



# SOCIAL WATCH REPORT 2005







 **SOCIAL WATCH REPORT 2005**  
**Roars and Whispers**



## SOCIAL WATCH

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## Whispers are not enough

*“The people have roared, but the G8 has whispered”. This was the powerful metaphor used by Kumi Naidoo, Chair of the Global Call to Action against Poverty, to express his disappointment with the outcome of the meeting of the eight most powerful political leaders of the world in Scotland in July 2005.*

*Billions of people are estimated to have watched the “Live8” concerts on the eve of the G8 meeting. Millions of them actually sent messages via e-mail or cell phones, demanding concrete and practical decisions against poverty from the G8: more aid and of a better quality, debt cancellation for countries unable to provide basic social services to their own people, and fair international trade. The expressions of public opinion demanding actions against poverty were so impressive that the eight leaders decided to show their commitment to the cause by actually signing the final communiqué in a public ceremony, something unusual in G8 meetings. Not only did the official announcements fall short of expectations, but the ink had not yet dried on the communiqué when US president George W Bush’s main advisor during the meeting denied having agreed to any increase in US aid.*

*By then the world’s attention was on the bombs that exploded in the London transport system so the hasty muting of an enormous roar into a shameful whisper went largely unnoticed.*

*This Social Watch Report 2005 deals precisely with the gap between promises and action. Poverty and gender discrimination actually kill people. Thousands of silent deaths every day could be avoided.*

*Sixty years ago, when the United Nations was created, the immediate motivation was “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. Yet the visionaries that drafted the UN Charter in*

*San Francisco already felt that “collective security” and the absence of war were not enough and could not be achieved without “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small” together with the determination “to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”.*

*In 1995, when the end of the Cold War reawakened the hopes that the promises of that document would be finally acted upon, citizen groups from around the world came together and created Social Watch to report independently once a year on how their governments were living up to their own standards and promises. The focus was, and still is, on the solemn pledges made by heads of State to achieve gender equality and to eradicate poverty, “making history” on the eve of the 21st century.*

*This is the tenth Social Watch report. Its essential concept has not changed: commitments were made by our leaders and it is a right and a responsibility of citizens to hold governments accountable to their own promises and legal obligations. What has changed over the last decade are the monitoring tools used by Social Watch and the breadth of its constituency.*

*The first Social Watch report in 1996 included the findings of NGOs in eleven countries. This Social Watch report 2005 compiles the findings from over 50 country coalitions on all continents. Each national Social Watch chapter is formed by organizations and movements that are active around the year on social development issues. They come together once a year to assess government actions and outcomes. Their findings are not intended as pure research but are used to interpellate authorities and help shape better pro-poor and pro-women policies. Thus, the Social*

*Watch report is not a commissioned report. The specific focus of each issue is discussed collectively and each national group decides on its own priorities and emphasis. To make the report possible, each group raises its own funds, most of which are invested in consulting with social movements to gather evidence and validate their findings. The role of the International Secretariat is to process all that information and edit it into the global report. The Social Watch International Coordinating Committee, elected by the national platforms in an assembly, provides guidance and leadership to the network. A team of social scientists based at Social Watch headquarters in Montevideo taps the latest information available nationally and internationally and processes it with methodologies designed, tested and scrutinized over ten years to produce the country by country figures and global summaries included in the report.*

*Based on methodology originally developed by the Social Watch coalition in the Philippines to monitor local governments, a Basic Capabilities Index has been developed and is included in this report together with a new Gender Equity Index. The indexes' findings are consistent with those of national reports and with the detailed analysis of each of the dimensions of poverty and inequity (education, health, nutrition and housing). The sad conclusion is that without a major shift in present trends, even the minimum targets agreed to solemnly by the heads of State and government*

*during the Millennium Summit in 2000 will simply **not** be met. "The Social Map" of the world that accompanies this report seems doomed to be painted mostly in red, orange and yellow, the colours that symbolize different degrees of deprivation, when by 2015 the "social planet" should be entirely blue to indicate that the minimum level of social services has been met.*

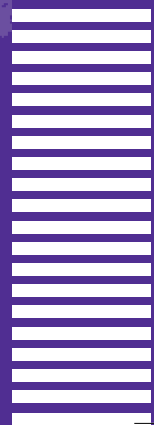
*The meeting of the G8 in Scotland failed to produce the new momentum needed to move towards a "blue", poverty free and gender equitable world. World leaders will have a new opportunity this year when they meet at the sixtieth anniversary of the UN in September and when their ministers attend the World Trade Organization gathering in Hong Kong in December.*

*By demonstrating that previous promises have not been met we are not promoting cynicism, but demanding action. The story is still evolving; the final word has not yet been said and citizens **can** make a difference: the time to act against poverty is now!*

Roberto Bissio  
Social Watch International Secretariat



# ◎ THEMATIC REPORTS



# Overview: Unkept promises

*"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable".*

Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776

Five years have passed since the largest gathering ever of heads of State and government made this solemn promise to the peoples of the world: **"we will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty."**<sup>1</sup> Ten years have passed since the leaders of the world solemnly committed themselves in Copenhagen **"to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world, through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind."**<sup>2</sup>

This is an ambitious agenda. So much so that it was compared by many leaders to the historic task of abolishing slavery in the 19th century. Inspired by the Copenhagen Declaration and the complementary Beijing Platform for Action towards gender equity,<sup>3</sup> citizen groups from all over the world came together to form the Social Watch network in 1995. Every year since then, Social Watch has published a comprehensive report monitoring the governments' compliance with their international commitments.

The findings of the national Social Watch coalitions in over 50 countries and the analysis of the available indicators coincide: the promises have remained largely unmet. Unless substantial changes are put into place soon, the targets set for the year 2015 **will not be achieved**. In area after area, be it health, nutrition, education or provision of essential services like sanitation, progress is insufficient and all too frequently we simply do not see any progress.

These are hard facts that cannot be disputed. Unlike the election promises of politicians, which are frequently vague, generic and difficult to pin down to actual delivery, most of the objectives collectively set by the presidents and prime-ministers of the world (known as Millennium Development Goals or MDGs - see box) refer to very concrete targets and indicators. By assessing the evolution

of the indicators and comparing them with the situation in which each country should be in order to meet the targets by 2015, the unavoidable conclusion is that without a major improvement in present trends the goals will not be achieved.

The Basic Capabilities Index developed by Social Watch to summarize the multiple dimensions of poverty and deprivation in a single figure agrees: "If the MDGs were to be met, the 'social map of the world' that accompanies this report should be painted blue, or at least green, by 2015, to indicate that the minimum level of social services has been met. Yet if progress continues to be as slow as it was in the 1990s, there will still be some 70 countries with unacceptable deficiencies in basic capabilities,<sup>4</sup> and at least 25 will still be painted in 'critical' red."

What went wrong? Were the targets too ambitious or unrealistic? Jan Vandemoortele, who helped develop the targets when he worked for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and who is now the highest ranking officer of the UN Development Group in charge of monitoring the MDGs, does not think so: "By and large, the quantitative targets were set on the premise that the progress observed in the 1970s and 1980s at the global level would continue for 25 years from 1990 to 2015. For example, were progress for child survival to continue as in the 1970s and 1980s, the global child mortality rate in 2015 would be two-thirds lower than in 1990."<sup>5</sup>

In other words, the fact that the world has made only half the progress needed to be on track towards achieving the MDGs means that the pace of advances in social development has slowed down since 1990, in spite of all the promises and declarations.

The Social Watch coalition in Kenya found that government expenditures in basic social services had declined from 20% of the national budget in 1980 to only 13% in 1995. Between 1997 and 2001 the country spent 52% of total government revenue on debt repayments.

The number of children dying before their first birthday is not only contemplated in the MDGs but is also a valid indicator of how a country is developing. Three out of four countries for which data are available performed worse in the last 15 years than they did in the 1970s and 1980s. The mortality of children under five years of age was dropping faster before 1990 in 80% of the countries.

## Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

The children that do make it to their fifth birthday should go to school. That they all do so is also one of the Millennium Goals. Yet progress in schooling has also slowed down since 1990 and the regions moving forward in terms of primary school attendance are Latin America and Europe, which were better off anyhow in comparison. Paradoxically, in the same period university education grew at a much faster rate in each and every region of the world. Which points to the real picture of the social scenario of the last decade: growing inequality. The elite is doing better everywhere. Instead of seeing poverty diminish, we are witnessing a growing social gap.

In the Philippines, for example, the national Social Watch coalition reports that the income ratio of the richest quintile to the poorest quintile was 13 to 1 in 1990 and that the distance grew to 16 to 1 in 2000.

In Colombia, with the second highest inequality rate on the continent after Brazil, the richest 10% of households receive an income 30 times higher than the poorest 10%. According to local "social-watchers" disparities are even higher in the rural areas, where armed conflict displaces peasants from their houses and land.

In both rich and poor countries progress towards gender equity is very slow. The German metal industry union IG Metall refers to "progress at snail's pace". "If women's wages in West Germany continue to move into line with men's at the same rate as over the last 40 years, it will take another 40 years, at least, for women white-collar workers, and far more than 70 years for women in manual jobs, to catch up with their male co-workers."<sup>6</sup>

1 United Nations Millennium Summit, Millennium Declaration, para. 11. New York, September 2000.

2 World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, Commitment 2. Copenhagen, March 1995.

3 Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Beijing, September 1995.

4 BCI levels lower than "medium".

5 Vandemoortele, Jan, "Ambition is Golden: Meeting the MDGs", in *Development*, 2005, 48(1), Society for International Development, [www.sidint.org/development](http://www.sidint.org/development)

6 Social Watch Report 2005, German national report.



It is a blatant paradox that measurable progress in health, education, sanitation and the promotion of women slowed down immediately after the end of the Cold War, when the great “peace dividend” was expected, when political leaders were unanimous in expressing their commitment to fighting poverty and when the public, perhaps as a result of the expansion in global communications, expressed solidarity in generous and spontaneous ways, as in the impressive “solidarity wave” that followed the tragic tsunami in December 2004.

A worldwide citizens’ campaign - the Global Call to Action against Poverty - was organized to demand more and better quality aid, trade justice and debt cancellation as requisites for meeting the internationally agreed upon goals. In the United Kingdom this campaign adopted the ambitious motto of “Make Poverty History”.

In the hope that substantive action against poverty could be agreed upon by the G8 - the group of leaders of the eight most powerful countries of the world who met in Scotland last July - millions of people wore white bands, the symbol of the campaign, and a group of celebrities organized “Live8”, a series of simultaneous concerts televised all over the world to what may have constituted the largest audience ever of a single event. Contrary to similar “Live Aid” concerts 20 years ago, the purpose was not to raise money for the poor but to motivate decision-makers to create the conditions that would allow people living in poverty and their nations to earn their own decent livelihoods.

In previous years, *anti-globalization* or *altermondialist* (to use their own term in French) demonstrators tried to make it impossible for the G8 to meet at all, judging that no good could come out of a gathering of the powerful, the self-appointed and the accountable-to-no-one. Some of the meetings were actually disrupted and had to be cut short due to huge crowds blocking the streets. This year in July, not even the bombs that exploded in London disrupted the leaders’ meeting, but the actual decisions taken fell short of the most realistic expectations. A few hours after signing a document saying that aid to Africa would be doubled by 2010, the US Government denied it had made a new commitment to increase its development assistance, one of the lowest in per capita terms.

## Charter of the United Nations Preamble

### *We the peoples of the United Nations determined*

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and
- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and
- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and
- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

### *and for these ends*

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and
- to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and
- to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and
- to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

*have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims.*

In September 2005, monarchs, presidents and prime ministers from all over the world will meet again, this time at United Nations headquarters in New York, to assess their performance in meeting the objectives of the Millennium Declaration. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the UN, has challenged them to act boldly and simultaneously in three directions: peace and security, human rights and democracy, and development and poverty eradication. None of these can be achieved without the other two. The link between them was already established 60 years ago in the preamble of the UN Charter. No new promises are needed, but action is indispensable. ■



# Poverty and globalization

## What are we talking about when we talk about poverty?

According to the Social Summit Programme of Action, "Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited access or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterized by a lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social and cultural life. It occurs in all countries: as mass poverty in many developing countries, pockets of poverty amid wealth in developed countries, loss of livelihoods as a result of economic recession, sudden poverty as a result of disaster or conflict, the poverty of low-wage workers, and the utter destitution of people who fall outside family support systems, social institutions and safety nets." It further emphasizes that "Absolute poverty is a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services."<sup>1</sup>

The Millennium Declaration uses the term "extreme poverty" in probably the same sense as the Social Summit, since both declarations quote the figure of "more than a billion" people in absolute or extreme poverty in the world.

Yet the goal set by the Millennium Declaration combines references to needs (food, water) with means (income) when promising to halve, by the year 2015, "the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day" and "the proportion of people who suffer from hunger" and, by the same date, "the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water".

By adopting the indicator popularized by the World Bank of USD 1 per day to define and measure poverty, the Millennium Declaration takes some distance from the views of the Social Summit and that of Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen: "poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes."<sup>2</sup>

Social Watch has demonstrated that an index of capabilities which does not include income can re-

flect country situations in a way that is consistent with the Human Development Index used by the UNDP and has the advantage of allowing for provincial and municipal monitoring. Yet indexes reflect averages and do not allow the poor to be counted.

## Counting the poor

The figure of 1.3 billion poor people published by the World Bank gained instant success and has been quoted *ad nauseam* in publication and speeches related to poverty. Yet the World Bank has been accused of using a methodology that underestimates the number of the poor,<sup>3</sup> mainly because it is based on "purchasing power parity" of local currencies, which adjusts according to national average prices, and not according to the prices actually paid by the people living in poverty.

The USD 1 per day indicator is also inappropriate for vast regions of the world. In Latin America the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) uses USD 2 per day as the line for extreme poverty. In the United States the threshold is around USD 12 per day.

While "extreme" or "absolute" poverty attempt to define a biological survival minimum, the concept of poverty which people actually use and which influences attitudes and decisions is socially defined. Thus, in the United Kingdom, the Breadline Britain measure defines a household as poor if the majority of people in Britain, at the time of calculation, would think that household to be poor. According to that measure, poverty grew in the United Kingdom from 21% to 24% between 1991 and 2001. Even when overall living standards rise, poverty can also rise if society becomes more unequal.

According to a preliminary analysis by Social Watch researchers, using national definitions of poverty instead of the international "extreme poverty" line would result in an increase of at least half a billion people to the number of poor, counting only middle and upper income countries. There were 35.8 million people officially considered as living in poverty in the United States in 2003 (12.5% of the population, 1.3 million more than in 2002). Around 70 million people are counted as poor in the European Union, of which only 5 million fall below the international poverty line. There are 200 million more people living in poverty in Latin America by national official definitions than those counted internationally. In lower income countries the World Bank defi-

nitions have frequently become the national official definitions, mainly because of the huge dependency of those countries on the Bank's soft loans and grants, which in turn easily translates into dependency on the Bank's ideology.

To make matters worse, most poverty indicators including those not based solely on income but on the satisfaction of basic needs, are based on household surveys that consider the family as a unit and assume that all members of a household share equally the income and resources available, independent of their age and gender. This results in underestimating the number of women living in poverty, since many of them are not able to satisfy their basic needs even when living in households above the poverty lines.<sup>4</sup>

## The world is richer, the poor are poorer

Do we really need a single international income definition of poverty? In order to mobilize public opinion and strengthen the political will necessary to implement the international commitments, indications of progress are no doubt required. But the speed of poverty reduction can be assessed and compared without having to resort to a common universal poverty line. What really matters is that each and every country reduce the proportion and number of its own citizens living in poverty. Such progress would be consistent with the mandate of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which does not condemn a State because of the poverty of its citizens but clearly requires that "all appropriate means" (including international cooperation) be applied "to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to **achieving progressively** the full realization" of those rights.<sup>5</sup>

In fact the main use of the USD 1 per day indicator is ideological and political. This indicator has led World Bank researchers to claim that "globalization is working", since it seems to imply that the proportion of people living in poverty in the world as a whole is declining at a rate that will make Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 achievable.

When we look more closely at the numbers, we find that even according to that indicator, extreme poverty is not declining and is even increasing in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe

1 World Summit for Social Development, Programme of Action, Chapter II "Eradication of Poverty", para. 19. Copenhagen, March 1995.

2 Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999.

3 Reddy, Sanjay G. and Thomas W. Pogge. *How Not to Count the Poor*, (Version 4.5), mimeo. New York: Barnard College, University of Columbia, 2003, [www.socialanalysis.org](http://www.socialanalysis.org)

4 Batthyány, Karina, Mariana Cabrera and Daniel Macadar. "The gender approach in poverty analysis: conceptual issues". Social Sciences Research Team, Social Watch Research Advance, 2004.

5 United Nations, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Art. 2, para. 1.



and most of Asia, with progress concentrated in Vietnam, India and China. India and China do register high economic growth in the last decade, but long term trends of poverty in China are difficult to establish due to the lack of reliable historical statistical series, while in India “there is good evidence that the official estimates of poverty reduction are too optimistic, particularly for rural India.”<sup>6</sup>

And the “globalization is working” claim collapses when equity issues are taken into account. According to Professor James K. Galbraith, director of the “Inequality Project” of the University of Texas, “the ‘global element’ in within-country inequality was stable from 1963 until around 1971, declined through 1979, and then rose sharply and steadily for the following twenty years. This pattern is very similar to that found by Milanovic for inequality between countries. We believe it constitutes strong evidence that global macroeconomic forces, and in particular the rise in interest rates, debt crises, and the pressure for deregulation, privatization and liberalization generally since 1980, have all contributed to a pervasive rise in economic inequalities within countries.”

“This work - concludes Galbraith - inevitably raises serious questions about the role of global economic governance in the rise of inequality and in the present difficulties of the development process.”

### Globalization increases poverty: Adam Smith was right!

The same conclusions are reached by the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization: “The global market economy has demonstrated great productive capacity. Wisely managed, it can deliver unprecedented material progress, generate more productive and better jobs for all, and contribute significantly to reducing world poverty. But we also see how far short we still are from realizing this potential. The current process of globalization is generating unbalanced outcomes, both between and within countries. Wealth is being created, but too many countries and people are not sharing in its benefits.”<sup>7</sup>

The reason why this is so was already clear to Adam Smith, 250 years ago: “It is every-where much easier for a wealthy merchant to obtain the privi-

lege of trading in a town corporate, than for a poor artificer to obtain that of working in it.”<sup>8</sup>

“The masters, being fewer in number, can combine much more easily; and the law, besides, authorises, or at least does not prohibit their combinations, while it prohibits those of the workmen. We have no acts of parliament against combining to lower the price of work; but many against combining to raise it.”<sup>9</sup>

In the last 15 years, during which time inequalities have been on the rise and social progress has slowed down, the rights of transnational corporations have been expanded by multilateral, regional and bilateral trade and investment agreements, without any parallel increase in their obligations or in the rights of the workers or of the governments of the countries in which they operate. Capital can move much faster than two centuries ago, but workers cannot. They are forced to compete in a race to the bottom while investment-starved governments compete to offer more concessions and tax-exemptions. Unbalanced rules create unbalanced results. This should not be a surprise for neoliberal economists, since that is precisely what Adam Smith observed and predicted!

If this is the diagnosis, either globalization is reversed or some form of global welfare governance is achieved. A globalized economy that can ensure a decent living for everybody but does not do so seems doomed to be unsure and politically unviable.

### The urgent and the necessary

It can be argued that pursuing an ambitious global governance agenda is a long-term project that fails to meet the urgent needs of people that are desperately poor and hungry today. The MDGs, while certainly not a summary of all the UN conferences of the 1990s and definitely not a substitute for them, can legitimately claim to be an expression of the most urgent needs. Yet meeting the MDGs is not just another humanitarian task to be fulfilled by an increase in aid.

In fact, if international aid was duplicated tomorrow, the present macroeconomic system would not allow it to be spent. The World Bank and regional development banks already have more money available than countries are allowed to absorb by the rules of the International Monetary Fund. The banks are receiving more money from poor countries than these disburse to the banks!

In 2002-2003, Uganda, which faces a major AIDS crisis, nearly rejected a USD 52 million grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria because it sought to stay within the strict budgetary constraints it had agreed to maintain in order to acquire loans from the IMF.

At the International AIDS Conference in Bangkok (July 2004), UN experts called for a massive increase in financing for AIDS programmes, urging that USD 20 billion be provided to developing countries by 2007. Yet a report published in October 2004 by four major humanitarian agencies<sup>10</sup> argues that IMF policies that seek to keep inflation at very low levels do so at the cost of blocking higher public spending to fight AIDS. Many economists think inflation and public spending could go higher than the IMF systematically determines, and therefore IMF policies are unreasonably undermining the global fight against AIDS.

The report also argues that IMF policies make it more difficult for countries to retain critically important health care workers, as a result of the IMF’s caps on the amount of money countries can spend for public health sector employees.

The low inflation targets set by the IMF lead directly to limits on the national budgets of poor countries, which lead to ceilings on national health budgets. “Most poor countries would like to significantly increase spending on fighting AIDS,” says Joanne Carter, Legislative Director of RESULTS Educational Fund, a US-based citizens lobby group that focuses on combating tuberculosis and other “diseases of poverty” in developing countries. “But they have given up trying to fight against the IMF because they know that they must comply with IMF loans just to keep their access to the current levels of foreign aid they are already receiving. If you go against the IMF, you risk getting cut-off from all other sources of foreign aid.”<sup>11</sup>

### Taxes under debate

In defending its rules, the IMF has argued that international aid cannot be trusted as a reliable source of income to support current expenditures (as, for example, taxes are) due to its volatility and non-contractual character. Which places the ball back in the court of donor countries and challenges them

6 Kozel, Valerie and Angus Deaton. *Data and dogma: the great Indian poverty debate*. World Bank, PovertyNet Library, September 2004.

7 World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All*. New York, February 2004. [www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/report/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/report/index.htm)

8 Smith, Adam, *The Wealth of Nations*, I.10.100.

9 *Ibid*, I.8.12.

10 ActionAid International USA, Global AIDS Alliance, Student Global AIDS Campaign, and RESULTS Educational Fund, “Blocking Progress: How the Fight Against HIV/AIDS is Being Undermined by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund”, The full policy briefing is available at [www.actionaidusa.org/blockingprogress.pdf](http://www.actionaidusa.org/blockingprogress.pdf)

11 *Ibid*.





to redefine flows to developing countries in a way that is predictable, reliable and non-volatile.

This is precisely what more than one hundred countries demanded on 20 September 2004 in New York in their request to consider new mechanisms to fund poverty eradication, a proposal that has been blocked by a single nation's veto, applied to the discussion of anything that might even resemble an international tax.

Faced with tough externally-imposed restrictions on their budgets for development and social urgencies, Presidents Lula da Silva of Brazil and Ernesto Kirchner of Argentina signed on 16 March 2004 the "Copacabana Act", formally known as the "Declaration for Cooperation Towards Economic Growth with Equity," where they denounce a "contradiction in the present international financial system between sustainable development and its financing" for lack of "adequate crisis solving mechanisms" and make a link between finances and trade, which is seen as "crucial" for growth. To change the system, they agreed "to negotiate with multilateral credit institutions in a way that does not jeopardize growth and ensures debt sustainability, allowing for infrastructure investment."

When a private corporation invests in infrastructure this is accounted for as asset creation and only a small percentage of the total investment affects the yearly balance as depreciation. But national accounts only register income and losses: all of the money spent is registered as a loss. And the IMF imposes a ceiling on government expenditure in order to generate a "primary surplus" to ensure debt sustainability. What Kirchner and Lula proposed, and was endorsed later by all South American finance ministers, was that in much the same way as private corporations do, infrastructure investment should be depreciated over several years and not as a loss at the moment of expenditure.

The immediate effect of the proposal, currently being studied by the IMF, is of course to allow for greater government expenditure. But the implications of introducing the concept of asset creation in national accounts are far-reaching. It could lead to the end of natural resource depletion (because there would be a corresponding loss in the assets accounts). And, in the original Argentinean proposal, the formation of "human capital" should also be exempted from the IMF imposed expenditure ceilings. Health and education expenditures could be regarded as "investments" in the same way as spending on infrastructure, and many economists would argue this is an investment that pays more and faster than big conventional development projects.

### Promises, promises

These ideas, together with the demand for increased developing country participation in the decision-making of the Bretton Woods Institutions, were already present in the discussions around the Monterrey Consensus that resulted from the Conference on Financing for Development in 2002.

Yet these promises are waiting to be fulfilled, just like those made in Doha to start a Development Round to make trade rules friendlier to developing countries. None of these promises have materialized yet. Instead, developing countries are experiencing additional demands in their services sectors (with direct implications on the provision of basic services for the poor) as a "price" for concessions in the agriculture or textile areas.

In fact, each of the yearly assessments of promises that Social Watch has studied since 1996 has shown that by and large developing countries have been closer to meeting their commitments than developed countries. And different independent evaluations show that among them, the members of the G7 are those lagging furthest behind.

If anything, what the adoption of commitments, goals and time-bound targets by the international community has achieved is to set benchmarks against which governments (and the politicians that form them) can be judged objectively. It is ultimately the judgment made by public opinion which makes change possible. But the decision-making that will make the difference is scattered in a multiplicity of forums and institutions attended by different ministers and officials with results that are frequently contradictory.

For example, on 4 October 2004 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child strongly recommended that Southern African countries ensure that "regional and other free trade agreements do not have a negative impact on the implementation of children's rights". The trade agreement currently being negotiated between the regional bloc and the United States could "affect the possibility of providing children and other victims of HIV/AIDS with effective medicines for free or at the lowest price possible." Such a resolution has global implications, since the provisions in the draft text are common to many bilateral trade agreements. Similar discrepancies between the right to life and intellectual property rights of pharmaceutical corporations led to a declaration at Doha and a further extension of that agreement prior to the Cancun Ministerial which had the effect of revising the application of the TRIPS agreement of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

There is no global supreme court to decide what should prevail when human rights and trade regulations conflict. Advocates of trade and investment accords and of the WTO attempt to press their priority over other treaties and norms at key international forums: the implementation of the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development, the treaty against tobacco or the ongoing negotiations around the protection of cultural diversity. At present coherence can only be achieved at the level of heads of State and government. Which is what makes the Second Millennium Summit so important. ■





# Recommendations

## A civil society Benchmark for the 5-year Review of the Millennium Declaration

From 14-16 September 2005 the implementation of the Millennium Declaration will be assessed in the light of developments that have taken place since its adoption in 2000. At the time of the Declaration's adoption it was seen to contain the agenda for eradicating poverty in the first part of the new Millennium.

The Millennium Declaration built on commitments adopted by the international community in the preceding decade at a series of conferences and summits - including those addressing the environment; human rights; gender equality and equity; social development; the rights of children; population; sexual and reproductive rights; the right to shelter and the elimination of racism and discrimination. As part of these commitments the 1995 UN Social Summit acknowledged that the eradication of poverty was achievable and adopted a strategy to meet this objective. This strategy was based on an all embracing concept of development which not only included a focus on poverty but also saw full employment and social inclusion as equally important aspects of the strategy. Civil society played an active role around the conferences of the 1990s, calling on governments to adopt time-bound commitments to promote development through ending poverty, achieving full employment and diminishing social exclusion. The engagement of civil society with these processes has resulted in the establishment of coalitions of organizations across the world that actively monitor the implementation of the commitments made by governments.

Since the 2000 Millennium Summit, critical events have taken place - from the 2001 attacks on the United States and subsequent military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, to the Asian tsunami - that have shaken the international community.

A military concept of security is prevailing, not based on a notion of security for all - human security in all its dimensions - but promoting security for some through a concentration of power in the hands of a few. In addition, by avowing a doctrine of unilateral pre-emptive military action, and going to war without the authorization of the global community based on a decision of the UN Security Council, the United States and its allies have undermined the very purpose for which the UN was created.

A unipolar world order is being created in which the dominant power promotes a single set of values covering all aspects of life, whether economic, political, cultural, religious or ethical. Differences are inevitably emphasized, re-enforcing divisions and intolerance on which conflict is built.

Security cannot be assured through force. Conflict cannot be resolved with a gun. It is only when we seriously confront the inequalities that divide us,

promote social justice and assure the human rights of all that we can hope to achieve a stable future.

The urgency of doing so cannot be underestimated. The very real threat of destruction to human life in its current form, and to contemporary flora and fauna, posed by global warming has yet to be sufficiently addressed. Its impact on people is starting to be felt, with the most marginalized communities being affected most. While the devastating effects of the Asian tsunami may not be the result of climate change, it certainly emphasizes the vulnerability of communities when nature's forces are unleashed by changes to the natural world in which we live. Without doubt, we all share responsibility for ensuring that the threats to life and the sustainability of our planet are overcome, not least by adopting responsible lifestyles. However, governments, and those in positions of power, have a particular responsibility to ensure that the practices promoted and allowed by government are consistent with the continued sustainability of our environment.

The colossal destruction of the Indian Ocean earthquake and resulting tsunami, together with the consequences that followed, not only increased awareness of international responsibility but also highlighted the different realities of security for people living in different contexts. This is in contrast to the consequences of other crises, such as that in Darfur, that have an equal impact on people directly affected. And equally to the silent, but ongoing deaths of millions of people that could be prevented. At least the tsunami has sharpened the public eye for the complexity and the ethical intolerance of inequality between the very rich and the very poor.

These events emphasize the interconnected nature of the world in which we live where the consequences of decisions, actions, and events occurring in one part of the world increasingly impact on people and communities globally. They also graphically illustrate the consequences of the gross inequalities that exist today, not only in the distribution of wealth and income, but also in access to decision makers and power, and to the resources that sustain life itself. These inequalities, which directly contribute to and sustain poverty, are central to the creation and maintenance of instability.

The review of the Millennium Declaration, and the positions taken by governments in preparing the review, will be seen in the light of these events.

In September 2005, and during the preparations for the review in the preceding months, the international community has a chance to address the crucial challenges of our time and put in place the ambitious strategy that is needed to secure the future of the world for generations to come. Recognition of all

human rights must be a guiding principle. Success requires the involvement of all stakeholders, both in the preparations for the High Level event in September 2005 and around the event itself.

People throughout the world know what is at stake. Those who lived through the Asian tsunami understand the fragility of life. Refugees in Darfur understand the consequences of insecurity. Communities decimated by HIV/AIDS struggle to survive. Farmers who lose the livelihood on which they and their families depend know what it means to be absolutely destitute. For these, and the millions of people like them, the inequalities of our world have real consequences.

It is on the basis of this kind of experience that civil society organizations call on the leaders of the international community to take bold and decisive action when they meet in New York in September. In particular we urge world leaders to make the following commitments:

### **Benchmark 1: From poverty eradication towards diminishing inequality**

The world has the means to eradicate poverty. It can and must be done. Hunger, malnutrition and being condemned to a life in poverty are an affront to humanity and a denial of basic human rights. We therefore have an obligation to eradicate poverty and must take all possible actions to ensure that this objective is achieved. What is lacking is the political will to make it happen. The international community must not only re-affirm its commitment to eradicating poverty worldwide in the shortest time possible, but each government must also recognize its individual and collective obligation to put in place effective strategies for eradicating poverty.

Poverty is not a statistic and is not defined by USD 1, or even USD 2 a day. There is no benefit in singling out the very poor from the almost very poor or the poor among the rich in developing countries from the poor among the rich in developed countries. All must be addressed. Poverty is based on radically unequal distribution of income, but also in similarly unequal distribution of assets, unequal access to opportunities for work and employment, social services and benefits, and in the unequal distribution of political power, access to information and political participation. This is largely the result of deep-seated and persistent imbalances in the current workings of the global economy which according to the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is *ethically unacceptable and politically unsustainable*. Women are most often among those who suffer these inequalities.



Inequality and social injustice are major sources of national and international instability and conflict. Those struggling to survive seek the means to live, while those who have more than enough protect what they have and all too often seek to accumulate more. An adequate response to poverty will only be found in comprehensive and redistributive initiatives which address all aspects of inequality, where particular attention is given to the gender dimension. A concerted emphasis on social development constitutes a major contribution to the eradication of poverty, with emphasis on the provision of basic health, basic education, water and sanitation. Achieving the MDGs within the agreed time lines is only the most urgent part of what is necessary to meet this requirement.

Security and stability can only be achieved when social justice is assured, when everyone's rights to the means of life - water, health, food, shelter, etc - are respected, and when everyone has access to the means to a livelihood for themselves, their families and their communities.

*Governments should commit themselves to eradicate poverty and to achieving social justice.*

This benchmark requires:

- a re-affirmation of the conviction that poverty can be eradicated, as they did 10 years ago in Copenhagen;
- a commitment to eradicate poverty in each and every country by 2025, where poverty is defined within each country on the basis of different national realities;
- a commitment that national strategies for eradicating poverty be defined within each country by 2007, drawn up through a transparent and consultative process, in which the poor are actively engaged;
- the implementation of policies dedicated to reducing inequalities, including assuring universal affordable access to quality core public social services, redistributive tax policies, respect for the core labour standards;
- a halt to policies of privatization and "liberalization" which lead to the concentration of public resources in fewer and often non-national hands;
- strengthening of the reporting and review requirements of the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to ensure more frequent and thorough reviews of states' fulfilment of human rights obligations to their citizens;
- a commitment to report regularly to the UN ECOSOC on progress in implementing these strategies. The first such reports to be made no later than 2007.

## Benchmark 2: Better strategies for development: the role of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

A country's development strategies should be informed by the experiences of its people. Over the past decades extensive macroeconomic conditions have been attached to the provision of development aid and loans as well as for the cancellation of debt with disastrous consequences for social development. Policies of structural adjustment, liberalization and privatization have increased inequalities, not diminished them, impacting most severely on communities and families with least access to decent work and the means to a sustainable livelihood. For the majority of the people living in poverty, of which a disproportionate number are women and children, agriculture and fisheries provide the only viable livelihood for themselves and their families. Economic reforms imposed on developing countries have promoted export-oriented production, particularly of primary products for which world prices have dramatically declined, and an increased control over agriculture and fisheries by corporate interests. The result has been increased impoverishment for large sections of developing country societies for whom there are no alternative options.

The notion that measures to increase trade will lead to the eradication of poverty has not worked, as can be seen from various statistical analysis covering the 20 years since the imposition of trade liberalization policies and export-led growth models of economic development. While Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) of the IMF and the World Bank were supposedly introduced to address these negative effects, they have not done so.

In theory their aim to ensure an adequate poverty focus in a country's development strategies and the allocation of development aid with an increased sense of ownership on the part of the recipient country is in line with the spirit of MDG 8 and its "global partnership for development". Experience shows, however, that this remains far from reality with numerous macroeconomic conditions still being attached to aid. World Bank loans support specific programmes of reform which include actions (conditionalities) considered critical by the World Bank and IMF to the success of the programme. Loan negotiations are still conducted behind closed doors within Ministries of Finance and Central Banks. The failed macroeconomic policies of the past continue to be promoted. Not surprisingly, the "ownership" of national development strategies has not lived up to its promises.

The withdrawal of the state and the privatization of service provision - of health care, water, edu-

cation - increasingly deny access to those unable to pay for what constitutes a basic human right. Globalization and liberalization of trade, the corporatization of agriculture and other forms of production should not be the guiding frameworks for agriculture. Instead, sustainable local livelihoods, food sovereignty, environment regeneration and social concerns should be the guiding principles.

*Governments should promote development strategies based on the needs and experience of people.*

This benchmark requires:

- the strengthening of national policy making, based on nationally defined needs and priorities identified through participatory processes. These should be defined in a rights based framework and allow the self-defined interests and objectives of street sellers, industrial workers, fishers, and field-workers to be clearly reflected in national development strategies;
- transparency in the process for establishing national development strategies that supports the effective participation of national stakeholders in the formulation of national policy;
- the establishment of PRSPs that respect real ownership through nationally defined decision making, with the effective participation of civil society, and accountability to national parliaments;
- agrarian and aquarian reforms to be carried out to ensure farmers, fisherfolk and other rural communities have access, control, ownership and management of productive resources. A special focus needs to be given to women ensuring the maintenance of their control over, and access to resources such as seeds.

## Benchmark 3: Achieving gender equality and equity

Poverty reduction and the empowerment of women are interconnected in many ways. Women constitute the majority of the world's poor and often carry the social and economic burden of looking after the most vulnerable members of the community, such as children, the elderly and the sick. Women and girls living in poverty are also at greater risk of becoming victims of gender based violence, are more likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS, to die at childbirth and to be sold into slavery. Economic reforms that dismantle social obligations of the state and privatise public goods, impact disproportionately on women and deepen gender inequality as women are pressed into filling the gap. At the same time women constitute crucial active agents in any strategy to eradicate poverty. Denying full and free access of



women to the economic sector and labour market is not only a denial of their basic human rights but is also detrimental to a country's economic development. Poverty cannot be tackled successfully without ensuring equality of access to the means of livelihood between women and men, and equity of opportunity. While gender equality and equity are fundamental objectives in themselves, they are also an essential pre-condition for eradicating poverty.

The MDG targets relating to women's empowerment (MDG 3 and MDG 5) must be achieved, but are insufficient alone. To achieve true gender equity, the concept must be understood in a comprehensive way and cannot just be limited to the indicators included in the MDGs.

The political declaration adopted by governments at the 10 year review of the Beijing Women's Conference in March 2005, "emphasize(d) that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, [...] and stress the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the high-level plenary meeting on the review of the Millennium Declaration."

*Governments should fully recognize the centrality of gender equality and equity for any development strategy to be successful.*

This benchmark requires:

- *increased emphasis to be given to achieving gender equality in implementing national, regional and international development strategies, through establishing meaningful targets and indicators to measure its progress;*
- *increasing primary school completion rate and secondary school access for girls; ensuring secure tenure of property, land and inheritance rights for women; ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, and promoting and protecting the full enjoyment by women of all human rights; promoting equal access to sustainable employment and adequate labor protections; promoting gender balance in government decision making; and expanding efforts to combat violence against women and girls.*
- *the identification of explicit measures for achieving gender equality in the context of MDG Goal 8, particularly to ensure that gender equality is promoted within PRSPs and the new aid architecture;*
- *a compact between donors and their partners to allocate 10% of resources specifically dedicated to promoting gender equality and in*

*support of specific activities to promote women's empowerment;*

- *each and every government to implement its commitments on promoting gender equality made in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1978) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA, 1995) as well as the adoption of an optional protocol to CEDAW.*

#### **Benchmark 4: Taking urgent action in the face of climate change**

The complex ecological balance of our planet, which provides the basis for life itself, is facing unprecedented threats, largely as a consequence of development strategies pursued by humankind. Our very survival may depend on immediate radical action being taken to combat the unsustainable pressures that we have created. We can already see increasing threats to communities around the world. Those most effected by the immediate consequences of ecological degradation and environmental change are those already most vulnerable - particularly marginalized communities and people living in poverty.

While many aspects of the world's ecological balance needs to be addressed, Global warming and changes to the global climate represent a significant threat. Increased temperatures have already accelerated glacial melting in the Arctic and recent scientific studies predict it will diminish by 50% by the end of the century. Predictions estimate that by 2050 more than a million distinct life forms will have been lost.

While actions are being taken these have been slow and insufficient, particularly given the potential calamitous consequences that may occur. The reluctance of some nations, particularly those disproportionately responsible for global warming emission, to sign up to the Kyoto Protocol must not prevent urgent action being taken. With the Kyoto Protocol entering into force in February 2005, implementation of emission reduction and funding commitments must proceed urgently. Furthermore, given recent indicators on the speed and depth of global warming new more stringent reductions of greenhouse gases must be established quickly.

Development patterns pursued by humankind over the past three centuries, and in particular during the past few decades, are the principal source of green house emissions responsible for climate change. Wealthy nations, and the lifestyles of their populations, have generated most of these emissions. The threat that climate change poses to all

humanity requires a common response, with radical and immediate actions being taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to address its consequences. The primary responsibility for doing so must be borne by those that have benefited most from the causes.

As part of the need for urgent and radical action to be taken, future strategies for energy generation must give priority to renewable safe and non polluting sources.

Given the life threatening nature of this threat, the interests of the global community must not be held hostage by those few countries that do not join the common effort.

*Governments should take urgent and bold action to address climate change and the environmental degradation of our planet.*

This benchmark requires:

- *explicit recognition of the serious and immediate threat that climate change poses;*
- *immediate implementation of measures for reducing emissions included in the Kyoto Protocol;*
- *an urgent start in negotiations for the immediate revision of existing commitments and to agree on long-term action in an equitable global framework that will prevent the most dangerous impacts of climate change;*
- *the provision of the necessary additional financial resources by a substantial increase of the funding level of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the introduction of emission related user charges for international airspace and the oceans, and the introduction of an international aviation fuel tax aimed at doing justice to the climate damage caused by flight traffic and, at the same time, overcoming the indirect subsidy to the aviation industry via the previous zero tax rate on aviation fuel;*
- *measures to be established to prepare the most vulnerable communities for those impacts that can no longer be avoided - as well as measures to protect the world's flora and fauna;*
- *a commitment to the principal of common but differentiated responsibility, as agreed in the Rio Declaration, where people and countries bear the costs of addressing climate change in proportion to their contribution to the causing factors;*
- *a commitment to increasing use of renewable forms of energy generation.*



## Benchmark 5: Stopping militarization and the proliferation of weapons

The much hoped for “peace dividend” from the end of the cold war has failed to materialise. New forms of militarization have emerged as governments, opposition movements and other groups seek to impose their will through the force of arms. Whatever the justification given, in almost all circumstances military intervention has not brought the stability sought. On the contrary the result is less stability, as is seen in Iraq. In addition the provision of humanitarian aid, that should be available on a non discriminatory basis for people directly affected by disasters and conflict, is increasingly being associated with military objectives through the use of military personnel in its distribution.

The associated global trade in arms has an enormous human impact, fuelling and sustaining conflicts, promoting insecurity and undermining development across some of the poorest regions of the world. At least every minute a person is killed somewhere in the world due to armed violence. In a number of countries precious natural resources such as diamonds and copper are being exploited in exchange for weapons used to commit terrible atrocities. Women and children are particularly vulnerable; women and girls are raped at gun point; and an estimated 300,000 children have become soldiers in conflicts around the world. The proliferation of the arms trade is a cruel example of the incoherence in international donor policy.

The states that profit most from this trade are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, which together make up around 80% of all reported exports of conventional arms. Between 1998 and 2001 the United States, United Kingdom and France earned more from the arms trade than they contributed to international aid. Furthermore the relaxation of controls on the sales of arms following the 11 September is leading to a new proliferation of weapons. Arms continue to be channelled to countries with poor human rights records or developing countries which spend more on defence than on basic social services, thus diverting resources from these areas such as health and education.

The international community must demonstrate coherence with its own commitments to promote peace and stability in the world.

*Governments should commit to a real and drastic reduction in military spending, and to put in place a stringent, legally binding control on the sale of arms.*

This benchmark requires:

- a binding commitment to at least halve military spending in each and every country by the

*year 2015 and use the resulting “peace dividend” for social and environmental purposes;*

- a binding commitment to promote general disarmament and the ban of all nuclear arms and of all weapons of mass destruction;
- the adoption of the global Arms Trade Treaty which can provide some safeguards in what is, at present, an unregulated market. The Treaty would ensure that all governments control arms according to the same international standards;
- a commitment for the removal of the millions of illegal and surplus arms which are already in circulation;
- a commitment to respect the neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian aid, both towards its distribution and the humanitarian organizations entrusted with this task.

## Benchmark 6: Financing of development

Generating the financial resources necessary to achieve sustainable development where basic needs of all are met and everyone has the opportunity to lead fulfilling lives is a responsibility for all governments and people everywhere. The greatest responsibility falls on wealthier nations, corporations and individuals. As clearly identified in the report of the Millennium Project, current levels of finance for development are insufficient to meet even the minimum targets set by the MDGs. In addition, many forms of finance that are supposedly provided for development are in reality working against the goals that they are supposed to promote. While recognising the crucial importance of trade and investment in generating resources necessary for ensuring sustainable forms of development, these will remain insufficient for developing countries, particularly those with low incomes.

### Generating international development financing

For the international community to meet its commitments and obligations to eradicate poverty there needs to be a substantial increase in the availability of finance for development. This can only be achieved by ensuring real increases in transfers of finance from the rich to the poor. In particular:

- Increasing aid

For many low income countries aid is the most important source of finance for development. For these countries it is also the only real source of investment for the basic social infrastructure that is vital for assuring the welfare and

well being of its people and for effectively addressing poverty. Aid will only be effective when it is sustainable and predictable, contributing to the development strategies defined by a nation itself. It needs to be free from ties imposed by donors, which not only distort its value but also prejudices a nation’s commitment to development policies imposed from outside.

*Governments should ensure that levels of aid are increased substantially so that adopted development strategies can be implemented.*

In particular, this requires:

- a commitment for an immediate doubling in the provision of ODA by 2006 in order to finance the MDGs;
- a commitment by every donor government to provide at least 0.7% of GNI, by 2015 at the latest;
- each donor government that has not yet reached the UN target to present plans to the September summit on how they will reach the target.

- Cancelling debt

While there is clear recognition that for many developing countries their debt servicing obligations undermines development, insufficient action has been taken to ensure that levels of debt are sustainable.

*Governments to adopt measures that will once and for all remove unsustainable levels of debt to all low and middle income developing countries. Debt sustainability has to be measured, among others, against the needs of indebted countries to achieve the MDGs.*

This requires, in particular:

- the complete cancellation of debts where not to do so will undermine the country’s ability to achieve the MDGs;
- further substantial debt cancellation for low and middle income developing countries beyond the HIPC initiative;
- the immediate setting up of a fair and transparent arbitration procedure to address unsustainable debt burdens, which gives the right of all stakeholders to be heard, the protection of debtors basic needs, and the institution of an automatic stay of debt servicing. This procedure must be based on a neutral decision making body independent of the IFIs, WTO and other similar institutions;





- ensuring that funding of debt cancellation is additional to donor's targets to achieve its commitment to provide 0.7% GNI;
- the cancellation of debt to be done free from economic policy conditions, such as on privatization and liberalization.

- **Instituting international taxes**

The need for new forms of international finance for development has been increasingly recognised. Commitments now need to be made to bring these into reality. Many proposals have been made that are both justified and feasible. In most instances the implementation of the proposed taxes would not only provide additional resources for development, but also play a constructive role in regulating actions that cause instability in global economic systems or impact negatively on the environment. These international taxes should address the use of global environmental commons, short-term financial and foreign exchange transactions, and on trade of items that have negative international impact - such as on global ecological balances, the promotion of conflict, etc.

*Governments should establish mechanisms for international taxation that will not only provide additional financial resources for development but control unsustainable and damaging processes.*

In particular this requires:

- a commitment to establish international taxes based on one or more of the current proposals, in particular a Currency Transaction Tax (CTT) and an international aviation fuel tax;
- a commitment to develop systems for sharing information on trans-border financial transfers, and increase the global coordination of taxes so as to increase tax revenues, as well as to control corruption;
- a commitment to take measures that will lead to the immediate abolition of all tax havens.

### **Generating domestic finance for development**

All governments have an obligation to generate financial resources from within their countries that can help finance development strategies. They also have an obligation to use financial resources efficiently and in the most effective way possible, and to account for their use in a transparent and accessible way to their own people. Mobilization of domestic finance is an important means to address

national inequalities, particularly through progressive taxation and the taxation of corporations.

*Governments should establish equitable systems of taxation in each and every country.*

In particular:

- support for the strengthening of domestic progressive taxation systems;
- commitments to establish transparency in national budgets and accounts, including the integration of gender budgeting, so as to increase accountability of governments to local citizens in using resources;
- an international convention to facilitate the recovery and repatriation of funds illegally appropriated from national treasuries of developing countries;
- a multilateral agreement on an effective sharing of information on taxation between countries, to stem tax evasion.

### **Benchmark 7: Making trade fair**

It is repeatedly emphasised that trade has substantially more potential to finance development than aid ever can. This can only be the case when international rules of trade make effective provision for the rights and needs of developing countries and their producers. At present trade is the vehicle for the indiscriminate liberalization of developing country economies and the imposition of harmful conditions, instead of supporting sustainable development, poverty eradication and gender equity. Trade policies need to be re-oriented to promote fair trade and to foster sustainable development. Trade rules and policies must ensure the right of developing countries to pursue their own development agendas, putting their people's interests first. This includes enabling measures to protect public services from enforced liberalization and privatization, to secure the right to food and affordable access to essential drugs, and to strengthen corporate accountability. Farmers' knowledge and indigenous technologies should be given due recognition and research should be re-oriented to include this.

For many developing countries the export of one or two commodities remains the source for most of their export earnings. The decline of commodity prices has eroded their income by up to 50%, thus aggravating their dependence on aid and increasing the unsustainability of their debt.

*Governments should ensure that the global trade system is fair and just.*

This benchmark requires:

- an end to conditions imposed by the International Financial Institutions and other donors

*on aid and debt cancellation that determine trade policies of developing countries;*

- effective and transparent special treatment for developing countries within the global trading system;
- the abolition of all forms of subsidy by rich countries that damage developing countries' agricultural production and markets;
- increased accountability and transparency of governments and international organizations to their grassroots constituencies in the formulation of international trade rules and national trade policies, while ensuring consistency of trade policies with respect for workers' rights, and human rights more broadly;
- effective and transparent international mechanisms to support the prices of commodities, and to compensate developing countries for price fluctuations.

### **Benchmark 8: Fighting HIV/AIDS and other pandemic diseases**

Death and incapacity resulting from disease is a continuing and often preventable human catastrophe which dwarfs almost all others. It is also a serious constraint on development. It strikes poor and marginal communities disproportionately, particularly those who have inadequate access to health care. HIV/AIDS poses a particular threat. The MDG relating to HIV/AIDS is scandalously modest and inadequate in its recognition of the potential for life-extending access to treatment. At the 2001 United Nations General Assembly on HIV/AIDS member states expressed their concern that the global HIV/AIDS epidemic constituted a global emergency. Since then the situation has deteriorated. At the International AIDS Conference in 2004 world leaders confirmed that over 38 million people in the world were living with AIDS and that the epidemic was spreading in every region.

HIV/AIDS affects poorest countries disproportionately. The most affected region is Sub-Saharan Africa where almost 40% of all deaths are from the disease. The enormous impact on HIV/AIDS on the human capital of these states stands as a grave threat to development. Through its effect on those directly affected as well as on their children, relatives and communities it undermines productive capacity both in the present and future. Other treatable pandemic diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, compound the threat to the life and livelihoods of millions of people in developing countries.



Treatment of the infected is available and possible, but while millions need it only a few hundred thousand have access. Providing access to treatment has been not only held back by social and cultural attitudes, the stigma associated with disease, and by the reluctance of governments to take energetic leadership but also by deference to the privileges and protections accorded to pharmaceutical corporations. Only sustained and widespread civil society campaigning and demonstration projects have led some governments, like that of Brazil, to provide free access to the affected, and to a grudging recognition by the WTO of the claims to the right to health. The vast majority of those needing treatment still wait for the ramping up of services and funds which would stop thousands dying each week.

At the International Conference in Bangkok in 2004 world leaders admitted that they had not done enough to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS or to mitigate its effects. A renewed commitment backed by political will is therefore necessary to combat this disease, which stands as a serious obstacle to global development, and to reduce its impact. All interventions must be gender sensitive since figures show that 60% of adults affected by HIV/AIDS in Africa are women - making women's empowerment a critical issue in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In addition, a special emphasis should be given to policies and interventions that address children affected by HIV/AIDS, including those orphaned through the disease. A "Free by 5" campaign, to assure equitable access to all, free of user fees, has been initiated in Africa and is expanding around the world.

*Governments should recognize the critical fight against the pandemics devastating countless communities and to ensure adequate priority is given to address them.*

This benchmark requires:

- a radical increase in financial support for the 3 by 5 initiative<sup>1</sup> of the World Health Organization, followed by the inauguration of a 6 (million) by 7 (2007) sequel in extending treatment. In addition sustained and predictable funding for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria must be assured;
- the inauguration of a global emergency service response and publicly administered supply facility for the provision of accessible and freely available anti-retroviral treatment - and vaccination should an effective vaccine be developed;

<sup>1</sup> "Treat 3 million by 2005" (3 by 5) is the global initiative of the World Health Organization and UNAIDS adopted in 2003 to provide antiretroviral therapy to 3 million people with HIV/AIDS in developing countries by the end of 2005.

- a re-commitment to the long-established vision of "Health for All" combined with substantially increased funding for rebuilding and extending health systems in all developing countries;
- a moratorium on any further extension of the terms of patent protection for pharmaceuticals and on further TRIPS clauses in bilateral and regional trade agreements. No TRIPS "plus";
- the inauguration, using emergency security provisions, of a publicly-owned support for a world-wide "Free by 5" initiative to ensure free, non-discriminatory access to treatment.

### Benchmark 9: Promoting corporate accountability

Transnational Corporations (TNCs) are the main protagonists and beneficiaries of globalization but they are not held globally accountable. TNCs are continuously entangled in the violation of social, environmental and human rights standards. Corporations and governments have responded to the widely recognized negative impacts of corporate activity through the development of hundreds of sectoral and company codes of conduct and voluntary "partnership" initiatives. The Global Compact initiated by UN Secretary General is the best example of a political strategy aimed predominantly at the voluntary self-regulation of industry. With the aid of *best practice* examples, the companies involved are expected to demonstrate their sense of responsibility towards society. However, industry's influence and the impacts of transnational corporate activities reach way beyond these "soft" policy fields. Behind the curtain of partnership initiatives and dialogue processes, many corporations and business associations continue to ruthlessly pursue their own specific interests in the "hard" areas of politics. Their activities seriously affect the human security of people all over the world. There is a need, therefore, for legally binding international instruments that will ensure that the activities of TNCs are consistent with globally agreed conventions and standards.

At the Johannesburg Summit 2002, governments clearly committed themselves to "actively promote corporate responsibility and accountability, based on Rio Principles, including through the full development and effective implementation of intergovernmental agreements and measures"<sup>2</sup> In 2003, the UN-Sub-Commission on the Promotion

<sup>2</sup> Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, para. 49. Johannesburg, September 2002.

and Protection of Human Rights approved the "Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights"<sup>3</sup>. These Norms represent a landmark step providing a succinct, but comprehensive restatement of the international legal principles applicable to business with regard to human rights, humanitarian law, international labour law, environmental law, consumer law and anti-corruption law.

*Governments should commit to making transnational corporations and other business enterprises accountable to the global community and to future generations.*

This benchmark requires:

- a commitment to support the "Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights" and to take concrete steps towards their full implementation;
- an international binding instrument to increase the transparency of financial flows between TNCs, particularly in the extractive industry, and governments, as proposed by the international campaign "Publish What You Pay".

### Benchmark 10: Democratizing international governance

A system of open, transparent and accessible governance in which human rights and the rule of law are respected is critically necessary for ensuring equitable global development. Ensuring that human rights are observed and the rule of law is enforced is primarily the responsibility of national legal authorities within a nationally established legal framework that is consistent with international agreements and obligations, not least those that define internationally agreed human rights. However, the application of national laws is not always sufficient for justice to be carried out and there is a growing need for the international legal framework to be strengthened so that governments, corporations and individuals can be held accountable for acts that contravene human rights and other international agreements.

The legitimacy of our system of international governance is at stake. Global power carries responsibility and accountability of those that assume it - whether they are governments, corporations or even individuals - must extend to the international community as a whole. However, the effective domi-

<sup>3</sup> UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, resolution 2003/16.



nation of our multilateral institutions by a minority of governments who use their position to promote their own specific interests above all others is no longer acceptable, particularly when those very governments themselves fail to adhere to the will of the international majority. A reform of our international system of governance is long overdue. It needs to be re-built so as to adhere to principles of justice and democracy. The United Nations remains the most legitimate and representative institution for assuring an effective system of international governance, yet the management of the global approaches to economic, monetary and trade policies effectively lie outside the UN within the IFIs and the WTO. This disconnection from the UN has led to structural imbalances in the global governance system that favours economic paradigms over human development, undermining political priorities defined in the UN framework. This needs to change so that the UN regains global political centrality based on new mechanisms ensuring effective democratic, transparent and accountable decision-making. The World Bank, IMF and WTO must be brought fully within the UN system, with their roles being redefined. Their governing structures must also be reformed to reflect changes in the global economy.

*Governments should commit themselves to a radical reform of the multilateral system of governance and the strengthening and democratization of the United Nations.*

This benchmark requires:

- *the re-establishment of a reformed Economic and Social Council of the United Nations in which membership is based on the principles of representation, accountability and common responsibility. The new Economic and Social Council should be the ultimate legal global authority for economic and social affairs, whose decisions are enforceable;*
- *a transformation of the membership of the Security Council so that the same principles of representation, accountability and common responsibility apply;*
- *a reform of the World Bank, IMF and other International Financial Institutions, together with the WTO to adhere to these principles, but with their ultimate accountability being to the reformed Economic and Social Council. Their roles should be redefined such that the World Bank is a development bank within the UN sys-*

*tem, the IMF's mandate focuses on safeguarding global financial stability, and the WTO restricted to regulating international trade;*

- *the establishment of regular public parliamentary reviews of the policies and actions of multilateral economic institutions, and the role and approach undertaken by the national government concerned, with participation from civil society;*
- *a strengthening of the legal institutions - International Court of Justice and International Criminal Court - responsible for implementing the international rule of law.*

### **Benchmark 11: Involving civil society**

The participation of stakeholders lies at the centre of successful development strategies. The concept of ownership that is promoted so vigorously in the Millennium Declaration, in PRSPs and in development assistance strategies requires the involvement of actors at all levels. National processes for participation should form the basis for engaging civil society in the identification, formulation and implementation of strategies that address the countries specific needs and national context. Governments need to facilitate the engagement of civil society that is open, transparent and inclusive. Making local government an effective democratic institution is vital for communities in order to safeguard their material and political interests, where key resources, such as water, can be safeguarded and used in a sustainable way. Equally, the participation of civil society also needs to be facilitated at regional and global levels.

The process of the Review of the Millennium Declaration should reflect the crucial role of an interaction of governments with civil society - and give ample space for civil society organizations to meaningfully engage with the review process. Ultimately, if the Millennium Declaration - and the MDGs - is to have real political significance, the ownership and support of civil society will be a crucial factor in its promotion. While civil society is ready to engage, governments negotiating the review of the Millennium Declaration must listen and take on board the concerns of its citizens. The UN should ensure space for this interaction to be meaningful and productive in a true spirit of common goals promoted in an open, transparent and accountable manner.

*Governments should ensure that engagement with civil society in the process of decision making - nationally, regionally and at the international level - is effectively facilitated.*

This benchmark requires:

- *a commitment to ensuring that national processes of engagement are transparent, open, accessible and consistent;*
- *the establishment and strengthening of participatory mechanisms for regional organizations;*
- *the establishment of mechanisms at the level of the United Nations and other international organizations that give transparency to the processes of debate and decisions, access to agendas, papers and reports, as well as to meetings themselves - including those of the General Assembly;*
- *to provide facilities to work and engage within the premises of the UN;*
- *the implementation of the proposal of an expanded trust fund to support civil society participation in UN processes, whether they take place at regional level or at the UN headquarters;*
- *a meaningful and effective engagement with civil society organizations in the preparations of the September Summit, and at the Summit itself which recognises the legitimacy and crucial role of civil society in assuring effective, acceptable strategies and policies, as well as their implementation.*

### **Conclusion: No more broken promises, no more excuses**

The time has come for bold and decisive action. Anything less is irresponsible. We recognise that at September Summit, and in the preceding preparations, our leaders will face difficult decisions. All too often short term political interests take precedent over longer term needs. Agreements made by the international community are full of compromise. Yet the threats and challenges to our common heritage are more urgent than ever before. The resources and technology exist. The world's heads of State and Government must show a common political will to succeed, not only in collectively committing to a bold and radical agenda, but in pursuing its implementation. The failure of a few to meet this challenge, pursuing instead their individual short term interests, could condemn us all. We cannot afford to fail. ■



# Water needs the protection of international law

For almost 30 years the United Nations has been proclaiming the universal right to sufficient clean drinking water. However, over 1.2 billion people still have no access to water. Various non-governmental organizations and movements from the North and the South are now calling for an international water convention under UN auspices in order to secure the binding right to water, to protect water as a public good and a life-sustaining resource, and to press governments into taking appropriate action.

Alliance Sud - Swiss Coalition of Development Organisations  
Rosmarie Bär

## Water, a challenge for the twenty-first century

Anyone concerned about the future of humanity must take water into account. "In this new century, water, its sanitation, and its equitable distribution pose great social challenges for our world. We need to safeguard the global supply of healthy water and to ensure that everyone has access to it", UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan wrote in 2001 when the World Water Day was launched. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) echoed the same theme by stating that the freshwater crisis was on the same scale as, and as potentially menacing as, climate change.

The following figures illustrate the dimensions of the crisis:

- 1.2 billion people lack access to clean drinking water.
- By 2025, three billion people will suffer from water shortages. More than 80% of these people will live in developing countries.
- 3 billion people have no sanitary facilities.
- 80% of all diseases in developing countries can be traced back to the use of polluted water.
- 6,000 children under the age of 5 die each day from the consequences of polluted water.
- 50% of the world's rivers and lakes are dangerously polluted.

What these figures mean is that a lack of water leads to increased hunger, poverty, misery and disease. People are forced to leave their villages and their homelands. Social unrest, conflicts and the risk of war over the use of water intensify. "When water ends, so does the world", an Uzbekistan proverb says.

## Policy failure

Any discussion of water must include a discussion of policy. Water issues are closely tied to land and farm policy, trade and economic policy, as well as environmental, social, health and equal opportunity policies. But above all else, water policy is a human rights and peace policy.

The water crisis is therefore not only a matter for planners and engineers. It cannot be remedied simply by means of technology, increased efficiency and expanded capacity, nor by economic prescrip-

tions such as liberalization and privatization. The 2003 UN world water development report entitled "Water for People - Water for Life" is clear about where the main cause of the global water crisis lies. It states that owing to political inaction, the water shortage in many regions of the world is assuming hitherto unsuspected proportions.<sup>1</sup>

Water calls for policy measures first and foremost. It needs what is today known as good governance. Good governance requires binding legal bases that rest on universally applicable human rights. Water needs justice and justice needs legal anchorage. Water needs the protection of international law. A water convention is an international legal instrument in line with the spirit of good governance, based on law and not on economic power.

The struggle to secure a sustainable water policy is tantamount to a struggle for social change, economic development and social justice. The call for a water convention is not a quixotic legal exercise on the part of a few specialists; like the call for binding law, it is based on questions of principle. Water is a common good, like the air we breathe, and not a commodity like paper tissues and refrigerators. The right and the power to turn the tap on and off should belong to the authorities of the people concerned, rather than to the invisible hand of the market. Who sets the price of water for a poor district in Manila? Is it the chief financial officer of the Suez multinational corporation with headquarters in Paris, or the water committee elected by the people of the district?

## Much talk, little action

The first major UN Water Conference held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 1977 is regarded as the starting point for a global water policy, since it is where the following statement was made: "All peoples [...] have the right to have access to drinking water in quantities and of a quality equal to their basic needs."

Since that time many UN documents have reiterated the need to secure access to clean drinking water. The action plans of the major UN conferences of the 1990s also describe water as a key factor in overcoming hunger and poverty, and the lack of water as one of the greatest obstacles to development.

Goal 7 of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) states that the number of people without access to safe drinking water should be

halved by 2015. To this, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10) held in September 2002 in Johannesburg added that the number of people without sanitary facilities was also to be halved by 2015. Additionally, World Water Day 2005 (March 22) marked the start of a new UN "Water for Life" Decade. A UN General Assembly resolution has designated it a Decade for Action, which is the only way to achieve the Millennium and Johannesburg goals with respect to drinking water and sanitary facilities.

## Human rights still a long way off

Participating countries have hardly kept the promises they made at UN conferences over the past 30 years. Instead, policymakers have lost no time in resorting to binding trade agreements to pave the way for economic globalization, thus opening the door to liberalization and privatization.

UN human rights bodies are aware of the problem. In November 2002 the Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights published General Comment No. 15: "The right to water",<sup>2</sup> which constituted a landmark action by the Committee and should become the cornerstone of a future water convention. In the introduction it states that: "The Committee has been confronted continually with the widespread denial of the right to water in developing as well as developed countries."

The Committee affirms that the right to water is a prerequisite for realizing all other human rights and the right for a life of dignity. It approves the right to water as an independent human right: "The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses."<sup>3</sup>

The Committee further states that "water should be treated as a social and cultural good, and not primarily as an economic good." It disfavours the way in which water is being transformed into a tradable good through its commercialization and commodification.

## Public good or economic good?

Many non-UN conferences and forums have also addressed the topic of water over the past two decades. Meanwhile, numerous entities have been

<sup>1</sup> [www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/index.shtml](http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/index.shtml)

<sup>2</sup> Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. General Comment No 15 (2002). "The right to water (arts. 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)". Geneva, November 2002.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*





created to cash in on the business of water. In the absence of a legally binding convention or treaty, the decision-making power over water has moved increasingly away from the international community towards powerful global players such as the World Water Council, the World Bank and regional development banks, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and water multinationals.

This has given rise to highly contradictory policies whereby the “right to water” approved by the community of States in UN resolutions was downgraded by the very same people at world water forums to a “need for water”. The “public good” became an “economic good”, the provision of which should best be left to private suppliers.

The paradigm shift from water being a public good to being an economic good is reflected in the pressure exerted by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund on developing countries to deregulate and privatize their water systems. This has allowed for the rapid privatization of the world’s water services, driving up prices and cutting millions of people off from their water supplies.

But water is also on the table in the ongoing General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) negotiations in the WTO, where the European Union’s demand to 65 developing countries is to open up their water supply systems to foreign service providers. The EU has succumbed to pressure from the (mostly French and German) multinational water giants, who are keen to expand the reach of their business even further toward developing and transition countries, in what is ultimately a new form of colonization.

### Lack of funds as a way to pressure for privatization

Lack of funds, it is argued, is the reason why billions of people continue to live in degrading conditions and without access to water. Advocates of privatized water supply systems argue that governments by themselves are unable to come up with the requisite funding and that private sector funds are therefore needed.

There are countless examples, such as Buenos Aires (Argentina), Manila (Philippines), and El Alto (Bolivia) that make it clear that privatization of water supply systems does not solve the funding problem. Water prices rose exorbitantly in a short period of time and the poor were cut off from supplies: the outcome was social unrest.

Multinational corporations are interested only in existing water supply systems in megacities, where clients have the financial means and profit prospects

are good. Yet the vast majority of people without clean drinking water live either in rural areas or urban slums. The German NGO Bread for the World has produced a study on financial flows in the water industry showing that neither direct private sector investments, World Bank funds nor official development funds are reaching the countryside or the slums: “Least aid where people have least clean water.”<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, private investments in water infrastructure have been in decline since 1997. Investments from the private sector, World Bank and official development agencies go mostly to a few major projects in a handful of countries. In sub-Saharan Africa where the needs are greatest, there are no flows either of funds or water. The study also concludes: “The role of [the] private sector [in] contributing to the Millennium Development Goals has been overestimated while the problems have been underestimated. (...) Even in the projects, where the private sector is involved, most of the project funds come from development banks and ODA.”

### Friends for an international water convention

An international water convention would build up a strong counter-strategy to the privatization trend. The main objective of a water convention is to anchor and protect the human right to water, in order to guarantee water for all. It is important to know that human rights are formulated in terms of the rights of individuals, not in terms of the rights and obligations of states vis-à-vis other states as is usual under the provisions of international law. A convention could merge the three main streams, namely social development, environmental ecosystem, and human rights into one mighty river. No long-term and sustainable approach to advancing the right to water can be divorced from the broader issue of the origin of freshwater. Nor can it be separated from the important role of healthy ecosystems in ensuring an adequate quality and quantity of freshwater for basic human needs, for social and economic development and for poverty alleviation.

Only a convention can ensure that water remains a public good, and that it does not become a simple commodity or an economic resource managed by international water companies. Such a convention can also help protect local and traditional cultural water rights, in particular those of indigenous peoples.

A number of development, environmental, human rights and consumer organizations from industrial and developing countries founded the network “Friends for the Right to Water” in 2004. Their common goal is the creation of an international convention on freshwater under the auspices of the United Nations. Their work is supported by experts in various legal specializations from the North and the South, and revolves around dialogue with the people affected. A water convention cannot become an end in itself, but rather, should effectively help empower those concerned, improve their quality of life, provide guidelines for the fair distribution of this scarce and vital resource and give it long-term protection. In workshops and discussion forums during the World Social Forum in January 2005 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the network was able to acquaint a wider public with its work and expand its base. Since the Second Alternative World Water Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, in March 2005, other prominent NGOs have joined the network, notably some which have successfully resisted privatization in their countries, such as Uruguay, Bolivia and Ghana.

Working out and implementing a sound water convention will be an arduous task. The history of other conventions demonstrates this all too well. Implementation in individual countries is yet another challenge since participating states often only reluctantly recall the commitments they have made after ratifying agreements. All of these obstacles do not alter the fact that a water convention provides the indispensable legal groundwork and a political tool for forging a sustainable water policy. Having a water convention will not provide a solution to all our problems but it will surely help bring about a life of dignity for all on earth and protect the very basis of our own survival. ■

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See also: [Why we need an international water convention: www.swisscoalition.ch/english/files/T\\_WrWn.pdf](http://www.swisscoalition.ch/english/files/T_WrWn.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Brugger, Fritz. “Some Water for All or more Water for Some?”. Bread for the World, 2004.

# The use of international financial markets to fulfil the MDGs: part of the problem or possible solution?

Fondazione Culturale di Banca Etica

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## Introduction

Despite the continued growth of the world economy in the last decades, the distance between the rich and the poor has dramatically increased, and this trend shows no sign of decreasing.

In today's global economy the international financial world has enormous responsibilities with regards to this situation.

To contrast the ever-growing distance between the rich and the poor the United Nations launched the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 with the aim of eradicating poverty and other development objectives to be met by 2015.

One of the main challenges facing countries is how to raise the funds required to meet these goals. The World Bank (WB) has estimated the figure at between USD 40 and 70 billion per year until 2015. Several proposals have been put forward to raise funds for fulfilling the MDGs.

This article aims to contribute to the debate and analysis of the responsibilities of the financial world, proposing possible improvements and changes.

In the first place, the current situation will be described, concentrating on the role and responsibilities of the international development institutions and the financial markets. An analysis of some of the instruments proposed to raise the needed funds will be followed by major criticisms of these instruments.

Among the proposed instruments, the UK's International Finance Facility (IFF), the Tobin Tax, the Carbon Tax, and other possible global taxes are examined.

Secondly, another aspect to consider is the rapidly growing interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The debate around the responsibility of financial markets and the need for radical changes has encouraged many international organizations and financial institutions to develop ethical guidelines and codes of conduct in order to improve their social and environmental attitudes. Although these initiatives tend to reduce the negative impact of private firms, there is an urgent need to study and draw attention to the various, and radically different, CSR practices.

The last part of this article will address ethical finance and microcredit as additional instruments in the fight against poverty. These are completely different approaches to finance and credit which aim to reduce negative impacts and produce positive ones instead. They provide a concrete example for today's financial community.

## International institutions, development and external debt

The first element to consider when discussing the fight against poverty is debt. Thanks to international advocacy and grassroots campaigns, debt has become one of the main topics on the international agenda. The developing countries' debt is estimated as being about USD 2.5 trillion. According to UN statistics, in the last years there has been a net flow of money from the South to the North. In other words, despite the Official Development Assistance (ODA), despite the money sent home by Southern migrant workers, and despite other forms of aid, the burden of repayment and interest rates creates a net financial flow from poorer countries to richer ones.

Moreover, while the world's richest countries committed themselves to providing 0.7% of their Gross National Income (GNI) to development and cooperation aid, according to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the global amount of ODA has fallen from USD 68 billion to USD 65 billion from 1992 to 2002, which corresponds to a 0.11% reduction (from 0.34% to 0.23%).

In the last few years several criticisms have been directed towards initiatives aimed at reducing or eliminating poor countries' debt which fell short of reaching their goals. We recall the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, a programme conducted by the WB and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Recently the IMF acknowledged that the proposal put forward by civil society organizations for it to sell part of its gold reserves in order to cancel debts could be feasible and would not unduly affect the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) or the gold market itself. Nevertheless such a possibility appears to be far from being seriously considered or executed.

The two IFIs created at the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference at Bretton Woods in 1944 are accused of being responsible, at least partially, for the present economic and financial differences between states and for many debt problems themselves. Many of the projects funded by the WB did not help development the recipient countries, but rather brought about heavy negative social and environmental impacts, including an increase in debt and corruption.

Similar negative consequences also took place when projects were fostered by export credit agencies. These are publicly controlled insurance companies that support and sponsor firms that carry out investments in developing countries. Agencies such as these often lack guidelines to evaluate the social and environmental impact of their activities,

and only result in an increase in useless projects in poorer countries.

Also the structural adjustment programmes promoted by IFIs in the last 30 years also failed in their fight against poverty. In many cases they caused both direct and indirect negative effects, worsening the poverty situation even further.

These programmes always included macro-economic policies, such as cuts in state expenses or inflation targets as well as structural reforms, such as the liberalization of markets and privatization of publicly owned firms.

It must also be said that the World Trade Organization (WTO), established about ten years ago, has become one of the most powerful international organizations becoming ever more the governing body in world economy.

## Role and dimension of the financial markets

The WTO, by means of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), provided for the liberalization of financial assistance. This threatens the ability of developing countries to maintain control over domains of fundamental importance for their development, such as banking, insurance and finance. Financial markets are already almost completely liberalized in today's global financial village.

In the last 30 years financial markets have witnessed a growth far more important than the real economy. Independent studies indicate that the global value of financial transactions reached USD 220 trillion in 1992, whereas the same years' value of trade in goods and services is estimated at USD 4.3 trillion - merely 2% of financial activity. The growth of the financial market and of its liberalization is believed to be one of the major causes of today's inequalities and of the latest crisis, including the crises that hit Southeast Asia in 1997 and Argentina in 2001.

The following impacts are among the most dramatic consequences of the growth in the financial market:

- the progressive shift of resources and power from productive activities such as agriculture, industry and services, to financial activities
- the focus of companies on their daily quotation value rather than on long-term strategies that abide to international commitments on sustainable development
- financial and monetary speculations responsible for the most recent international financial crises
- the fixing of the prices of raw materials from agricultural and extractive production by a few western markets stock exchanges which

threatens the possibility for developing countries to obtain fair and adequate prices for their goods for export and in turn gather sufficient resources to fight poverty domestically

- investment of power in the financial sector to heavily influence political decisions against the will and the interests of the citizens.

### Corporate social responsibility

The debate around ethical finance, socially responsible investments, and in particular corporate social responsibility has been growing. CSR is recognized as an important tool since it considers not only the economic consequences of business transactions but also non-economic environmental and social impacts.

At the same time, neoliberals who are also supported by major IFIs believe that the role of the state must be downsized and free market expansion become the solution for growth and development. In this way, virtuous firms are rewarded by the market and consumers while regulations and controls are progressively eliminated.

Unfortunately the European Commission appears to lean towards this neoliberal approach. In its green paper on "Promoting a European framework for Corporate Social Responsibility" CSR is defined as "essentially a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment". This exclusively voluntary approach to CSR does not address the lack of information available to the general public and consumers about CSR. Moreover it may increase greenwashing<sup>1</sup> initiatives whereby firms adopt non-binding codes of conduct or CSR statements without substantially changing their policies and behaviour. Considering how profit-oriented private firms are, corporations may decide to adopt a code of conduct only if it guarantees further earnings. Consequently, important aspects of development such as social integration, the environment and workers' rights may be reduced to a mere economic assessment.

Furthermore CSR could have a boomerang effect and become the first step towards the loss of the rights which won recognition over the last decades, such as labour rights, social rights, and environmental rights. The danger is deregulation and vesting the private sector with their voluntary enforcement. Also, despite some CSR statements including significant commitments, CSR initiatives are generally limited in the financial sector. It is therefore impossible to consider that CSR could provide a minimal level playing field that respects rights enshrined in fundamental human rights conventions and commitments made by the international community.

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: greenwash (a portmanteau of *green* and *whitewash*) is a term that environmentalists and other critics give to the activity of giving a positive public image to putatively environmentally unsound practices. The term arose in the aftermath of the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. Corporate lobby groups saw the Earth Summit as a prominent platform from which to redefine their role and to shape the emerging debate on environment and sustainable development.

### The International Financial Facility

In 2003, the Government of the United Kingdom proposed the creation of the IFF with the intention of collecting funds through the sale of bonds as a means of achieving the MDGs over the next ten years. This financial instrument, although not yet completely defined, could be issued by the OECD for the rich countries to subscribe to and then be offered to the public at large. The bonds would have a 10-15 year life-span. The money collected would then be used to fight poverty. However bonds are usually considered to be one of the main causes of the world's economic injustices.

It is still unclear whether the IFF would raise the entire sum necessary to fulfil the MDGs. A first evaluation suggests that the IFF could result in a net loss of aid. Moreover it is not possible to foresee what might occur when, once the 2015 deadline is reached, all the money would have to be returned. This would naturally cause a dramatic decrease in ODA contributions. During the bond's life-span the subscribing countries could decide to include such amounts in their official ODA contribution, thus reducing the net amount donated. Or they may find other ways of shuffling numbers and fail to achieve the 0.7% GNI undertaking.

The most serious criticism of the IFF initiative is probably linked to the fact that the burden of repayment is transferred to future generations. Some governments are arguing that the current economic crisis hampers them from increasing ODA, and therefore support the IFF as a way to guarantee a certain level of ODA.

This may be the case for Italy, which according to OECD statistics is the last country in the list of donors in terms of percentage of ODA: in 2003 it contributed 0.17% while in 2004 it was down to 0.15%. The Italian Government, nevertheless, spent more than EUR 1 billion (USD 1.27 billion) in foreign military missions, notably to Iraq, and ordered 121 Eurofighter 2000 aircrafts, at a cost of more than EUR 14.2 billion (about USD 18 billion). These expenditures, coincidentally, should terminate in 2015 which is the same year set for meeting the MDGs.

At present it is not clear which authority should be vested with the power of managing the money from the IFF. One possibility is that the sums be managed, in whole or in part, directly by the WB. When the Treasury of the United Kingdom presented the IFF, it explained that recipient countries of grants or particularly advantageous loans (i.e. those with long expiry dates, no obligation to interest rates, etc.) should be subject to tight conditions such as good governance, anti-corruption commitments, transparency obligations, and market liberalization.

IFIs and their supporters have imposed conditions on developing countries for the last 30 years in the form of structural adjustment programmes. Therefore specific conditions, designed to open the countries' markets and implement free trade principles seem unacceptable considering the damage already caused by free trade policies in the same countries.

Considering the above, if the IFF does not take into account the overall role of the IFIs, this could lead to a further increase in their power, and also in

the poorer countries status of dependency from the WTO, the WB, the IMF and from the financial markets themselves in general.

### Global taxes

In order to achieve the MDGs, and so as to have a positive impact in the fight against poverty, what is needed is a radical change in international institutions and a proper solution to the debt crisis.

During the last few years, innovative proposals have been put forward to finance development, such as global taxes. The tax which probably received the most attention is the Tobin Tax. This is a tax on global currency speculations, named after the Nobel Economics Prize winner who first proposed the mechanism.

According to recent statistics, the currency exchange market has reached a value of USD 1.5 trillion per day. This figure must be compared to the total amount of international trade exchanges in goods and services, which is estimated at USD 4.3 trillion per year. This means that the amount of money dealt in trade during one year is equivalent to the amount dealt on the foreign exchange market in three days.

Therefore it is suggested that a small tax be charged on each foreign currency transaction regardless of the transaction's content and amount. This would create a disadvantage exclusively for those who, for speculative purposes, carry out many transactions per day, and not for those firms which import and/or export large amount of goods on a less frequent basis. Such a tax would vest governments with an instrument to control financial markets. The revenue could be used to finance development programmes in the fight against poverty without many of the inconveniences discussed above with regards to the IFF proposal. A further advantage is that the sums raised with this type of tax cannot easily be used by governments for other purposes, thereby decreasing their ODA contribution. The Landau report commissioned by President Chirac of France, together with the Spanish, Brazilian and Chilean Governments, outlines the possibility of using global taxes to finance the MDGs.

Among other global taxes, we will consider those whose aim is pollution reduction. For instance some European governments, notably the French and the German, started discussing the possibility of a tax on airplane tickets in order to use at least part of the revenue to finance MDGs. The Carbon Tax on carbon dioxide emissions, which are mainly responsible for global warming and climate change, also sparked an important debate. This tax would be based on the "polluter pays" principle. Unfortunately many initiatives regarding the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change relating to carbon emissions trading, allow a company to buy and sell significant amounts of carbon dioxide emissions if it does not respect the parameters fixed by the protocol. Consequently, the basic polluter pays principle becomes the he-who-pays-may-pollute principle. This is an example of an environmental issue addressed

using exclusively economic and financial considerations, increasing the power and the influence of the financial markets over environmental issues.

As in the case of CSR, the voluntary approach may push private corporations to adopt codes of conduct which only consider revenues and expenditures.

### Alternative approaches to finance

The discussion on the fight against poverty using instruments such as CSR, global taxes, among others, uses the general term of "ethical finance" when referring to these economic tools.

However ethical finance implies a clear commitment to transparency and democracy, where money is not an end but a means to promote social rights, protect the environment and achieve sustainable development. Consequently, ethical banks do not fund all their activities on the principle of maximizing profit, but they consider credit a fundamental instrument to eradicate poverty. Access to credit is seen as a right in itself, or better said, as a common good, in opposition to the liberalization of trade and human rights' commodification. These experiences are growing both in the South and in the North, and are living proof that a radical change in today's economy and financial sector is not only desirable but feasible.

In the context of ethical finance, a major role is played by microcredit, which consists in very small loans used for productive purposes, such as for starting a small business. The importance of this practice in eradicating poverty has recently been recognized by the UN, which declared 2005 the International Year of Microcredit. In developing countries millions of men and women, who are the main recipients of these loans, are reasonably improving their incomes and overall life standards thanks to microcredit initiatives. Several small ethical banks in the South have been established, where the share capital property, the managerial resources and the work force are local. This is a concrete example of a useful procedure to fight poverty that promotes self-development rather than providing charity.

One of the main problems of these initiatives is the need to reach a certain critical dimension, or breakeven point, which allows small ethical banks in the South to be self-sufficient. In many cases, organizations from the North or UN agencies have helped these experiences in the start-up phase, although a lot remains to be done. One of the major criticisms of global taxes, and of a tax on currency transactions, is that if these measures are effective the sums raised would rapidly decrease. Thus the tax would not suit the needs of financing the fight against poverty on the long term. Even if this criticism turned out to be true, the revenues from a currency transaction tax could be very effective in assisting in the incorporation and

start-up of ethical banks, microcredit programmes, or similar initiatives in the South, all of which require initial support and financial resources before becoming self-sufficient.

This could start a sustainable self-development process in poorer countries, managed directly by and for the benefit of the citizens in those countries. It would also be an effective way to combine the fight against pollution or speculative transactions, with the fight against poverty. Additionally it could help reverse the unacceptable financial flow which, along with the complicity of the IFIs, the external debt and the financial markets, is still draining resources from the poorer countries for the exclusive benefit of the richest ones.

### Conclusions

The international community is presently questioning how to fulfil the MDGs, since in the first five years since they were launched very little progress seems to have been made. This comes despite further commitments taken at the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in March 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico. The debate today seems focused on putting a helpful but insufficient patch on the problem. The enormous imbalances and injustices that characterize the present situation do not seem to have been addressed.

We cannot ignore the responsibilities of the international institutions, such as the WB, the regional development banks, the IMF or the WTO, or those of the export credit agencies, private banks and other financial firms. A proper and definitive solution to the burden of the developing countries debt must also be found, and the rush for complete liberalization and privatization of trade, economy and finance must be halted.

A new global approach to human and sustainable development must be conceived. Despite the continued growth in global wealth, millions of people continue to live in extreme poverty. The ecological footprint methodology has widely demonstrated that the current approach to measuring development that only considers economic growth, calculated in GNI increases, is inconsistent, false, incomplete and unsustainable.

The change must pursue several different initiatives. A radical reform of international economic governance is needed since at present the economic, financial and trading rules control and dictate the political decisions of countries and governments. This approach must be completely turned on its head in order to bring human and social rights and environmental concerns to the heart of all international decision-making processes. The WB and the IMF must stop imposing conditions on the poorer countries, while the WTO must be subject to a democratic and transparent external control that evalu-

ates the social and environmental impacts of trade issues. The decision-making process must be democratic, fair and transparent, where all interested parties are granted a role to play. It is unacceptable that today the Paris Club<sup>2</sup> or the IFIs themselves are the main creditors as well as the self-appointed arbitrators to finding a solution to the debt crisis.

At the same time, innovative instruments such as the global taxes should be implemented. These taxes could both limit heavy negative impacts on the poor countries and gather the resources needed to meet the MDGs, while more broadly collaborating in the fight against poverty and hunger.

In the same way, some concrete initiatives already exist and the duty of the international community is to support them. The fair trade movement is demonstrating - together with other ethical finance initiatives - that a different approach to trade is possible and that humans, their social relations and environment, can be at the heart of economic decision making processes. It is therefore important to clarify the concept of CSR, in order to eradicate greenwashing initiatives. The latter do not provide a proper solution and only risk ruining and obscuring the most interesting and useful initiatives.

For corporate accountability reasons a change in the CSR approach is needed. For instance, the correct use of water resources or energy-saving initiatives should not be determined by a statement of revenues and expenditures, or simply left to voluntary initiatives. Even more so such initiatives should not be simply referred to as "corporate responsibility" or "ethical finance". All stakeholders should have the right to participate and demand transparency of all activities. The financial community needs to change and all contributions are crucial to help ensure that over the next years financial activities do not cause further harm but instead help resolve environmental and social problems. ■

<sup>2</sup> The Paris Club is an informal group of financial officials from 19 of the world's richest countries, which provides financial services such as debt restructuring, debt relief, and debt cancellation to indebted countries and their creditors. Debtors are often recommended by the IMF.



# After the tsunami: rebuilding for tourists

Disguised as a reconstruction plan, a second “tsunami” has struck the coasts of Sri Lanka. Tourist operators and private sector developers are taking advantage of the exclusion of local communities in the formulation of recovery plans and the availability of government and international funds for reconstruction. They have drawn up plans that push local people away from the coast to make room for luxury hotels and float plane docks, focussing the Government’s attention on tourism rather than the needs of local people.

## Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform

Sarath Fernando

After the tsunami struck Sri Lanka on 26 December 2004, the Government moved quickly to announce it was launching not only a rehabilitation plan in the affected areas, but a plan to rebuild the entire nation. It has since gathered over USD 3 billion in commitments from international financial institutions and foreign governments to carry out this task. In the meantime, non-governmental agencies have been carrying out almost all of the clean-up work in the destroyed areas, as well as the construction of temporary shelters and the regeneration of livelihoods.

Within days of the disaster, the Government announced that people should not rebuild their homes on the coast. A few weeks later an exclusion zone of 100 to 200 metres was announced. Shortly thereafter, exceptions were announced for tourism operators. Throughout the recovery process, the Government has continued to talk about the need to promote tourism. For example, the Sri Lanka Tourist Board says, “In a cruel twist of fate, nature has presented Sri Lanka with a unique opportunity, and out of this great tragedy will come a world class tourism destination.”<sup>1</sup>

## The master plans

Plans are now being developed to transform 15 coastal towns around the island into magnificent tourist resorts as part of the post-tsunami reconstruction process. Wadduwa, Beruwala, Bentota, Hikkaduwa, Galle, Unawatuna, Koggala, Matara, Hambantota, Tangalla, Yala, Arugam Bay, Passikuddah, Nilaweli and Kalpitiya have been singled out for redevelopment according to different themes.

The first plan to emerge was for the redevelopment of Arugam Bay, a small town nestled on the edge of a 300 hectare lagoon on Sri Lanka’s east coast. It just happens to be one of the best surfing spots in the world, complete with beautiful beaches. Arugam Bay will serve as the model for all the other areas to be rebuilt.

## Transforming the local environment and economy

The *Arugam Bay Resource Development Plan: Reconstruction Towards Prosperity* announced in April 2005 covers a stretch of land measuring 17 by 5 kilometres between Komari and Panama, and includes the town of Pottuvil.

The Plan envisages the total reorientation of the area. It will transform what were once fishing and agricultural communities, which offered some services in the way of seasonal guesthouses, into an extensively developed area complete with hotels for anyone from a “low cost budget windsurfer to a 5-star tourist”.<sup>2</sup> The transformation also includes a commercial “shoppers’ paradise”,<sup>3</sup> a yachting marina, a float plane pier and a helipad. According to the Plan the amount of land used for tourism will increase exponentially due to redevelopment from the mere 9 hectares (out of 25,000) currently being used.

Consultants contracted to carry out the Plan admit that they, “have drawn heavily upon past plans (esp. the Tourism Master Plan) ... which were widely recognized as being grandiose and inappropriate.”<sup>4</sup> The disconnection between the planned development and the interests of local people is illustrated in the following quote, “the location of the helicopter pad near the new pedestrian road will bring a new vibrant life into Arugam Bay town centre”.<sup>5</sup>

## Fishermen pushed away to make way for tourists

In order to carry out the Plan, the Sri Lanka Tourist Board is willing to acquire not only all the land within the buffer zone - 200 metres from the high tide line as declared by the Taskforce for Rebuilding the Nation (TAFREN)<sup>6</sup> - but also a one kilometre wide stretch running along 3 kilometres of the coast beyond the buffer zone, and a belt of over 600 metres around the edge of the lagoon. The area of sea next to the lagoon entrance for the yachting marina and a strip across the middle of the lagoon for the float plane landing pier must also be considered.

Notes taken at a community meeting organized by the Sewalanka Foundation and attended by community members and the Sri Lanka Tourist Board Chairman<sup>7</sup> reveal that “the land belongs to the Government. Maybe your forefathers lived in that area, but the 860 acres belong to the Government. It will be developed as a tourist zone. We will put up buildings and develop the area and we will ask you to come and work there... After I became Chairman I captured 5,000 acres of land for the Tourist Board. My target is 15,000 acres”.

The Plan explains that new housing for the estimated 5,000 displaced families<sup>8</sup> will be located at five separate inland locations. In all cases housing will be situated well over one kilometre from both the sea and the lagoon behind areas zoned for tourism and with obstructed access to the water bodies due to the new infrastructure. The Plan proposes allocating housing using a lottery system. The same set of notes mentioned above reports that “these houses will be given to people who support our program”. Further, “if you built any illegal structures in Arugam Bay, the army and the police will have to come and remove them”.

The Plan also says that the over 70 estimated existing guesthouses and numerous other small enterprises requiring relocation, will be given a 30 year leasing option within the zones if they were already registered businesses, while unregistered businesses will have no such rights. These unregistered businesses will receive no compensation.

## What else could be done with USD 80 million?

The Government has decided to stop the weekly food grant of 200 rupees in cash and 175 rupees in rations for the 881,000 people affected by the disaster. With USD 80 million this relief could be extended for another six months.

The Government has just started to build 1,659 permanent houses to replace the 41,393 that were completely destroyed. USD 80 million would allow 32,000 families to build new homes.

1 Sri Lanka Tourist Board, [www.srilankatourism.org/bb\\_slrebuilds.htm](http://www.srilankatourism.org/bb_slrebuilds.htm)

2 Arugam Bay Resource Development Plan (ABRDP).

3 *Ibid.*

4 Arcadis. “Environmental Assessment for Post-Tsunami Rehabilitation: Assisting the Planning Process at Arugam Bay”, March 2005, [www.humanitarianinfo.org/srilanka/infocentre/assessments/others/doc/Arcadis.pdf](http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/srilanka/infocentre/assessments/others/doc/Arcadis.pdf)

5 ABRDP, *op cit.*

6 Taskforce for Rebuilding the Nation, [www.tafren.gov.lk](http://www.tafren.gov.lk)

7 Notes from Arugam Bay Meeting in the Committee Room of the Sri Lanka Tourist Board, 17 May 2005.

8 Lancaster, John. “After Tsunami, Sri Lankans Fear Paving of Paradise.” *Washington Post*. 5 June 2005. [www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2005/06/04/AR2005060401136\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpdyn/content/article/2005/06/04/AR2005060401136_pf.html)

## USD 80 million of tsunami funds to facilitate the process

The initial investment in the planned development is estimated at USD 80 million. Of that, USD 50 million is earmarked for a bridge over Arugam Lagoon, which according to the document “will stand as an inspirational symbol that shows progress towards the achievement of prosperity for Arugam Bay” as “the gateway to a tourist paradise”.

Another USD 5 million is allocated to build a new road around Arugam Lagoon. A further USD 20 million is proposed for the construction of the new inland townships of 2,500 houses.

The remaining USD 5 million is designated to water supply schemes and sanitation systems in the new townships and the tourist zone. The cost of the other proposed infrastructure and amenities, such as the float plane landing pier and helipad, has not yet been included in the overall plan, although it is stated in the document that these will use Government or non-governmental organizations funds.

## Putting the wrong people in charge of planning

The Plan was apparently initiated independently by the Rebuild Sri Lanka Trust,<sup>9</sup> which was set up in the aftermath of the tsunami by four individuals who started working in the Arugam Bay area as a “non-political private sector initiative”. The Trustees are Ajith De Costa, Michel Sproule, Hanif Yusoof, and D Kumara. Mr De Costa is Managing Director of a garment manufacturing company called Maxim Ltd. He was previously appointed Chairman of the Central Environmental Authority and chairman of the taskforce that produced the Colombo Megapolis 2030 Master Plan. Mr Sproule is his stepson and a senior partner in a Colombo law firm which specializes in foreign investment, infrastructure development advisory services and real estate. Mr Yusoof is the Managing Director of a transport services company called Expolanka Freight Ltd. Mrs Kumara is a retired doctor.

### Business interests at the top

The plan falls under the authority of the Task Force to Rebuild the Nation (TAFREN), an extra-governmental body functioning under the authority of the President.

TAFREN is led by 10 business leaders, of which at least 5 own or manage companies that operate beach hotels.

9 Rebuild Sri Lanka Trust, [www.rebuildsrilanka.org](http://www.rebuildsrilanka.org)

The Rebuild Sri Lanka Trust had within a month of the tsunami contracted a series of consultants to work on the plan. The group included Arcadis, an engineering consultancy company from the Netherlands, ECOPLAN-Z Limited from New Zealand, and Environment & Management Lanka (EML) Consultants from Sri Lanka. All are involved in or directly linked to work on large Asian Development Bank or World Bank infrastructure projects. According to their website, the local company - EML Consultants - normally works facilitating investment from the United States in water and environmental services, carbon trading, plantation agriculture and floriculture.

The Plan was finalized on 25 April 2005 and states that the President had approved the project, and was “keen to see the action projects proposed in the report [were] implemented without delay”<sup>10</sup>. In fact, by 8 April 2005 the United States Agency for International Development had already published a presolicitation notice<sup>11</sup> for a contract to construct the bridge, road, water supply and wastewater systems in Arugam Bay. They also hosted a pre-bid conference for potential contractors in Colombo on 10 May 2005.

The residents of Arugam Bay first heard of the plan at a meeting organized by the Sri Lanka Tourist Board and Sewalanka Foundation in Colombo on 17 May 2005.

An assessment of the Plan carried out by Arcadis said that “the most important shortcoming is that it has largely been produced in isolation in Colombo, with little or no stakeholder involvement. It is evident that the team spent only two days in Pottuvil-Arugam Bay, and apart from the Government Agent officer in Ampara and the District Secretary in Pottuvil, they met only with international non-governmental organization staff.”<sup>12</sup>

## The second “tsunami”

It is becoming clearer by the day that the direction taken in the post-tsunami reconstruction is completely opposed to the interests of the survivors of the disaster. These people are being driven from their land and away from their livelihoods in the name of a grand plan to modernize the country.

This process started long before the tsunami, but it is now being pushed along with the weight of the USD 3 billion gathered by the Government in the name of the tsunami victims. If all 15 tourist townships require an investment of USD 80 million to rebuild, the cost will be USD 1.2 billion, or a whopping

40% of the total amount raised. If the 15 tourist township plans follow the model of Arugam Bay, the number of families pushed out of the way of hotels, yachting marinas, helipads and float plane landing strips could easily reach over 75,000, a smaller, yet equally devastating “tsunami” for these people.

## Conclusion

When the wrong people are placed in charge of planning, the wrong plans result and the majority of the people end up left out. Like the tens of thousands of people that are sweltering in their tents and tin huts, waiting to find out where they will be allowed to rebuild their lives and what resources they might be permitted to use. Like the hundreds of thousands of people who have been living in this uncertainty for up to 20 years. Like the millions who have been told to wait until 2015 to perhaps feel half as poor or half as hungry.

The millions of people who have contributed, so promptly and generously, to the post-tsunami rebuilding funds should demand that the people they wanted to reach out to and help get what they need to rebuild their lives. All they want is access to the resources that have been theirs for generations - the land, the water, the beaches, the sea - and the space to make their own plans. ■

10 ABRDP, *op cit*.

11 Presolicitation Notice for Upcoming Issuance of Request for Proposal, No SL688-05, 8 April 2005.

12 Environmental Assessment for Post-Tsunami Rehabilitation. “Assisting the Planning Process at Arugam Bay”, 16 March 2005.

# MDGs in the Arab region: a tool and a challenge

The Arab countries face their own set of challenges in the Millennium Development Goals campaign. National MDG Reports highlight the lack of poverty data in many countries in the region while deep-rooted prejudices towards women will require drastic changes in order to achieve gender equity. Civil society organizations must play an active role in the MDG campaign, in particular regarding policy formulation and strategic planning.

## Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)

Ziad Abdel Samad / Kinda Mohamadieh

### Introduction

All Arab countries signed the Millennium Declaration and committed themselves to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. They also participated in the preparation of national MDG reports (MDGRs), publishing 18 reports by May 2005.

The Arab region faces many specific challenges regarding the achievement of the MDGs. Often development policies are not a priority for Arab states since they are overshadowed by the complex political dynamics of the region. Arab countries have been involved with national liberation agendas and regional anti-neocolonial policies for a long time, while marginalizing the need for national development agendas based on local needs and priorities. Arab leaders and decision-makers have not considered that strengthening democratic processes and sustainable development policies at a local level might enhance and support sovereignty at regional and international levels. The Arab region has great resources which are meant to fuel development. However regional and national conflicts have rendered these resources useless. In this context, and as the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the occupation of Iraq continues, most Arab states are stagnating or deteriorating, with a controlled and weak civil society, low human development, and declining socioeconomic trends.

Ten years after the 1995 World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Arab region are still demanding what they were after at the close of the Summit. In a declaration issued in Copenhagen by Arab CSOs participating in the Summit, these organizations stressed that decision-making processes and declarations made during the Summit lacked the participation of both civil society and official country representatives. They refused to consider that the participation of CSOs in the Summit meant that they agreed and supported its results. They also believed that the Summit opposed their set objectives and did not address the real reasons and responsibilities behind poverty, marginalization, and other social ills,<sup>1</sup> for which reasons their declaration called for:<sup>2</sup>

- consideration of national social problems within a global context
- examination of the causes of development problems such as the impact of structural adjustment policies, financial policies, and the global trading system
- recognition of debt cancellation as a right of developing countries
- a redefinition of the concept of free trade and open markets
- consideration of employment needs and workers' freedom of movement
- recognition of environmental problems as a North-South issue, since developing countries are becoming a dump for developed countries' waste
- prioritization of democracy, women's rights, and culture as major components in the development process
- urgent reform of the United Nations and its agencies.

This report looks at examples of activities achieved to date in the MDG campaign in the Arab region, including the MDGRs. It concentrates on poverty and gender indicator reporting, in light of the Copenhagen Summit and the Beijing Conference in 1995, and discusses how MDG 8 is addressed in the Arab MDGRs. In addition, the report considers the roles of various actors, including government, multilateral organizations, CSOs, and UN agencies.

### MDG action to date

In general, mobilization for the MDG campaign in the Arab region started late. Until 2004, all MDG efforts had focused on the MDGRs. This left only one year to undertake other activities before progress was evaluated at the United Nations General Assembly Special Summit on the Millennium Development Goals in September 2005. The following factors were identified as essential for a successful MDG process:

- localizing the indicators and integrating targets within national policies
- establishing and enhancing networking and coordination between governmental institutions, UN agencies, and CSOs
- monitoring progress and enhancing the capacity for data collection and processing.

In this context different activities and projects have been organized in order to raise awareness and mobilize to meet the MDGs. These activities include workshops by UN agencies, CSOs, and governmental institutions, as well as reporting, awareness-raising campaigns, pilot projects, and coalition-building initiatives.

Often the national and regional MDG workshops included participants from the Government, Parliament, civil society, press, academia, research institutes, and UN agencies. Their agendas included the launch and evaluation of MDGRs, analysis of costing processes and methodologies, and discussion of MDG challenges and opportunities in the Arab region.

In Lebanon, a roll-out agenda was developed based on an MDGR prepared with the help of civil society. In addition, a series of consultations between the Government, CSOs, and UN agencies were organized which included a session with Parliament where a draft poverty strategy was elaborated. In Morocco, a pilot project to *engender* the MDGs was launched to promote equality in education for women and girls.

A pilot project called the Jemstone Network was started in Jordan by a non-governmental organization (NGO) to raise awareness on the MDGs. It aims to recruit and train a small team of development volunteers who will visit communities and explain how the MDGs apply to daily life. In Tunisia, the UN in coordination with the private sector and some CSOs used a creative approach to raising awareness with the Millennium Caravan.<sup>3</sup>

Other initiatives include MDG coalitions of CSOs at the sub-national level in Egypt. In Djibouti, a pilot project is also being conducted by the UN Country Team in a primary school to address MDG 2 (Achieve universal primary education), MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women), as well as hygiene and sanitation issues.

Several activities have been directed towards engaging parliamentarians in the MDG process. A project document entitled *UNDP Support to the Parliament - Phase II*, was produced in Morocco with the aim of enhancing the capacity and substantive knowledge of parliamentarians and MDG committees so that they can effectively participate in the legislative process, better exercise oversight, and increase citizens' input in the democratic process. In Mauritania, the UNDP country office has

1 Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND). "Social Development, Geneva 2000. Social Development in the Arab World." Presented to the *Irregular Session of the United Nations*, 26-30 June 2000 in Geneva.

2 *Ibid*, p. 37-40

3 An artistic caravan toured the Northern and central parts of the country with the Tunisian National School of Circus to convey the importance of achieving the MDGs.

engaged members of Parliament in a process of mainstreaming the formulation of public policies to address poverty issues and MDGs.

Several activities were directed towards young people in order to incorporate their issues into the MDG campaign. These included activities at universities such as lectures and workshops around the MDGs and mobilization mechanisms.

These MDG-related activities are a sample of the projects undertaken in the Arab region. Most of the efforts are still limited to pilot projects and have not been implemented on a larger scale. Also, there has been no follow-up to the activities implemented and a lack of coordination among campaign efforts. Accordingly, projects have remained isolated from national policies and programmes. Efforts have focused mainly on raising awareness, while stakeholders have not yet begun the action-oriented stage of the campaign where measurable projects might lead to real change.

Projects should be adopted on a larger scale, endorsed by governments, and integrated into national policies. To date the MDGRs have not been used as tools for policy and strategy elaboration, or as a means of evaluation, or to set benchmarks, or plan for the future. Even when MDGRs were prepared using a participatory approach, as was the case in Lebanon, they were not developed into national comprehensive work plans. In Lebanon during consultation sessions with parliamentarians - the very people who are supposed to lead national policy-making on the MDGs - only three of the 128 members of Parliament participated.

### National MDGRs

MDGRs were produced in eighteen Arab countries: the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Saudi Arabia in 2002; Bahrain, Djibouti, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Yemen, Comoros, and Syria in 2003; Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Sudan, Tunisia in 2004; Oman in 2005; Egypt first in 2002 and then in 2005,<sup>4</sup> and Somalia's draft report in 2004.

Although a significant number of countries have produced reports, most were prepared exclusively by government bodies in collaboration with UN agencies, and there was little or no civil society participation. CSOs in Lebanon participated in the preparation of the country MDGR, but other countries failed to include this sector in the process. Consequently, the reports are overly optimistic about progress made to date and the MDG indicators. They are also weak tools for measuring MDG progress and planning future activities to achieve the goals.

4 Data was collected from the Regional Bureau for Arab States and from other UN agencies.

### MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Poverty is a central issue in the development process and affects every other MDG. Although extreme poverty is specifically targeted in the MDGs, the Arab MDGRs only outlined it. However it would be useful to address the overall poverty situation in each country. This is particularly important in the Arab States where there are extremely low rates of poverty and hunger.

Poverty is affected by factors included in other MDGs, such as education and unemployment, as well as by economic growth and structural adjustment reforms. These factors, as well as geographical and regional disparity, must be encompassed by the MDGRs in order to study and fight poverty comprehensively and efficiently. On the one hand, addressing these larger economic factors could lead to real, in-depth change. Unfortunately, on the other hand, the factors could be used as an excuse to declare poverty an insurmountable challenge.

It is therefore crucial that MDGRs assess responsibilities and the level of accountability to commitments. In some cases, responsibility for past shortcomings and misguided measures extends to supranational authorities, namely economic and monetary authorities which have encouraged the implementation of structural adjustment reforms responsible for disastrous consequences on national living standards.<sup>5</sup> Thus, it is also important to examine the implications of global institution programmes and policies on national and local development and poverty.

Several indicators were used to measure poverty in the Arab MDGRs including the USD 1 a day indicator, the USD 2 a day indicator, the national poverty line method and the human poverty indicator. The USD 1 a day indicator was used by 9 of the 18 countries, the USD 2 a day indicator by 4 countries, the national poverty line by 15 countries, and the human poverty indicator<sup>6</sup> by 15 countries. In general, Arab countries lack the adequate statistics and comparable data required to identify meaningful trends. For example, most Arab MDGRs claim that there is no extreme poverty in the region. The Saudi Arabia MDGR does not even identify a poverty rate. Instead it calculates unemployment at 15% and talks about "low rates of extreme poverty".

5 Algerian MDGR; in reference to the "support of international financial institutions", p. 7.

6 The Human Poverty Indicator extends beyond income poverty. For developing countries, it includes dimensions of a decent standard of living (percentage of population without sustainable access to an improved water source and percentage of children under weight for age); knowledge (adult literacy rate); and a long and healthy life (probability at birth of not surviving to age 40). Based on the Human Development Report, 2004, United Nations Development Programme, p. 258.

An adequate definition of poverty or the poor has not been reached or adopted in many Arab countries. Lebanon attempted to establish a quality of life indicator called the "Living Conditions Index", which included 11 indicators on housing, water and sewage, education, and income related indicators. It was used to classify individuals and households into five categories of living conditions including very low, low, intermediate, high, and very high. Social Watch is working to produce a quality of life indicator as well,<sup>7</sup> stressing the need to enhance efforts in this area given the importance of good indicators in tackling poverty issues. Accordingly, it would be helpful for analysis and comparison purposes if every MDGR included an annex explaining the details of the adopted indicator.

The Gini index which has the benefit of representing overall wealth disparities in a single number cannot reliably be used to study poverty in the Arab countries because data is lacking or inaccurate. Nor can the poverty gap be studied reliably given the lack of data on poverty rates and income distribution. The Arab MDGRs also lack disaggregated data on poverty even though it would be helpful to look at figures disaggregated by region in order to better understand wealth disparities.

According to World Bank estimates,<sup>8</sup> poverty rates in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)<sup>9</sup> region were calculated at 2.3% in 1990, using the USD 1 a day method. The rate had increased to 2.4% by 2000. The MDGs call for the rate to be halved to 1.2% by 2015. According to these rates, the MENA region has less poverty than East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. However, if the trend does not change, the region will shift away from the goal instead of moving towards it during the next 10 years.

The World Bank has only managed to examine around seven Arab countries using the USD 1 a day indicator. This indicator should be used with caution since most Arab countries are medium income countries. And it is not useful for measuring poverty in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, which are considered high income countries.

7 Social Watch Philippines has been making important efforts to identify a comprehensive poverty index, and has set up a committee of Social Watch members to follow-up on the project.

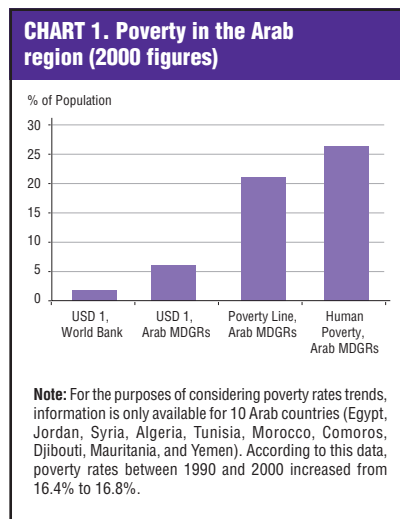
8 World Bank. [www.developmentgoals.org/Poverty.htm#povertylevel](http://www.developmentgoals.org/Poverty.htm#povertylevel)

9 The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region does not encompass all Arab countries nor is it limited to them. It includes 17 Arab countries (excluding Sudan, Somalia, Comoros, Mauritania, and Libya) as well as Iran and Israel which are non-Arab countries. However, the Arab countries can be divided into 4 main regions; the Mashrek region (Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria); the Maghreb region (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia); the less developed Arab countries (Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen); and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates).



According to the figures in the nine Arab MDGRs which used the USD 1 a day indicator, 7.4% of the population in these countries live on less than USD 1 a day, with these nine countries making up 62.4% of the entire Arab region population.<sup>10</sup> This figure is significantly higher than the international figure of 2.4% presented by the World Bank.

According to the poverty line indicator, which was used in 15 MDGRs,<sup>11</sup> 23% of the population in the Arab region live under the poverty line.<sup>12</sup> But when the Human Poverty indicator is considered, which was also used in 15 MDGRs, 27.1% of the Arab region population are poor.<sup>13</sup>



- 10 The percentage was calculated at 5.6% in the Mashrek region based on data from MDGRs of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria; at 2.9% in the Maghreb region based on the MDGR data of Algeria and Morocco; and 22.2% in the less developed Arab countries based on MDGR data from Comoros, Mauritania, Somalia, and Yemen. No data is available for the GCC countries. The figures used are based on original sources from the Arab MDGRs and supported by preliminary calculations prepared for the yet unpublished 2nd UN Arab MDGR.
- 11 The population of the countries which used the poverty line indicator makes up 79% of the entire Arab region population.
- 12 It reaches 17% in the Mashrek countries based on data from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria; 9.2% in the Maghreb countries based on data from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia; and 48.2% in the less developed Arab countries based on data from all the countries included in this category. The only data available for GCC countries is from Bahrain which indicates 11% poverty.
- 13 25.7% in the Mashrek region based on data from the MDGRs of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria; 26% in the Maghreb area based on data from all countries in this region; 35.5% in the less developed Arab countries based on data from Comoros, Djibouti, Mauritania, Sudan, Yemen; and 17.5% in the GCC region based on data from the MDGRs of Oman and Saudi Arabia.

Poverty rates in the Mashrek region decreased from 21.6% to 15.7%, and increased from 7.3% to 9.1% in the Maghreb region. The less developed countries showed a significant increase from 24.8% to 47.1%, while there is no data for the GCC countries. These trends show that the Arab region is not on the right track to achieve the MDGs, and the picture is even gloomier when we consider Arab countries experiencing conflict such as Palestine, Iraq, and Sudan.

### MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Gender inequality is deeply rooted in Arab societies so real change must come from changing attitudes, behaviours, and mentalities. In tackling MDG 3 some Arab MDGRs focused on education, specifically raising awareness about woman rights in this sector. The Algerian MDGR included an assessment of the extent of violence against women (domestic or otherwise). The Egyptian MDGR studied women and unremunerated work, whether in family businesses or in agriculture.<sup>14</sup> Some MDGRs presented the women ratio in decision-making positions as an indicator of disparities in the job market. Indicators showing wage disparities and comparative gender unemployment figures were also used to give insight into discrimination in the labour market. These factors are essential to achieve a comprehensive understanding of all the factors that affect women's status and opportunities in the Arab countries.

Quite a few of the MDGRs did not analyze MDG 3 in a comprehensive enough manner to show the real situation of women in the Arab societies. The 2002 Arab Human Development Report (AHDR) finds that Arab countries rank very low according to the UNDP Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM).<sup>15</sup> The report also highlights that Arab countries have made important advances regarding girls' education, but points out that the low GEM values were due to the limited participation of women in political organizations. In the 2003 AHDR, several developments in women's empowerment are mentioned, such as the right to vote and stand for election to municipal and legislative assemblies in Bahrain, the election of 33 women to the Moroccan Parliament, the appointment of a woman as State Minister for Human Rights in Yemen and the entrance of one woman into the Yemeni Parliament in the 2003 elections. Yet, it also stresses that "the political emancipation of Arab women which was called for in the first AHDR has a long way to go,

although the new progress is evidence of a greater receptivity to women's empowerment at the executive levels of government and state institutions".<sup>16</sup>

The Saudi Arabian MDGR reported that "a strong supporting environment for gender equality exists in Saudi Arabia... and that the UN works on enhancing the role of women non-governmental organizations and their links with regional and international counterparts and UN agencies".<sup>17</sup> This statement is not backed up by measurable figures and holds no credibility especially when we consider that there are no active women's organizations in the country. Furthermore, it is well known that women's rights are not properly respected in Saudi Arabian society, where they are not allowed to vote or even drive a vehicle.

For this reason it is essential to look at country commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) when measuring MDG progress. Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, Tunisia, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Kuwait, have ratified the CEDAW. However most of these countries have submitted reservations on the following articles: Article 2 on the legal equality of men and women; Article 9 on nationality and the nationality of children; Article 16 on marriage and family life; Article 29 on disputes and reservations; Article 15 on the movement of persons, freedom of residence choice, civil matters such as administering property; and Article 7 on political and public life including the right to vote and participate in government and public offices. What may appear to be progress and respect of international law could be a cover for widespread discriminatory measures in national laws and among public and private institutions in many Arab countries.

According to World Bank indicators - the main reference used in most MDGRs - the Arab countries in the MENA region have achieved significant progress in gender equity in enrolment rates. Gender equity indicators, such as the ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education, show that the MENA region progressed from a ratio of 79 in 1990 to 91 between 1997 and 2001. In 2001, the region ranked above South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa, and below East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Although Arab MDGRs proudly referred to these indicators, little was said about the participation of women in decision-making positions. It is important to see how women's participation in political and economic affairs is progressing at both the national and regional levels, not only in lower

14 UNDP. "Egypt Human Development Report 2004. Choosing Decentralization for Good Governance", 2004, [www.undp.org/egy/publications/HDP-2004-E%20.pdf](http://www.undp.org/egy/publications/HDP-2004-E%20.pdf)

15 UNDP. "Arab Human Development Report 2002. Creating Opportunities for Future Generations", [www.undp.org/rbas](http://www.undp.org/rbas); [www.un.org/publications](http://www.un.org/publications)

16 UNDP. "Arab Human Development Report (2003). Building a Knowledge Society", [www.undp.org/rbas](http://www.undp.org/rbas) and [www.un.org/publications](http://www.un.org/publications)

17 UNDP. "Millennium Development Goals Report on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia", 2002, [www.undp.org/sa/Reports/MDGR%20SA%20English.pdf](http://www.undp.org/sa/Reports/MDGR%20SA%20English.pdf)

level posts but also in executive and high level posts. Women are still absent from high level meetings of the League of Arab States, and ministerial and trade-related meetings in the region.

### MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

A global partnership for development has taken on a special importance within the MDG campaign. Some claim that the MDGs are no different than the "Better World for All" document which was prepared by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the World Bank, and the UN at the Geneva 2000 Summit, with the addition of an agreement and commitment by developed countries to take responsibility for the process of development through MDG 8. The "Better World for All" document was rejected by developing countries whereas the MDGs were adopted by all developing countries on the belief that a real partnership and commitment to these goals would be shared between both developing and developed countries.

MDG 8 addresses non-discriminatory trading and finance, international debt and aid, youth employment, affordability and availability of essential drugs in developing countries, as well as the benefits of information and communication technologies (ICTs). Not enough attention was given to this particular MDG in the Arab MDGRs.

Although Arab MDGRs talked about the three interlinked factors of trade, aid, and debt, they disregarded any talk about ICTs. These essential factors for building a knowledge society have been directly linked to human development in the 2003 AHDR. They include technology transfer; the acquisition, dissemination, and reproduction of knowledge; freedom of research, expression and information; the use of ICTs in education; and legal management of technologies.

The Jordanian MDGR states that MDG 8 "tackles evolving partnerships for development which require the national economy to participate in and act with the global economy, which in turn includes the level of openness and participation in partnerships and free trade agreements with other countries". The report noted that Jordan is on track to meet MDG 8 by 2015. Jordan has joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), and signed the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership agreement, as well as a bilateral free-trade agreement with the United States. However, it is worth stressing that not all international cooperation is positive. The above statement from the Jordanian MDGR is in direct opposition with the basic perspective of civil society, which does not consider trade an indicator by itself, but rather measures how trade can serve development. For reasons of objectivity CSOs should be included in the analysis of MDG 8 and the entire MDGR preparation process.

In order for trade to be beneficial, the idea that trade must be at the service of development needs must be internalized. Arab countries are still entering into international and bilateral free trade agreements<sup>18</sup> even though they are vague about their ability to develop a Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA). Inter-Arab trade only represents around 8% of total Arab trade.<sup>19</sup> Arab countries are not entering into these trade agreements with a clear idea of their needs, priorities, and expectations. The lack of appropriate and well-defined national policies on various aspects of development puts Arab countries in a weak position when negotiating. A quick glance at economic indicators reflects their feeble situation with low economic growth, high budget deficits, and a critical balance of payments.<sup>20</sup> Technology and knowledge figures are insufficient to build local capacities for adequate integration into the global market, further weakening the role and impact of Arab countries.<sup>21</sup>

It is difficult to understand why Arab countries have not been able to develop their own regional agreements despite their ability to sign agreements with the United States and the European Union. Arab countries must participate in rather than simply join the global trading system. One must ask whether Arab countries are joining and negotiating the terms of the WTO and other agreements with a full and clear understanding and projection of its impact on their economies.

The main issue of MDG 8 is not the number of trade agreements a country has signed but rather the kind of global partnership which is needed to bring about real change. Countries must choose whether trade or development is the priority before reporting on this goal. The Doha Development Agenda, resulting from the 4<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Meeting, is meant to serve as a reference for national policy measures regarding free trade. But given the actual state of the Doha commitments, fair trade and the idea of trade as a tool for development are far from realistic.

Promoting trade and foreign direct investments (FDI) pushes national governments to present a positive impression of the country. This contradicts the processes linked to debt cancellation and aid which require truthful reporting on socio-economic conditions. The question of whether FDI is in the interest of local needs or in the interest of multinational companies raises the issue of social corporate responsibility, which is still weakly addressed in the Arab countries. National strategies must balance economic and social priorities and a long-term vision for the country with the various social and economic global dynamics.

### Roles of governments, UN agencies, international financial institutions, and CSOs

Most MDGRs stressed the importance of strong and consolidated partnerships, coherence of efforts and information-sharing for a successful campaign. "It is important to know who should do what to avoid duplication of efforts and achieve better coordination. In addition, strategic partnerships need to be identified and alliances built at a national and/or regional level to achieve the MDGs. This is how all stakeholders could be involved with decision-making and be aware of who is doing what as well as who should do what".<sup>22</sup>

It is clear that these relationships and coordination have not been developed in the Arab countries, where governments have been processing the MDGR in close coordination with UN agencies, such as the UNDP. In others countries, the governments had limited roles while the UN led the process. Yet, even where governments were involved, their involvement was limited to public institutions, which reflects an incomplete and weak national commitment and an ineffective governmental role. The Arab governments have not appeared interested in establishing a good relationship with CSOs and the business sector since most Arab countries excluded them from the MDGR process.

Two issues need to be considered regarding the role of CSOs:

- The advisory role of CSOs in MDG policy formulation and strategic planning should be highly appreciated by other groups including governments and UN agencies. If this role is not respected, as is the case of all Arab countries, then CSOs should be strongly involved in advocacy campaigns in order to voice their concerns and perspectives.
- It is important to look at whether CSOs have been able to shift successfully from the awareness-raising phase to the implementation phase of the MDG campaign in order to assess real changes in people's lives.

18 Eleven Arab countries are members of the WTO (Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Djibouti, and Mauritania). Seven more are observers (Lebanon, Libya, Iraq, Sudan Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Algeria). Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, and Bahrain have entered into bilateral free trade agreements with the United States. All Arab Southern Mediterranean countries have association agreements with the European Union, including Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Libya, and Lebanon, while the negotiations with Syria have been concluded in October 2004 in preparations to sign the agreement. The process for the Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement, called for by the League of Arab states in the early 1960s, due to be launched in 2007, only started at the beginning of 2005.

19 Arabic News. "Increasing Arab states inter-trade, regional economic integration an absolute imperative", 4 December 2001, [www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/010412/2001041230.html](http://www.arabicnews.com/ansub/Daily/Day/010412/2001041230.html)

20 UNDP 2002, *op cit*.

21 UNDP 2003, *op cit*.

22 UNDP. South and West Asia sub regional resource facility. "Localizing the MDGs".



In a series of national meetings on the role of Arab CSOs in the MDG campaign,<sup>23</sup> participants stressed the importance of issues in the pre-implementation and pre-action stage that were part of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development in 1995. They emphasized the need to consider NGOs as real partners and to apply good governance at local and national levels. They noted the need to create an enabling environment for CSOs to perform their role. Participants stressed the importance of organizing a widespread campaign to publicize the MDGs, and to elaborate a specific and detailed document to evaluate what needs to be done by all stakeholders in order to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Also discussed was the need for CSOs to actively participate in the elaboration of the MDGRs in order to enhance the credibility of the reports and to put forward CSOs' perspective on progress. This did not occur in the elaboration of any of the 18 MDGRs published so far even though by doing so they could have voiced their views and concerns about the national MDG campaigns and the information produced by the Arab governments. The capacity of CSOs to play this role, as well as their transparency, accountability, awareness, efficiency, and ability to lead advocacy campaigns for the MDGs should also be considered.

The MDG work plans cannot be separated from the policies that are being advocated by multilateral institutions. Social policies in developing countries have been adjusted according to structural adjustment policies recommended by the World Bank, leading to negative socio-economic impacts. Currently, most developing countries including Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, and Djibouti, are working on their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers with the intention of offsetting these negative impacts.<sup>24</sup>

The UN Millennium Project's latest report entitled *Investing in Development* says that each country should prepare an "MDG based poverty reduction strategy that should be a detailed operational document attached to a medium term expenditure framework which translates the strategy into budgetary outlays."<sup>25</sup> A participatory approach for the preparation of a 10-year framework for action based on poverty mapping by locality, region and gender, and including a 3- to 5-year MDG-based poverty reduction strategy is needed in order to successfully achieve this step. Comprehensive and well-monitored national MDG campaigns and MDGRs which propose strategies and work plans instead

of mere descriptions and blown-up figures are also needed. Unfortunately these factors are not among Arab countries' strong points.

In order to enhance the role of multilateral organizations in the MDG campaign at national levels, the coherence between the policies advocated by these organizations, including the World Bank and the UN, must be addressed. The balance of roles between organizations must also be examined, as well as any possible conflict of power between them.

Translating the strategies into budgetary outlays means that there must be real, effective, and constructive parliamentary participation in the MDGR preparation and content analysis. MDGRs should inform Parliament's work plans. Parliament should also assess and evaluate them, and later hold governments accountable for their role in their implementation. However this has not happened yet in Arab countries.

The identification of effective roles for players in the MDG campaign is necessary for successful cooperation and coordination. However, this process is directly linked to good governance, rule of law, political and social rights, public administration accountability and efficiency, sound economic policy, supportive environments for association, the role of CSOs, as well as participation in general. These are the basic values of human rights, democracy, and good governance that have been advocated for and included in the Millennium Declaration and are the pre-requisites for any steps taken towards achieving the MDGs.

The ability to carry out a comprehensive campaign or work plan instead of separate activities is linked to successfully addressing the distribution of roles. A proper identification of roles could enhance the coordination of efforts, thus avoiding resource misallocations and duplication. Therefore the *Investing in Development* report recommended that "each country should convene an MDG strategy group chaired by the national government and including bilateral and multilateral donors, UN specialized agencies, provincial and local authorities, domestic civil society leaders, including women's organizations which are traditionally underrepresented".<sup>26</sup> This is an initial step towards improving the coordination of efforts and information-sharing at national levels.

### Ending notes

CSOs in the Arab region are leading a struggle in two directions. First, to develop advocacy strategies that will enable them to improve their role, effectiveness, and impact on policy-making at the national level. Second, to fight for their right to exist and operate freely, which is restricted by the re-

gimes that are currently in power in most Arab states. Therefore, when talking about national and regional campaigns, one should stress the need to empower CSOs and enable them to increase their influence on the formation of national policy.

Arab CSOs should realize that the MDGs can serve as an effective advocacy tool, and offer an important opportunity for creating an agenda with defined objectives and targets while taking advantage of their Government's commitments, international support, and the umbrella provided by the global MDG campaign. The global campaign should support CSOs in developing countries, specifically in the Arab region. ■

23 ANND organized a series of national meetings in Sudan, Yemen, Bahrain and the Gulf countries, and Egypt on the role of civil society organizations in the MDG campaign.

24 World Bank. "Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers by Region", [http://poverty.worldbank.org/files/prsp\\_deliveries.pdf](http://poverty.worldbank.org/files/prsp_deliveries.pdf)

25 UN Millennium Project. "Investing in Development", [www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/fullreport.htm](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/fullreport.htm)

26 *Ibid.*

# In search of a common future: The European Union's lost opportunities as a global actor

Simon Stocker / Mirjam van Reisen<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

The European Union (EU) has sought to project itself as a leading player within the international community in delivering what is required to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other international commitments. The EU keeps emphasizing that being the world's largest donor, collectively contributing 55% of all Official Development Aid, is a reflection of its strong commitment to development and to translating its core values into a global policy. It also repeatedly claims that it is pursuing a development oriented approach to trade negotiations, both within the World Trade Organization (WTO) and within its negotiations with developing country regions. In addition it claims that it is continually ensuring that its overall approach to policies remains coherent with its development policies and its objectives for its cooperation with developing countries.

In June 2005 the European Council, which brings together the Heads of State and government from all Member States, proposed important commitments to increase EU aid. Additionally it identified the priorities for the September Summit<sup>2</sup> preparations as being the "Creation of the Peace Commission, prevention of conflicts, the fight against terrorism, the adoption of principles for making commitments to use force, disarmament, the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the re-enforcement of the United Nations in maintaining peace". It also called on all members of the UN to sign the Convention relating to the prevention of nuclear terrorism that was recently agreed in the UN General Assembly in September.

These announcements came with important commitments to aid increases and plans to increase the effectiveness of aid. How do these various priorities go together? Are the claims that the EU is ready to enter a new era of development cooperation justified by the actions being taken by the EU?

## Overview of main events

### EU expansion

The last twelve months have seen significant developments for the EU. In May 2004 ten additional countries joined the Union increasing the number of Member States from 15 to 25.<sup>3</sup> Most of these countries are considerably poorer than the rest of the EU requiring a process of adjustment that has implications for all Member States. The total population of the Union now ranks the third, behind China and India. While initial fears were that development cooperation could be undermined by the eastward expansion, such fears have not generally been justified. On the contrary, the new Member States have brought a new dynamic to the EU, with interesting perspectives which include the geographic area east of the current Union. A prestigious Presidency Fund has been established by Ireland and the Netherlands during their successive Presidency of the EU. This fund aims to help civil society from new Member States in their engagement with EU development cooperation.<sup>4</sup>

Following the expansion of the EU its policies have been re-organized to reflect this new reality. The EU has now set up its policies around concentric circles. The first circle reflects the core of the EU and is made up of its Member States, in one open and free movement of goods, however with restrictions on the movement of people.

The second circle reflects the European Neighbourhood Policy of the EU, with a heavy emphasis on migration and border control. The 16 neighbouring countries are not part of the EU market, but constitute a critical component of the EU's internal security. The neighbourhood ranges from the Arab states in North Africa to the Middle East, and includes Israel as well as Palestine; and includes the Balkans and Ukraine to the East. With some of these, notably Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia and Turkey accession negotiations are on the way to prepare for their entry.<sup>5</sup>

The third circle is composed of the EU's policy to other third countries. This policy is the least clear as a result of mixing of interests and policy objectives, as will be outlined below.

The consequences of these policies from the perspective of the EU's gender policy have been examined in Eurostep's publication *To the Farthest Frontiers: Women's empowerment in an expanding Europe*, in partnership with Social Watch, Wide and Karat.<sup>6</sup> This publication sets out how the new centric policies fail to include strong dimensions of gender equality and poverty eradication, mainly because of their emphasis on pursuing and securing EU economic interests.

### EU elections

Elections for the European Parliament took place in June 2004 with the inclusion of representatives from across the 25 Member States. The European Commission also changed, with the new Commission, led by former Portuguese centre right Prime Minister José Manuel Barroso, taking up office in November 2004. The EU Member States initially had difficulty in agreeing a nominee for Commission President, and Barroso was appointed as a compromise candidate. It is worth remembering that Barroso publicly lent a useful hand to the United States when the second Iraq War was initiated. He lent credibility to the concept of a "coalition" with support from Europe for the war in Iraq by organizing a press meeting attended by US President George W Bush, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and then Spanish Prime Minister José María Aznar. President Bush reciprocated by visiting the European Commission - the first time that the European Commission received a US President - in February 2005.

### European Constitution

The first Constitution for Europe was also agreed and signed in 2004 before being subject to a process of ratification by each Member State. The Constitution was developed by a Convention established in December 2002 involving representatives from across the EU, including from civil society organizations. The proposals intended to subordinate development cooperation to a revamped EU foreign and security policy, as adopted by the EU Council in the European Security Strategy of 2003.<sup>7</sup>

Concerted and united actions by EU civil society organizations with support of national Members of Parliament and Members of the European

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2 A high-level plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly will undertake a comprehensive review of the progress made in the fulfilment of all the commitments contained in the UN Millennium Declaration on 14-16 September 2005.

3 The 10 countries joining were Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia.

4 See: <http://presidencyfund.eurostep.org>

5 The countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy are Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Ukraine as well as the Palestinian Authority.

6 See: [www.eurostep.org](http://www.eurostep.org)

7 *Social Watch Report 2003. The Poor and the Market*. Montevideo: Third World Institute, 2003.

8 The French term *acquis communautaire* is used in European Union law to refer to the total body of EU law accumulated so far. An in-depth analysis of the Treaty is provided at: <http://constitution.eurostep.org>





Parliament and some Member States followed. Subsequently, the legal basis in the Constitutional Treaty was clarified and remained a specific independent policy of the European Community, governed by its own objectives and principles - in line with the *acquis communautaire* acquired by the EU.<sup>9</sup>

The ratification process has been halted by the rejection of the Constitution in referenda in France and in the Netherlands. The voters in these traditional pro-European countries gave an unprecedented signal that citizens are concerned with the direction in which the EU is going. Particularly unfortunate was the alliance between the anti-European right and the progressive left, which made it more difficult to interpret the desire and the weight of the anti-vote. It would appear that in particular the erosion of the EU's social policies are at the core of concerns in these two countries, and the continued pressure towards privatization of key public sectors.

## Towards common EU action in Development Cooperation

### New resources

Superficially it would appear that the EU is building external strength on the basis of its joint actions in development cooperation. Since early 2004 the EU has been preparing a common position involving all Member States to take to the September 2005 Summit. The principal element of this position is a commitment to increase ODA to a collective average target of 0.56% ODA/GNI by 2010, and 0.7% by 2015. To achieve the 2010 target the "old" 15 EU Member States are expected to achieve a minimum of 0.51% of GNI, while the new 10 Member States should increase their ODA to 0.17% of GNI. The 10 are also encouraged to reach 0.33% of GNI by 2015. Commentators speak of a new era in development cooperation with a doubling of financial resources expected in the next ten years.

A particular initiative has been launched towards Africa for which the EU will give priority. It has committed itself to increase its aid to sub-Saharan Africa by at least 50%, taken on a collective basis. This includes increasing its aid flows towards countries in conflict and in fragile states.

### The Millennium Development Goals

In its 2005 Council conclusions a number of initiatives were announced in relation to the September Summit. These include the following:

- A strong emphasis on human rights and democracy. Human rights should be put on the same footing as questions of development, peace and security. The EU therefore supported

re-enforcing the role and means of the High Commissioner as well as the creation of the proposed Human Rights Council.

- Calling for the September Summit to initiate a process to establish a strengthened UN environmental agency based on the existing United Nations Environment Programme which would have an equal status with other specialised UN agencies.
- The European Council stated explicitly that the contribution of non-aid policies in attaining the MDGs must be considered an integral part of the process to achieving development aims.

### The Paris Declaration and the new aid modalities

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness<sup>9</sup> constitutes a key element of the future EU development cooperation perspective, and the EU is determined to bring this into a central framework of the MDGs at the September Summit.

The essence of the Paris Declaration is its promotion of new aid modalities bringing donors in support of the Washington-led Poverty Reduction Strategies. The principles of "ownership" of policies by developing countries and of "coordination" by donors form the foundation of this new focus.

The difficulties associated with the Paris Declaration are related to the question as to who owns the national policies of the countries in the South. A new Eurostep publication, *Accountability Upside Down: Gender Equality in a partnership for poverty eradication*, written in cooperation with Social Watch, questions the ownership of the new aid modalities to people living in poverty in the South. The publication examines whether the new aid modalities could promote gender equality, which has been generally ignored as a vital component of poverty eradication in the context of the new instruments, such as budget support. The conclusion is that without a transfer of decision-making power from the donors to the South and in the absence of adequate mechanisms for accountability in the South itself, the prospects for promoting gender equality and poverty eradication are bleak.

A recent delegation of tsunami victims to the European Parliament raised the same question, namely that the unprecedented amounts of aid given in the wake of the disaster has not reached the people affected by the tsunami. In its hearing to the European Parliament on 14 July 2005 the delegation of Sri Lanka told parliamentarians that the extensive aid programme served the interests of the private sector and failed to assist the communities suffering from the tsunami. The delegation called on governments and tsunami aid donors to truly enforce the accepted guiding principle of ownership by the affected communities. "Plans for reconstruction were drawn up without consulting the affected people and do not target the needs of these communities but rather serve the economic interests of the private sector" said Sarath Fernando, Co-Secretary of the Movement for Land and Agricultural Reform (MONLAR). "Fishermen will lose their livelihoods and be further displaced by the tourism industry, to which the Government of Sri Lanka has given priority in the reconstruction plans. We are deeply concerned with the social consequences of these plans" emphasised Herman Kumara, Convenor of National Fisheries Solidarity (NAFSO).<sup>10</sup>

### Undercutting the development deal: the new financial perspectives of the EU

While the EU's commitment to increase funding for development is to be welcomed, there is a consistent pressure for these new resources to be utilized for non-development actions, given that the EU *acquis communautaire* provides the strongest legal base for implementing the EU's external actions, such as its security agenda.

In current negotiations, which aim to set a framework for the EU's common financial resources until 2013, a number of new instruments were introduced by the European Commission. All of these had the objective to prise development resources away from poverty eradication to other external interests.

The European Commission proposed that the Development Instrument (DCECI)<sup>11</sup> of some EUR 7.7 billion be brought together with an activity, which is called "economic cooperation", a EUR 17 million programme which mainly finances the participation of business people of the EU and of other industrialised countries in conferences across the world.

<sup>9</sup> On 2 March 2005, participants at the OECD Paris High-Level Forum issued the "Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness," in which they committed their institutions and countries to continuing and increasing efforts in harmonization, alignment, and managing for results, and listed a set of monitorable actions and indicators to accelerate progress in these areas.

<sup>10</sup> See: [www.eepa.be](http://www.eepa.be)

<sup>11</sup> The Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation Instrument proposed by the European Commission would form the legal basis for financing EU cooperation with countries outside those covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy.



The European Commission also proposed an instrument linking development and security policy in a new “stability instrument”; however the future of this instrument is unsure as the European Court ruled the proposal lacked a legal base in the current EU Treaties.

### *Development cooperation and trade*

In terms of trade, critical areas of incoherence will need to be addressed in the coming months. Prime Minister Tony Blair has raised the stakes of the EU Financial Perspectives by linking these to the issue of agricultural subsidies financed from the EU budget, a suggestion immediately rejected by French President Jacques Chirac. The issue was raised essentially as a response to demands by several Member States that the United Kingdom give up its rebate for its financial contributions to the EU, negotiated by former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

Tony Blair’s confidant, Peter Mandelson, is the new European Commissioner for trade. Being in charge of the EU’s preparations for the Hong Kong Ministerial meeting, he has made it clear that his aim is to follow a development trade agenda. However, he has also made it clear that progress on the liberalisation of services will be a major priority. The questions raised by NGOs on the compatibility between this and the development agenda were dismissed in an internal Commission letter, seen by Eurostep.

Moreover, the EU is trying to push African countries into accepting rules not yet agreed within the WTO through the Europe Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The so-called “Singapore issues”, named after the ministerial meeting where they were proposed, were removed from the Doha talks in 2003 after demands from developing countries. They include issues related to rules on protecting foreign investment, promoting domestic competition and increasing government procurement. ACP<sup>12</sup> trade ministers have expressed concern: “We are worried over this backdoor approach,” says Dipak Patel, the Zambian Trade Minister. “Where is the convergence between the WTO (...) and the EU approach in the EPAs?” Mukhisa Kituyi, the Kenyan Trade Minister, says: “I will be opposed to any progress being made if we get less than we got in the WTO negotiations.”<sup>13</sup>

At its 81<sup>st</sup> session in Brussels on 21 and 22 June 2005, the ACP Council of Ministers adopted a declaration on the EPA negotiations. The Council expressed grave concern that the negotiations have not pro-

ceeded in a satisfactory manner having failed to start addressing most issues of interest and concern to the ACP regions, in particular the development dimension and regional integration priorities, and regretted the disconnect between the public statements of the Commissioners of Trade and Development on the development aspect of EPAs and the actual position adopted during EPA negotiating sessions. The ACP Council of Ministers also called on the European Commission to ensure consistency and coherence in their trade and development policies.

### **Towards another vision of Europe**

The EU gives mixed signals. While it strongly proclaims the need for its policies to be coherent, and consistent with its development objectives, the actual policies pursued are often not seen to have poverty eradication and gender equality as their primary objective.

This is a crucial error. The EU has a strong history in development cooperation and is itself built on the values of social democracy, the promotion of human rights, peace and development. A strong Europe will build on these values which root it into European civil society. Sixty-nine percent of Europeans believe that the EU should contribute to solving problems linked to global poverty.

Development cooperation is a crucial element of the EU’s external face and the EU is a clear leader in this area. Any attempts to weaken this area, such as the newly proposed instrument DCECI, make a fundamental error, which will ultimately negatively impact on the support by its citizens.

By positioning itself as a united global actor working towards the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the MDGs, the EU could bring itself into a position where it can provide the leadership required in the context of the UN, the international financial institutions and the WTO so as to make poverty history.

### **Eurostep’s vision of Europe**

Eurostep’s campaign is aiming to ensure that the vision for a responsible Europe will be reflected in all European policies.

Eurostep’s *Vision of a Responsible Europe in the World* calls on the EU to ensure that its actions towards developing countries are consistent with the strong legal base for cooperation with developing countries included in the Constitution. It believes that within the Constitution there is a reasonable balance across the spectrum of EU external actions, notably between its Common Foreign Security and Defence policy and its Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid policy.

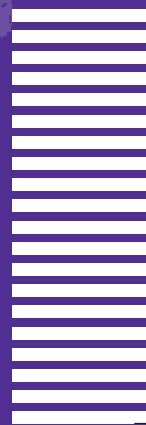
As a global player and as the largest provider of development aid, Europe now has both the opportunity and the mandate, to articulate an alternative to the increasingly unilateral world order by rooting its foreign policy in positive values. It should become the advocate of people living in poverty by fighting harder in favour of a fairer world in which injustices and inequalities are abolished, women empowered, human rights respected and the environment protected. ■

12 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP).

13 *Financial Times*, 4 July 2005.



# ◎ MEASURING PROGRESS



# Gender and poverty: a case of entwined inequalities

Social Watch Research Team<sup>1</sup>

Although poverty and gender are inextricably linked, the methodologies commonly used to measure poverty do not allow gender to be reflected in official statistics and consequently in poverty reduction strategies. Gender is frequently mentioned as a cross-cutting theme in many strategies, but when it comes to action plans and specific development projects it receives very little attention.

Poverty affects men, women, boys, and girls, but it is experienced differently by people of different ages, ethnicities, family roles and sex. Due to women's biology, their social and cultural gender roles, and culturally constructed subordination, they face disadvantageous conditions which accumulate and intensify the already numerous effects of poverty.

Poverty and gender are the central themes of this report. The reports from national coalitions provide a series of arguments and evidence about the link between poverty and gender, showing to what point the problems of poor women are not always the same as those faced by poor men.

## Poverty indicators do not see the women

The study of poverty from the point of view of gender has gained importance since the 1990s. Studies within this framework "examine gender differences in the poverty-generating results and processes, particularly focusing on the experiences of women and asking whether they form a disproportionate and growing contingent among the poor. This emphasis implies a perspective that highlights two forms of asymmetries that become intersected: gender and class."<sup>2</sup>

The studies that confirm gender inequalities, particularly in access to and fulfilment of basic needs, support the claim that "female poverty cannot be comprised under the same conceptual approach as male poverty."<sup>3</sup>

Poverty indicators are usually based on household information, without acknowledging the large gender and generational differences that exist within households. From a gender perspective it is necessary to decode situations within households, since people who share the same space maintain asymmetric relationships and authority systems tend to prevail. Gender inequalities within family contexts, which cause differentiated access to resources of the domestic group, worsen women's poverty, particularly in poor households. Further, despite current changes in roles, the division of labour by sex within households is still very rigid.

1 The members of the team are: Karina Batthyány (Coordinator), Mariana Sol Cabrera, Graciela Dede, Daniel Macadar and Ignacio Pardo.

2 Kaber, Naila. *Reversed Realities: Gender hierarchies in development thought*. London: Ed. Verso, 1994.

3 *Ibid.*

## Gender inequalities as reported by national Social Watch coalitions:

"In the Palestinian context the hardship of daily life was felt most acutely by Palestinian women who carried the burden for responsibility within the household because of the death, imprisonment or unemployment of male members. (...) There is concern that in the absence of a strong government, traditional structures that reinforce patriarchal values are re-emerging."

*Palestine national report*

"...women [have] limited access to credit. Since they lack financial empowerment, they must approach credit facilities to support their economic activities. However credit institutions - where available - are reluctant to extend their services to them. The reluctance stems from a prejudice that women

are bad managers of funds and would not be able to repay the loan. Those willing to extend services to women insist on male guarantors."

*Nigeria national report*

"...negative impacts [are] of a particularly serious nature for women. Illiteracy affects almost 10 in 100 women, while it represents 7% among men, and differences are still more significant in rural areas. In 2003, female sub-employment was 50% compared to 25% for men, while unemployment rates accounted for 11% and 6.5%, respectively. (...) In terms of ownership, only 68% of women heads of household own their houses or are paying for them."

*Ecuador national report*

The division of labour by sex assigns women to domestic work and limits their access to material and social resources and participation in political, economic and social decision-making. Women are at greater risk of poverty because they have relatively limited material assets and also more limited social assets (access to income, goods and services through social connections) and cultural assets (formal education and cultural knowledge). The consequences of this disparity persist throughout a woman's entire life in diverse forms and in different areas and social structures.

The limitations placed on women by the division of labour by sex and the social hierarchies based on this division determine a socially unequal situation mainly within these three closely-linked systems: the labour market, the welfare or social protection system and the household.

Applied to families, the gender perspective improves the understanding of how a household works. It uncovers hierarchies and patterns of resource distribution, thereby questioning the idea that resources within a household are equitably distributed and that all household members have the same needs. The gender approach to the study of poverty unmask both public and household discrimination by identifying power relationships and unequal distribution of resources in both spheres.

The definition of poverty determines what indicators will be used for its measurement as well as the type of policies that should be implemented to overcome it. As Feijoó puts it, "that which is not conceptualized is not measured."<sup>4</sup>

4 Feijoó, María del Carmen. "Desafíos conceptuales de la pobreza desde una perspectiva de género". Paper presented at the Meeting of Experts on Poverty and Gender Issues, ECLAC/ILO, Santiago de Chile, August 2003.

The situation described in the Zambian report can be considered a paradigm for the realities of the least developed countries: "Gender disparities in the education system become higher at secondary level and widen considerably at tertiary level, manifesting their highest disparity in the labour market. The share of women in paid employment dropped from 39% in 1990 to 35% in 2000."

*Zambia national report*

In addition, the Chilean report shows that "...the more years of schooling that a person has, the wider the pay gap between men and women in the same job. A woman with up to three years of study earns 18.6% less than a man in the same situation, but a woman with 13 or more years of training makes 35.7% less than a man at the same level. Besides this, the provision of maternity benefits laid down in the Labour Code only operates for a limited sector of workers."

*Chile national report*

Inequalities in the labour market are also noticeable in the Canadian report: "Only 38% of unemployed workers receive benefits - down from over 75% in the early 1990s. Only three out of every ten women who lose their jobs today are eligible for benefits, due to rules that place workers with shorter or irregular hours at a disadvantage. Most of the 1.7 million households living on less than CAD 20,000 (USD 16,393) a year are precariously housed: they do not own their home and spend more than 30% of their income on rent. Female-headed households dominate this category. An estimated 250,000 people will be homeless this year, a number that continues to rise as housing costs increase."

*Canada national report*



Inequalities also manifest themselves in the form of barriers and invisible ceilings: "Although Korean society has strengthened policies and programmes to promote women's participation in socio-economic activities since the 1990s, there are informal barriers and glass-ceilings for women in the labour market. In addition there are low wages and employment problems that affect 42.2% of all employed women due to irregular, temporary and part-time work. Women must also interrupt their work and social participation because of domestic responsibilities such as marriage, pregnancy, child-birth, child-rearing and other family duties. The labour market in Korean society has a double structure. The upper part is characterized by high productivity, high wages, and stable employment while the lower part is characterized by low productivity, low wages, and unstable employment. This double structure, with men in the upper part and women in the lower part, separates the sexes into different business categories, positions and wage levels. The discrimination of women in the labour market results in poor female-headed households."

*Republic of Korea national report*

The effects of these processes in the labour market are visible in income gaps even in developed countries. This is the case in Germany: "If women's wages in West Germany continue to move in relation to men's wages at the same rate as over the last 40 years, it will take another 40 years, at least, for women white-collar workers and far more than 70 years for women in manual jobs, to catch up with their male co-workers. Averaged across all occupational groups, women are still paid 20% less than their male co-workers for doing the same work. For female engineers the difference amounts to 30.7%."

*Germany national report*

In a rural context there is a similar situation: "Tanzania's agricultural pattern basically thrives on small holders' farms and single households. Women are predominant in this sector, which does not provide adequate income and has poor living conditions."

*Tanzania national report*

Since poverty is measured according to the socio-economic characteristics of households as a whole, it is impossible to identify gender differences in relation to access to basic needs within the household. Household surveys are also limiting in the way they obtain information since the only resource considered is income, while time devoted to household production and social reproduction of the home are not taken into account.

Naila Kabeer<sup>5</sup> proposes making up for limitations in poverty measurement by disaggregating information to take into account the differences between "beings" and "doings" in the household. According to Kabeer, there is a need for indicators which recognize that the lives of women are ruled by different and sometimes more complex social

restrictions, titles and responsibilities than men's, and that women live their lives to a large extent outside the formal economy.

This broader concept of poverty would include dimensions like economic autonomy and gender violence, which are rarely taken into account in poverty studies.

### Measurement of poverty from a gender perspective

Poverty measurement not only helps make poverty visible but also plays a crucial role in policy development and implementation. Measurement methodologies are closely linked to specific conceptualizations of poverty and therefore measurements may differ, since they address different

Gender violence is usually not included in poverty discussions even though the numbers reveal the seriousness of the situation: "In Uruguay a woman dies every nine days due to domestic violence, and unsafe abortions are the principal independent cause of maternal mortality. Particularly among poor women, transgressing traditional models of womanhood and womanhood-motherhood is a high risk practice."

*Uruguay national report*

The Romanian report presents similar findings: "...one in every five women is abused by her spouse or partner [and] in general society regards these attitudes as normal."

*Romania national report*

Similarly in Nepal "Young widows, particularly in the Indo-Aryan community, are subject to both psychological and physical violence due to disputes over inheritance. It is estimated that annually 12,000 girls and women, approximately 20% under the age of 16, are trafficked into India and other countries for prostitution. Poverty and unemployment, caused by a progressive decline in demand for the services of village craftspeople and the impoverishment of peasants through land division, is forcing families to sell their own daughters."

*Nepal national report*

aspects of poverty. No methodology is neutral; not even gender-sensitive ones, since all include subjective and arbitrary elements that limit their accuracy and objectiveness.

The gender perspective contributes to widening the concept of poverty by identifying the need to measure poverty in a way which accounts for its complexity and multidimensionality. The debate on poverty measurement methodology does not propose the development of a single indicator which synthesizes all the dimensions of poverty. On the contrary, the idea is to explore different

Cultural traditions in different countries are the root of other restrictions faced by women. "Cultural norms do not only inhibit women from inheriting land. Traditionally upon the death of her husband, a widow is dispossessed of all of her husband's property, which is distributed among the husband's male relatives. One state in the country, Enugu, enacted a law in 2001 forbidding this practice. However there has been no enforcement of the law and the practice remains widespread. Other states and the federal government carry on as if they were not aware of the tradition."

*Nigeria national report*

India's report is also enlightening on the subject: "Women are also marginalized because they are powerless in different economic, social and political activities. Legal provisions and social practices regarding ownership and inheritance are weighted against women, except in a few areas where matrilineal family structures exist. Social, political and family structures do not include women in decision-making. This not only affects the place of women in society, the economy and the family, but also contributes to their low self-esteem."

*India national report*

The Uruguayan report highlights the different dimensions of labour inequality: "Women are particularly affected by labour market flexibility, loss of clear work standards, fear of unemployment, labour segmentation between the sexes, unequal remuneration for the same work, exclusion from decision-making positions due to gender stereotypes, sexual harassment, along with a social security system that does not respond to the necessities of an aging population nor to the realities of the informal labour market."

*Uruguay national report*

5 Kabeer, *op cit.*

measurement proposals geared to improving the more conventional techniques while noting their advantages and limitations, as well as to creating new measurements.

### Measuring household income

The measurement of poverty according to household income is currently one of the most widely used methods. It is a very useful quantitative indicator to identify poverty situations, and as far as models of monetary measurement are concerned, there is no method that is more effective. Also there is greater availability of country data that measure poverty in monetary terms than by using other approaches (capabilities, social exclusion, participation). Measuring poverty by income therefore allows for country and regional comparisons and helps policy makers by estimating how many people are poor.

The main deficiency of income measurement is its inability to reflect the multidimensionality of poverty. It emphasizes the monetary dimension of poverty, and therefore ignores cultural aspects of poverty like power differences, which determine access to resources; and above all, unpaid domestic work, which is indispensable to the survival of households.

Another frequent critique of this poverty measurement is that it does not take into account that people also satisfy their needs through non-monetary resources, such as community networks and family support.

Political participation is crucial in gender equity. The Salvadorean report states that “the biggest challenge for gender equity is related to the participation of women in politics. In autonomous public bodies only 9.1% of managerial positions are held by women; in Parliament only 10.7% of representatives are women, and on municipal councils women only hold 6.5% of posts. There is evidently a lack of political will to allow women to participate more in positions of power. The Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (Salvadorean Institute for Women’s Development), the lead organization for gender policy, is allocated only 0.04% of the national budget, and women’s organizations make up only 16.3% of its management board.”

*El Salvador national report*

The legal dimension is also important, in particular in relation to abortion: “The most controversial gender problem in Portugal is abortion. It is illegal except in cases where the mother’s life is endangered, the foetus has serious problems or pregnancy is the result of rape. Thousands of women die every year or suffer serious health problems because they cannot get professional help and are forced to undergo unsafe abortions. For years there has been strong controversy in public opinion and among politicians, especially when women are prosecuted. Legal changes are urgent but they continue to be postponed.”

*Portugal national report*

Measuring income per capita by household presents serious limitations to capturing intra-household poverty dimensions. It fails to account for the fact that men and women experience poverty differently within the same household. This is because households are the unit of analysis, and an equitable distribution of resources among household members is assumed. By this measurement all household members are equally poor.

Unpaid work within the household is not counted as income. Yet domestic work can make a

considerable difference in household income. Male-headed households are more likely to count on free domestic work performed by the female spouse and therefore avoid incurring expenses associated with household maintenance. This is less likely to happen in female-headed households, which generally incur the private costs of doing unpaid domestic work: less rest and leisure time, which affects levels of physical and mental health; less time to access better job opportunities and less time for social and political participation.

Further, the income method does not show the differences between men and women in their use of time or their expenditure patterns. These aspects are central to the analysis of poverty from a gender perspective. Time use studies confirm that women spend more time than men in unpaid activities, with the result that they have longer workdays to the detriment of their health and nutrition levels.

Individual measurements of economic autonomy and ability to fulfil each person’s needs are necessary to study intra-household poverty.

It is not about replacing one measurement with another, but about working with both, since they serve different purposes. Individual poverty measurements allow us to identify poverty situations which remain hidden to traditional measurements, such as the poverty of people living in non-poor households but without their own incomes. Those studies expose the greater limitations faced by women in becoming economically autonomous.

### Unpaid work

Unpaid work is a central concept in the study of poverty from a gender perspective. Even when not valued monetarily, that work satisfies needs and allows for social reproduction to take place. There is a strong relationship between unpaid work and the impoverishment of women. The need to measure women’s work has been highlighted and has led to

### Paragraph 206 of the Beijing Platform for Action 1995 recommends:

- “(f) Develop a more comprehensive knowledge of all forms of work and employment by:
  - (i) Improving data collection on the unremunerated work which is already included in the United Nations System of National Accounts, such as in agriculture, particularly subsistence agriculture, and other types of non-market production activities;
  - (ii) Improving measurements that at present underestimate women’s unemployment and underemployment in the labour market;
  - (iii) Developing methods, in the appropriate forums, for assessing the value, in quantitative terms, of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, such as caring for dependants and preparing food, for possible reflection in satellite or other official accounts that may be produced separately from but are consistent with core national accounts, with a view to recognizing the economic contribution of women and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men;
- (g) Develop an international classification of activities for time-use statistics that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work, and collect data disaggregated by sex. At the national level, subject to national constraints:
  - (i) Conduct regular time-use studies to measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work, including recording those activities that are performed simultaneously with remunerated or other unremunerated activities;
  - (ii) Measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work that is outside national accounts and work to improve methods to assess and accurately reflect its value in satellite or other official accounts that are separate from but consistent with core national accounts.”



different proposals which suggest assigning monetary value to domestic work and its inclusion in national accounts. The measurement of unpaid work would also show an important difference in household income between households with a person devoted to domestic work and care giving (male-headed households) and households that must pay the private costs associated with this work (female-headed households).

### Measurement of time devoted to “unpaid work”

Another way to measure and visualize unpaid work is through time use studies. Unpaid work is divided into subsistence work (food and clothing production, clothing repair), domestic work (purchasing household goods and services, cooking, laundry, ironing, cleaning, activities related to household organization and task distribution, and errands such as bill payment among others), family care (child and elderly care) and community service or voluntary work (services provided to non-family members through religious or lay organizations).<sup>6</sup> By taking into account the time women spend doing each one of these activities, they become visible and acknowledged, facilitating the perception of gender inequalities in families and society. Also, time use studies allow us to calculate total workload volume, which is a concept that includes both paid and unpaid work.

Time use surveys help generate better statistics on paid and unpaid work and are an essential tool in developing a greater body of knowledge about different forms of work and employment.

There are precedents for this type of systematic study from countries such as Canada, Cuba, France, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain and Venezuela.<sup>7</sup> In Italy “the increase in female participation is not matched with a fairer distribution of family activities: unpaid childcare and social reproduction activities fall almost entirely upon women whose total working hours, paid and unpaid, are on average 28% more than men’s. Some 35.2% of men do not dedicate any hours to family care activities.”

Other countries’ efforts - although not systematic - have permitted specific studies of these dimensions. This is the case in Uruguay where a 2003 survey on male and female time use was carried out with the objective of generating indicators which would report on and display asymmetric gender relationships in families.<sup>8</sup>

### Final summary

The gender approach has made valuable conceptual and methodological contributions to the study of poverty. In conceptual terms, it has provided a more comprehensive definition of poverty, proposing an integrated and dynamic approach which acknowledges the multidimensional and heterogeneous aspects of poverty. The gender perspective strongly criticizes definitions of poverty based only in income and highlights the material, symbolic and cultural components as those which influence power relationships which in turn determine gender access to resources (material, social and cultural). Without a gender perspective poverty cannot be sufficiently understood.

The gender approach to the study of poverty has led to the review of more conventional measurement methods and an exploration of alternatives, thus making a significant contribution to the ongoing debate.

Household income measurement does not capture the intra household dimensions of poverty, including gender inequalities, since it assumes a fair distribution of resources among members, thereby homogenizing each person’s needs and considering everyone to be equally poor. The method has limitations for measuring gender inequalities because it fails to acknowledge, in monetary terms, the contribution of unpaid domestic work to the household. Finally, income measurement fails to capture gender differences in terms of time use and expenditure patterns, two dimensions that contribute to characterize poverty more fully and to design better policies. ■

6 Aguirre, Rosario. “Trabajo no remunerado y uso del tiempo. Fundamentos conceptuales y avances empíricos. La encuesta Montevideo 2003”, ECLAC, Santiago de Chile, 2004.

7 For more information on these studies see Araya, María José “Un acercamiento a las Encuestas sobre el Uso del Tiempo con orientación de género”, Unidad Mujer y Desarrollo, ECLAC, Series *Mujer y Desarrollo* No. 50, Chile, 2003.

8 Aguirre, *op cit*.

# What the social development indicators say

## Social development in focus

- *The percentage of the world's population living in extreme poverty, the number one concern of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),<sup>1</sup> may have decreased over the last decade (1995-2004). This decline however is closely linked to the development of one single country (China), whose population accounts for one-fifth of the total world population. Forecasts on the future evolution of poverty point to the absence of one single direction and the prevalence of regional differences. World Bank estimates predict that the goals set by the MDGs might be met in Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia and perhaps in Northern Africa, while in Latin America the slow poverty reduction pace makes the goal unattainable by 2015. In Sub-Saharan Africa the outlook is grim given that poverty increased in 140 million people between 1995 and 2004.*
- *Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger is an indispensable step towards the well-being of the world's population and represents the first challenge facing the global community. However concerns about food security have not resulted in actions which help countries pursue solutions to overcome this serious problem. Although many countries have made great efforts and shown some improvement in indicators related to food status and population undernourishment, they account for less than half of the whole community of nations. Conversely, approximately one in every five countries in that group has experienced a significant deterioration of its nutrition situation. According to FAO the outlook does not look very promising as far as the affected population is concerned: in developing countries the number of hunger-stricken people has fallen by only nine million over the course of 15 years and the opportunities favourable to food security are still very unequal, both between and within countries. South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are still the most critical regions in terms of their food situation. Even though poverty is still concentrated in rural areas, urbanization and globalization generate a more complex view of the factors that cause food insecurity and their related impact. In the world today, food crises are increasingly caused by human actions. It therefore becomes even more horrifying to realize that at present 852 million people in the world are affected by hunger.*
- *There is broad consensus about the importance of education as an indispensable tool to help people out of a situation of poverty in a context of sustainable and lasting development. Over recent years, there has been growth in primary education coverage spurred by commitments resulting from the Copenhagen Social Summit and the Millennium Summit. However worldwide advances in education coexist with a wide variety of situations; some of them extremely serious as in the case of several African countries where nearly half the population is illiterate. At other levels it is necessary to evaluate the quality of education provided in order to go beyond mere quantitative coverage indicators. Although there may be no systematic information available in this area, the differences in quality are obvious and have a negative influence on educational equity. Another feature that characterizes these inequities, apart from basic coverage and quality of elementary education, is the time of exposure to education, that is to say, the highest level reached by a person in their educational career. The number of years of schooling varies greatly between poor and rich countries. The widest coverage gaps occur in the average years in tertiary education, where understandably the richest countries have the highest averages while in Africa the average is insignificant.*
- *In recent years, characterized by a slowdown in health-related social benefits and by increased inequality, the health security of countries has evolved unevenly. The differences caused by demographic factors and health policies as well as by different living standards are revealed in the morbidity and mortality indicators. Although there is some progress on a global level, such as a decline in infant mortality, there are regions where the situation is still serious and some countries have even experienced regression. Sub-Saharan Africa is the area facing the world's poorest health conditions: the HIV/AIDS pandemic, together with an increase of tuberculosis and malaria, have caused historical regression such as the reduction in life expectancy at birth. Increased coverage of basic immunization to children under one year of age has probably been one of the main contributing factors in the reduction of infant mortality. A follow-up study of the situation since the early 1990s shows progress in most countries. The average world immunization coverage today is around 70% but this figure masks the huge inequity existing between countries. The goal of achieving universal immunization coverage becomes more elusive in the light of the enormous gaps observed between countries and even more so when at least 15% of the countries have regressed in their coverage. A country's wealth is inextricably related to its health indicators. The gap existing between the richest and the poorest countries is not diminishing; therefore, world progress in terms of morbidity and mortality is still unevenly distributed among the world's population.*
- *Access to safe drinking water and sanitary services comprise the minimum basic infrastructure associated with better health security levels. Ten years after the Copenhagen and Beijing agreements, and five years after the Millennium Declaration, over 1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water (approximately 17% of the global population) while more than 40% of the world's population lack basic sanitary services. The situation becomes alarming in poor countries where more than 70% of the urban population live in squatter settlements or slums, with no access to essential services such as safe drinking water and sanitation. The most serious example of lack of access to safe drinking water is Afghanistan where in 2002 only 13 out of every 100 people had access to improved water sources. With respect to sanitation, there are extreme cases such as that of Ethiopia, where only 6 out of 100 inhabitants have access to this service. On the other end of the spectrum, both in terms of water services and sanitation, are high-income countries such as Norway, the United States and the Netherlands, where both services are completely covered.*

<sup>1</sup> The Millennium Development Goals are: 1) Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2) Achieve universal primary education; 3) Promote gender equality and empower women; 4) Reduce child mortality; 5) Improve maternal health; 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; 7) Ensure environmental sustainability; and 8) Develop a global partnership for development.

- *The inclusion of the gender dimension in these categories of well-being triggers a multiplying effect, that is to say, global inequity becomes even greater when gender is considered. Gender equity must be borne in mind when studying quality of life. The growing participation of women in different spheres of society has not guaranteed their recognition or improvements in their quality of life. The fact is that women cannot fully participate in economic and public life; they have limited access to positions of influence and power; their labour options are more restricted and their income is much lower than that of men performing the same job. Although progress can be noted in many countries, unequal access to education still exists between men and women in most developing countries and is still far from being eradicated.*
  - *The participation of women in economic activities is of particular importance as it relates directly to poverty issues. Women's participation in the most rural societies coincides with the most industrialized ones. According to available data, 70% of the estimated 1.3 billion poor of the world today are women. Some of the reasons leading to higher poverty among women are unequal conditions in terms of women's access to the labour market and labour discrimination through lower salaries. The income gap is one of the most striking inequalities: even in countries that are better off, female income is only 65% of male income, while in countries where the situation is worse, the relationship is around 30%. Furthermore, all over the world women are practically absent from parliament. On average they account for less than 15% of members of parliament and no systematic differences are observed by region or according to country income level.*
  - *Despite evident progress in both the coverage and quality of reproductive health, this particular area is still a priority for millions of women in countries with severe qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. This is reflected in poor health indicators: high maternal mortality, low prevalence in the use of contraceptives and low percentage of births attended by skilled personnel. Every day 1,600 women die worldwide due to complications experienced during pregnancy and childbirth. In addition, 50 million women annually suffer health problems related to pregnancy and childbirth. Inequalities between countries are overwhelming: in developing countries, maternal death is 18 times higher than in industrialized countries. Since women in developing countries have more pregnancies and obstetric care is more scarce and inadequate, they are exposed to the risk of maternal mortality 40 times more than in the developed world. Inadequacies in reproductive and sexual health care services cause almost one fifth of the world's premature morbidity and mortality figures, and one third of the diseases and deaths of women in their reproductive years.<sup>2</sup>*
  - *Scientific and technological innovation is the area that has advanced most rapidly in recent years. The capacity of countries to generate science and technology is of vital strategic importance despite the fact that only a few nations have been able to maintain a good position in terms of these indicators. Developing countries, which are home to almost four-fifths of the world's population, supply less than 30% of researchers in science and technology. Meanwhile, although practically all countries in the world are connected to the Internet and other types of communication and information technology such as telephones and*
- personal computers access to them is remarkably unequal. This inequality is maintained in spite of the progress achieved in this field by the large majority of countries. When the expenses on information and communication technology and the number of scientists and engineers devoted to research and development are taken into account, the outlook is not encouraging. These two indicators, which are key to progress in this area, also demonstrate an unequal distribution which compromises the chance for equitable and sustainable development.*
- *Governments have signed a series of international treaties on fundamental human rights<sup>3</sup> that have become internationally binding. In addition to the civil and political rights of individuals, these international treaties and conventions express the right to health, education, adequate housing, non-discrimination, decent work for men and women alike, and the rights of children, among others. Part of the obligations assumed by the States that signed and ratified these international treaties is their commitment to guarantee their compliance at the national level by passing national legislation and implementing policies geared at their enforcement.*
  - *The chances to improve the living conditions of citizens all over the world and allow them to fully exercise their rights, requires the political will of decision-makers. Governments play a leading role and their resources should be made available for development. A look at the public budgets of all countries and at the international cooperation commitments of high income countries reveals that governments are not making further efforts in education and health. Some countries have experienced progress in this area while in others expenditure in relation to gross domestic product (GDP) has fallen. A more specific analysis should incorporate the way in which expenses are managed within the education and public health systems. Meanwhile, the heavy share of military expenses in several countries is a matter of concern when compared to their social spending.*
  - *Servicing the foreign debt is still a very important burden that results in substantial restrictions in terms of the availability of economic resources and their potential reorientation toward policies favouring the MDGs. Access to debt alleviation programmes for heavily indebted poor countries has become difficult for many due to restrictions imposed upon the adoption of these programmes, and their global impact remains weak. In middle-income countries there is concern regarding the tendency towards increased debt servicing as percentage of gross national income (GNI).*
  - *In recent years the Official Development Assistance provided by wealthy countries over the last three decades has shown signs of recovery, after a period of regression. However donor countries are far from fulfilling their commitment since only five of them have reached the agreed goal of assisting developing countries with the equivalent of 0.7% of their GNI. ■*

Social Watch Research Team

2 Singh, S., et al. *Adding it up: The Benefits of Investing in Sexual and Reproductive Health Care*. Washington, DC and New York: The Alan Guttmacher Institute and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), 2004.

3 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948; International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1965; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), 1966; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979; Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989.



Since 1995, Social Watch annual reports have included a follow-up on the situation of countries in relation to the development goals that governments committed themselves to during the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, as well as to the most recent goals of the Millennium Declaration for 2015.

Since 2004 Social Watch follow-up strategy is built around a set of basic areas of social development. The dimensions of analysis related to human security were therefore incorporated and strengthened following the guidelines proposed by international summits.<sup>5</sup> These dimensions also represent relevant thematic areas for understanding poverty from a multi-dimensional perspective.

Indicators selected to define and evaluate these core areas of development respond not only to conceptual criteria but also to functional considerations based on the evaluation of coverage and international comparability of indicators.<sup>6</sup>

#### Thematic areas:

- Poverty and distribution
- Food security
- Education
- Health security
  - Morbidity and mortality
  - Immunization
- Environment
- Gender equity
  - In education
  - In economic activity
  - In empowerment
- Reproductive health
- Information, science and technology
- Public expenditure
- Development aid
- International commitments and human rights

For descriptive/explanatory purposes the advance tables and the placement of countries in each area are classified according to geographic region or income level.<sup>7</sup>

## 1. Poverty and distribution

#### Selected indicators:

- Gini Index (%)
- International poverty line: population living with less than USD 1 a day (%)
- International poverty line: poverty gap of population living with less than USD 1 a day (%)
- Population below the national poverty line (%)
- Poorest quintile's share of consumption (%)

Unfortunately very little can be said about the progress in the struggle to reduce poverty. Even though the foremost goal of the Millennium Summit is to reduce the world's poverty by half, instruments and measurements used in the diagnosis and evolution of the situation are still inaccurate and under discussion.

### 1.1. On measuring poverty

The concept of poverty is and will be a source of heated debate. This is mainly due to the fact that it is built around a purely analytical perspective that reflects the dissatisfaction of certain needs considered basic for the development of life in society. There is more than one viewpoint not only on the way these needs are measured but also on how to determine when needs are met. There is also debate regarding the choice of basic needs that define a situation of poverty.

When considering which needs determine a poverty situation, the first step is to identify any unsatisfied basic needs. In order to do so, it is necessary to define the specific set of household needs whose presence or absence determines whether the household is poor or not. Therefore a person is considered poor when living in a poor household. A second method is based on the consideration of income as a tool to satisfy the set of needs that are considered essential to ensure a minimum standard

of living. According to this method, a person is poor when his/her income is below the minimum threshold to satisfy certain needs. This option, based exclusively on the satisfaction of needs related to the consumption of goods and services money can buy, does not take into consideration access to other goods and services not provided by the market or factors that influence a person's welfare but are unrelated to monetary income.

The income threshold method may be based on a relative or an absolute poverty line. The relative poverty line is set in such a way that a person is considered poor when his/her income is below the average income of the members of a given society. This is the method used by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Thus, poverty is basically conceptualized as a problem of distribution related to social justice criteria. The absolute poverty line is determined in such a way as to reflect the amount of money necessary to reach a minimum standard of living. It does not depend on the distribution of income. When establishing these poverty lines the income level necessary to cover basic needs (food, clothing, housing, healthcare, and education) should be taken into consideration. In order to do so a basket of goods is established that includes food items that meet nutritional requirements and non-food items considered to cover basic consumption needs. The poverty line will result from expanding the value of the basic basket according to the factor derived from the quotient between consumption expenditure and food expenditure of the group in question.

Over and above absolute and relative poverty lines, it is increasingly necessary to remember that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Altimir<sup>8</sup> defines poverty as "a situational syndrome that brings together infra-consumption, malnutrition, poor living conditions, low educational levels, inadequate sanitary conditions, unstable participation in the productive system, attitudes of discouragement and anomie, little participation in social integration mechanisms, and maybe the endorsement of a particular set of values somewhat different to those of the rest of the society." Qualitative considerations are currently being added to the definition to provide more depth to the concept. "Feeling poor is a relative concept that has a lot to do with having access to necessary resources to satisfy the living standards that are customary to or approved by the society you belong to."<sup>9</sup>

Recently, non-material or symbolic dimensions have been added to the concept of poverty, such as the increasingly necessary use of several modern skills, among which can be mentioned analytical thinking, information processing capacity, communication and management skills in order to ensure full participation in a globalized world and adaptation

4 The members of the team are: Karina Batthyány (Coordinator), Mariana Sol Cabrera, Graciela Dede, Daniel Macadar and Ignacio Pardo.

5 Social Watch holds a critical view on making the goals established by the UN in the Millennium Summit operational, as it has focused on the situation of countries in the worse relative situation, thus reducing expectations and demands for improvement in other countries with higher relative development. However, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are considered an important point of reference.

6 It must be pointed out that in several areas we chose to include indicators that, despite showing high correlations among them, firmly represent the area should one of them be absent in the summary value.

7 World Bank definitions: *Geographic region*: Classifications and data reported for geographic regions are for low-income and middle-income economies only. Low-income and middle-income economies are sometimes referred to as developing economies. The use of the term is convenient; it is not intended to imply that all economies in the group are experiencing similar development or that other economies have reached a preferred or final stage of development. Classification by income does not necessarily reflect development status. *Income group*: Economies are divided according to 2003 GNI per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method. The groups are: low income, USD 765 or less; lower middle income, USD 766 - USD 3,035; higher middle income, USD 3,036 - USD 9,385; and high income, USD 9,386 or more. See: [www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html](http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html)

8 Altimir, Oscar. *La dimensión de la pobreza en América Latina*. (The dimension of poverty in Latin America), ECLAC, 1979.

9 *Ibid.*

to new labour and production models. If poverty is defined in terms of a lack of well-being or resources that allow people to live a good quality of life, then attention must be paid to dimensions such as availability of spare time, public safety, protection against public and domestic violence, protection against disasters, and gender equity.<sup>10</sup>

Although the broad approach presented here has not been operational at the level of empirical research, a multi-dimensional approach seems to be the most appropriate way to define situations associated with the condition of poverty. In this respect, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can and must be considered a multi-dimensional approach to meet basic human needs and part of an organized response to the condition of poverty in its broadest sense.

### 1.2. Poverty of income

In recognizing the multidimensional character of poverty, we should acknowledge that there is no single method for measuring poverty but rather a variety of methodological approaches that can be used to measure it. Information on the living standards of individuals, their health situation, educational level, mortality and morbidity, gender equity and other characteristics are indispensable in obtaining a sense of the scope, distribution and trends of poverty worldwide. Income poverty is, however, an essential part of measuring certain situations and living conditions of people, since income in today's society is undoubtedly a fundamental factor that links people with the satisfaction of certain needs.

The need to compare income poverty at the international level has led to the development of tools that have become both widely used and widely questioned. The USD 1 or USD 2 a day poverty lines are controversial, yet the former was still used to make the main MDG operational.

### 1.3. The poverty of measurement

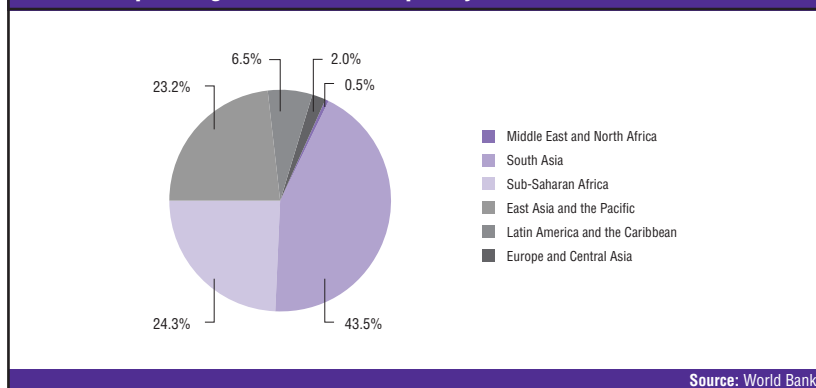
According to Reddy and Pogge,<sup>11</sup> the World Bank estimates contain serious flaws and are therefore not fully reliable:

- The international poverty line (IPL) is inconsistent, since it does not provide the means to interpret purchasing power between countries or between years, and therefore leads to estimates that make no sense. Thus it is possible for people who are considered poor in one country to have more products or engage in higher consumption than those not identified as poor in another.
- The IPL is not based on an individual's requirement for basic resources.

10 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). "Document on poverty for the Third Regional Follow-up Conference on the Social Development Summit", 2003.

11 Reddy, Sanjay G. and Thomas W. Pogge. *How Not to Count the Poor*, (Version 4.5), mimeo. New York: Barnard College, University of Columbia, 2003.

Chart 1. People living on less than USD 1 per day



- Poverty estimates available today are unreliable due to their sensitivity to the values of critical parameters that are estimated on the basis of limited information or no information at all.

Reddy and Pogge state that we are still uncertain about the income of poor people in the whole world, how poor they are, where they live and how this figure has changed over the years. This information is extremely important and urgent for MDG monitoring. The authors suggest that the definition of poverty concentrate on the basic ability to satisfy one's needs and not just on an arbitrary amount of dollars. This would provide meaning to the ILP: those below the line will lack the necessary resources to satisfy the most basic requirements of a human being.

In conclusion, common methods need to be adopted to determine poverty lines and to provide worldwide poverty estimates. To this end, it will be necessary to specify - through a comprehensive and transparent process - not only the basic human capabilities that depend on income but also the characteristics of any goods typically needed to achieve them. A fixed set of human capabilities can also provide a single standard to adjust national poverty lines over time, to reflect the changing prices of priority needs to achieve elementary capabilities. These adjustments should be conducted by national committees that make the national poverty line consistent with common standards. A universal standard will allow the world to rely on the definition of poverty used to estimate the number of poor people and will also ensure that this condition has the same meaning in any corner of the world.

### 1.4. The goal to reduce poverty in the world and World Bank data (1990-2015)

Indicators presented in the **present situation of poverty in the world table** are the ones used internationally<sup>12</sup> to assess poverty and inequity from the point of view of income. Information available at a global level for this type of measurement is very

12 See, for example, Vigorito, Andrea. "Some comments on country-to-country poverty comparisons" in *Social Watch Report 2003. The poor and the market*. 2003.

limited: not only is it lacking in some countries but also the criteria for measuring vary or are applied to situations that do not allow for comparison.<sup>13</sup> In addition, some national situations are diagnosed on the basis of quite superficial estimates. Within this framework of inaccuracy and relativity it is very difficult to establish the criteria for quantifying poverty in the world and, more specifically, to get information on two instances in time that are minimally comparable between countries. For all of these reasons, it is truly complicated to establish a follow-up of the evolution of poverty, measured through changes in country income level. It is necessary to pay attention to potential manipulation of the results of poverty measurements undertaken for purposes related to the political evaluation of international commitments and campaigns.

Bearing in mind the warnings mentioned above, the latest figures available from the World Bank report a decline in the absolute number of people in conditions of extreme poverty<sup>14</sup> from 1.22 billion in 1990 to 1.1 billion in 2001. The same source<sup>15</sup> points to the fact that this reduction is mainly due to the significant decrease in poverty experienced in China. At a regional level, substantial improvement was seen in South and East Asia, where the first MDG will most likely be reached.

The Global Economic Projections carried out by the World Bank in 2002 already recognized that the MDGs could be achieved at a global level, albeit with great regional differences. The forecast for the year 2015 indicates that 734 million people will be living in poverty. This figure is obtained through differential drops in the number of poor people by region and according to a slight increase in North Africa and the Middle East and an alarming increase in Sub-Saharan Africa. (Chart 1).

The 2004 review of poverty projections indicates that by 2015 poverty might reach a global level of 12.5%, compared to 28.3% estimated for 1990. At the regional level, the evolution of poverty in North

13 In many cases, the country information presented refers only to certain regions or cities.

14 People living with less than USD 1 a day.

15 The World Bank is the only source of reference to count poverty according to income on a global level.

Africa and the Middle East, as well as in Europe and Central Asia, shows that this goal is likely to be achieved. It might not be met however in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. According to regional specialists, chances for the Latin American region to reach its goal are closely linked to a change in its income distribution patterns. The region is the most unequal in the world and there does not appear to be any trend to indicate a reversal on this situation. On the other hand, Sub-Saharan Africa has witnessed the growth, rather than the reduction of poverty, from 41% to 46% of the population. This translates into 140 million more people living in a situation of extreme poverty.

It is worth noting that the poverty reduction goal has been implemented through the specific goal of reducing the share of the total population below the poverty line of USD 1 a day, which nevertheless allows the absolute number of people living in such conditions to increase. Taking into account the total number of people who survived on less than USD 2 a day in 1990 (2.65 billion), the estimates for this figure in 2015 are down to 2.14 billion. In this case, the situation is slightly different as the significant increase in the number of people who live on less than USD 2 a day in Sub-Saharan Africa must be added to the slight increase experienced in South Asia and to a decline in East Asia and the Pacific (due to China's inclusion in this region).

Although good performance is expected from countries in South Asia regarding populations living on less than USD 1 a day, a large contingency of people will hardly cross this threshold and will remain below USD 2 a day. If we consider the evolution of poverty measured through the one-dollar-a-day basis over the last few decades, we can see that by the year 2000 the number of people living on less than USD 1 a day was reduced by more than 130 million, compared with this figure in 1990. But this was due, almost exclusively, to the reduction experienced in East Asia and the Pacific, where figures fell almost by half: from 470 million in 1990 to 261 million in 2000, mostly due to the strong pace of income growth in China, which reached over 9% annually.

## 2. Food security

### *Selected indicators:*

- Undernourishment (% of total population)
- Low birth weight (%)
- Malnutrition in children under 5 (low weight for age, %)

For a society to achieve the adequate levels of food security, all of its members must "at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritionally adequate food to satisfy nutritional needs and their preference in terms of food choice, so that they may live a healthy and active life. Food security is accomplished when the availability of food is guaranteed and the supply is stable and affordable."<sup>16</sup>

16 FAO, Special Programme for Food Security. [www.fao.org/spfs/index.asp?lang=en](http://www.fao.org/spfs/index.asp?lang=en)

**Table 1. Food security: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		UNDER-NOURISHMENT (% OF TOTAL POPULATION)	LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (%)	MALNUTRITION IN CHILDREN UNDER 5, LOW WEIGHT (%)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	38	19	34
	Number of countries	28	32	32
Countries in better relative situation	Average	8	6	6
	Number of countries	36	72	46

To halve the average number of people experiencing hunger in the world by 2015 is one of the first commitments governments assumed at the time that the MDGs were agreed upon. This goal is less ambitious than the one formulated in 1996 when 186 country leaders at the World Food Summit pledged to reduce the number of people starving by over one half. The estimated figure of starving people at that time was 841 and the goal was to be achieved within one decade. The latest figures reveal that, since 1990, the number of people living in hunger in developing countries has only been reduced by 9 million.

Food security is an essential factor in the effective exercise of human rights. The right to adequate nutrition is enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, through which the signatory States committed themselves to work towards improved food production, preservation and distribution methods in order to ensure an equitable distribution of global food supplies according to the needs of the population.

The current food security situation on a global level is of high concern, particularly when faced with the fact that recent history does not show a strong tendency towards improved food security. In its 2004 report, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)<sup>17</sup> estimates the number of people in the world suffering from undernourishment at 852 million and draws three forceful conclusions. Firstly, the minimum pace of progress necessary to combat chronic hunger in the developing world has not been attained. Secondly, progress has been very asymmetric with several countries experiencing significant progress while many others remained stagnant or even deteriorated. Finally, both in human and economic terms, "the costs of not taking immediate and strenuous action to reduce hunger at comparable rates worldwide are staggering. (...) Every year that hunger continues at present levels costs more than 5 million children their lives and costs developing countries billions of dollars in lost productivity and earnings."<sup>18</sup>

With the hunger reduction pace that the world has set up until now, it will not be possible to achieve the MDG to reduce hunger. In order to improve this

16 FAO, Special Programme for Food Security. [www.fao.org/spfs/index.asp?lang=en](http://www.fao.org/spfs/index.asp?lang=en)

17 FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2004*, 2004. [www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5650e/y5650e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5650e/y5650e00.htm)

18 *Ibid.*

situation, intensive efforts will be necessary from developing countries and from the international community. These efforts must not only include investments and specific policies, but also substantial changes in world trade practices. These elements are explicitly outlined in MDG 8 and involve aid from the international community to the most troubled countries, as well as changes in debt management and trade mechanisms.

In particular, FAO has expressed the need for direct measures to reinforce effective access to food, especially through income generated by employment in rural activities that are safe, productive and competitive. "Most of the poorest developing countries are in desperate need of investment. International aid to such countries, including lasting solutions to the debt issue as well, would represent a concrete signal that the world is willing to meet the goals of the UN World Food and Development Summit for the Millennium."<sup>19</sup>

Currently half the people starving in the world live in small farming communities, while another 20% are landless farmers and 10% live in communities whose subsistence is based on cattle grazing, fishing or forestry activities. Only 20% of the starving live in cities. However, urbanization as well as globalization of food systems are modifying the map of hunger and the nutritional profile of hunger and malnutrition in developing countries.<sup>20</sup> These changes make more complex the factors leading to food vulnerability among countries and within countries.

The number of food emergencies (crises due to natural or human causes that require immediate attention) has gradually grown over the last 20 years from an annual average of 15 in the 1980s to over 30 since the year 2000. Additionally, the proportion of emergencies that can be principally attributed to human causes, such as conflict or economic crisis, has more than doubled since 1992, from 15% to 35% while the proportion of emergencies caused by natural disasters has diminished. African countries affected by the most devastating and prolonged crises are those subject to armed conflict. Some of these countries such as Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan have been immersed in crises throughout almost the entire period lasting from 1990-2004. In all of these cases, armed conflicts have coincided with difficult climatic conditions.<sup>21</sup>

19 Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO. [www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2004/50703](http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2004/50703)

20 FAO, *op cit.*

21 *Ibid.*

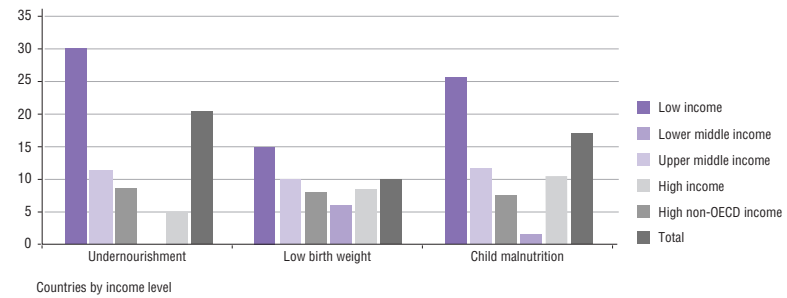
The consequences of food insecurity are especially serious in the case of the newly born and of children, causing immediate effects and after-effects for the rest of their lives. Almost one-third of children living in developing countries suffer retarded growth and below average height for their age, which is proof of their chronic undernourishment. Every year, over 20 million babies are born with insufficient weight in the developing world. Retarded growth and low birth weight cause serious harm to these children, impairing their physical and cognitive development and therefore seriously compromising their future possibilities. In the case of girls, consequences can also be passed on to the next generation as their chances of giving birth to babies with lower weight are above average.<sup>22</sup>

In terms of the present undernourishment situation, infant malnutrition and low birth weight, a significant number of countries occupy the best relative position; this group is comprised of around 40% of the countries with available information (72). At the other extreme, almost one in five countries (34) occupies the worst relative situation according to their food status. The difference between these two groups reveals the gap that exists among countries in the world in terms of food security. On average, almost four of every ten inhabitants of countries in the worst situation are affected by undernourishment. This translates into more than three children out of every ten under the age of 5 with malnutrition and one in every five with low birth weight. This is a far cry from countries with a better food situation, where on average there is less than one undernourished person out of every ten, one child out of every 20 is malnourished and one of every 20 babies is born with low weight. (Table 1).

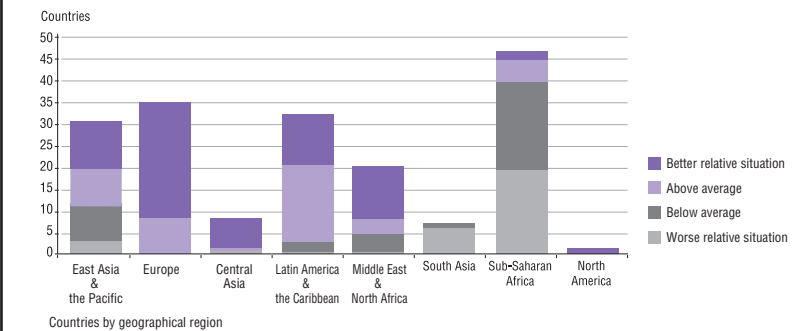
These differences are clearly visible when grouping countries according to their levels of income (measured in GDP per capita which is one of the indicators normally used to classify countries according to their development levels). According to FAO estimates, out of the 852 million undernourished people, 815 million live in developing countries, 28 million in countries in transition and 9 million in industrialized countries.<sup>23</sup> More specifically, 30% of the population is undernourished in countries in the lowest income level, while in lower middle income countries this figure drops to 12%. This indicator most clearly shows the differences existing between the poorest countries and the rest of the world. (Chart 2).

22 Ibid.  
23 Ibid.

**Chart 2. Average rates in undernourishment, child malnutrition and low birth weight by income level**



**Chart 3. Present situation in food security by region**



The geography of food security also reveals the differences that exist between countries by concentrating the most critical situations in specific regions. South Asia experiences the most difficult situation in terms of food security. Of the eight countries with available information, seven are in the worst situation within the area and the rest remain below average. The nutritional situation of children in this region is particularly critical, as it reflects the worst average values both in the percentage of the newly born with low birth weight (22%) as well as malnutrition in children under the age of 5 (39%).

Sub-Saharan Africa also reveals serious problems. In this region, the most critical situations relate to undernourishment (32%), with permanently high levels in infant malnutrition (24%) and in low birth weight (15%). Africa is the continent with the largest increase in food emergencies in recent years. These emergencies tripled between 1986 and 2004.<sup>24</sup> (Chart 3).

Recent developments in food security present a worrying scenario. Countries which show no or little progress in this area predominate. That is to say, there has been only a slight improvement in over ten years. The effort made by some countries that were in very critical situations has been impressive but not sufficient to produce any substantial changes. Only slightly more than half (27) of

24 Ibid.

the countries that made advances were able to rise above the global food security average.

The deterioration of food security is happening as much in countries that still maintain above average situations, as in countries in the worst positions in this area, although the greatest regression has occurred mainly in this last group.

Indicators reflect this slow progress. On average, countries have curbed the undernourishment of their population by two percentage points and infant malnutrition by three points. However the same average values are maintained in the percentage of children with low birth weight. These averages summarize divergent evolutions where we find some countries that have regressed significantly while others have made substantial progress in their food situation.

The stagnation and regression of many countries is associated with frequent or prolonged food crises which cause chronic generalized undernourishment of the population. The average duration of emergencies during the period of 1992-2004 was nine years. Between 1986 and 2004, 18 countries underwent critical situations for more than half that period. The result has been that in 13 of those countries, more than 35% of the population is starving.<sup>25</sup>

In eight countries significant regression has been registered in at least one of the indicators. In

25 Ibid.



The most critical situations today:

AT LEAST 1 IN 2 PERSONS IS STARVING* IN ...		
Eritrea	Sub-Saharan Africa	73%
Congo, Dem. Rep.	Sub-Saharan Africa	71%
Burundi	Sub-Saharan Africa	68%
Tajikistan	Central Asia	61%
Sierra Leone	Sub-Saharan Africa	50%
Zambia	Sub-Saharan Africa	49%
* Undernourishment (% of total population)		

OF EVERY 10 CHILDREN BORN, AT LEAST 3 ARE BORN WITH WEIGHTS MUCH BELOW NORMAL* IN...		
Mauritania	Sub-Saharan Africa	42%
Yemen	Middle East and North Africa	32%
Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa	31%
Bangladesh	South Asia	30%
India	South Asia	30%
* Low birth weight (%)		

ALMOST 1 OF EVERY 2 CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 5 SUFFERS FROM MALNUTRITION* IN...		
Bangladesh	South Asia	48%
Afghanistan	South Asia	48%
India	South Asia	47%
Nepal	South Asia	47%
Ethiopia	Sub-Saharan Africa	47%
Yemen	Middle East and North Africa	46%
Cambodia	East Asia and the Pacific	46%
Burundi	Sub-Saharan Africa	45%
* Malnutrition in children under 5, low weight (%)		

some cases, this setback is displayed in the percentage of undernourished people (the most alarming cases are the Democratic Republic of Congo, moving from 32% to 71% and Tajikistan, from 21% to 61% of its population). In other cases, deterioration is observed mainly in the infancy indicators (regression in terms of low birth weight and in infant malnutrition is significant in Comoros and Iraq).

On the other end of the scale, 12 countries have made significant progress in their food situation. In connection with this progress, FAO highlights important factors such as the implementation of specific actions both in food programmes (to accompany development policies) as well as changes in production structure and policies that cushion the effects of food crises, especially climate-generated ones. (Table 2).

### 3. Education

#### Selected indicators:

- Children reaching 5<sup>th</sup> grade (%)
- Illiteracy (ages 15-24) (%)
- Primary school enrolment net rate (%)

**Table 2. Present situation and recent evolution in food security**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN FOOD SECURITY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	3	6	12	7	4	32
Countries below average	3	1	9	11	5	29
Countries above average	1	11	20	9	2	43
Countries in better relative situation	1	8	35	22	1	67
Total *	8	26	76	49	12	171

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

Access to elementary education is crucial to the elimination of extreme poverty and is also a core human right. Governments are committed to achieving the six objectives in the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA)<sup>26</sup> and the education MDG.

Since 1994 there has been substantial growth in education worldwide, especially in Africa and South America. However inequality is still experienced and represents a source of concern both in developing and developed countries.

One of the most important world education objectives for governments is universal primary education coverage by 2015. In terms of primary education, it is essential to provide people with the basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills that they need for their personal development and to live in society. In order to do so, most countries have adopted five- or six-year primary education programmes, which are considered to be the number of years needed to reach the goal before moving onto more diversified and specialized education at secondary level. Likewise, many countries find it indispensable to develop educational systems that continue well beyond primary education.

According to UNESCO's *Global Education Digest 2004*,<sup>27</sup> although a child today is more likely to receive 9.3 years of schooling (primary and secondary education combined), there are considerable differences at the global level. In high-performing countries another 2.5 years of tertiary education can be added to the average, while in Africa the average time devoted to tertiary education is still marginal. A child starting school in Finland, New Zealand or Norway can expect to receive more than 17 years of education, which is almost twice what

In the Millennium Development Goals, education is a priority. MDG 2, which pursues universal primary education, is the main goal in this area. However the role of education in the attainment of the other goals is also relevant. Whether in the quest for more gender equality (MDG 3), or in the struggle to eradicate hunger and extreme poverty (MDG 1), environmental challenges (MDG 7), sanitary challenges (MDG 4, 5 and 6) or political challenges (MDG 8), education must be considered a crucial element in achieving higher levels of social development.

is received in Bangladesh or Myanmar, and four times what is received in Niger or Burkina Faso.

The study also reveals that estimated school years have a very high, although not perfect, correlation to the national income of a country. However unequal access to education exists both within and between countries. Therefore it is important not only to assess a country's progress with respect to world goals but also with respect to its declared national standards.

Some of the most significant differences in results between countries are found in the average time spent studying at the tertiary education level. The average time that young people spend in tertiary education (these estimates include those who never study) is more than 30 times higher in the ten countries with the highest participation rates compared with the ten countries with the lowest rates. An important exception is Africa, where time devoted to tertiary education is insignificant, even in countries with higher school-life expectancy. Tunisia and South Africa are the only countries in the region where tertiary school-life expectancy is more than one year.

According to the above-mentioned UNESCO report, the expected number of school years devoted to primary and secondary education is closely related to a country's wealth. Of 37 countries with low incomes, only Malawi and Uganda display a school-life expectancy of at least 11 years. Meanwhile, all high-income countries, except two, exceed this level. Among low-income countries, the mean duration of expected schooling is below seven years in 21 of 37 countries. Only Cameroon, Malawi, Nepal, Tajikistan and Uganda exceed the world mean duration of nine years.

In the majority of countries most students that complete primary education continue onto the first

26 In 1990, International Year of Literacy, the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien (Thailand) and the "World Declaration on Education for All" was adopted. The International Consultative Forum on Education for All was created together with its Secretariat at the UNESCO headquarters, and became the inter-institutional body in charge of conducting and supervising a follow-up on the conference. The World Education Forum, held in April 2000 in Dakar (Senegal), adopted the "Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments", that integrates six world action frameworks, and expressed the "collective commitment to action" and to attaining the objectives and purposes of EFA by 2015, at the latest.

27 UNESCO, *Global Education Digest 2004: Comparing Education Statistics across the World*. Institute for Statistics, 2004.



OVER 40% OF YOUNG PEOPLE* ARE ILLITERATE IN...	
Niger	73%
Burkina Faso	60%
Mali	59%
Iraq	54%
Bangladesh	49%
Mauritania	49%
Senegal	44%
Benin	41%

\* Illiteracy ages 15-24 (%)

three years of secondary education. In Europe, all countries except Ireland and Malta show transition rates that exceed 94%. In Asia and the Americas, transition rates exceed 90% in half of the countries and are above 85% in another quarter of the countries.

However the reality is very different in Africa. In one out of every four countries, half the children who reach the last level of primary education do not move onto secondary education. In another quarter of the countries, at least one in every three students drops out of school before starting secondary education. Only one quarter of the countries attain transition rates similar to those registered in other regions (exceeding 95%), including Botswana, Ethiopia, Namibia, Seychelles and South Africa.

Participation in the first three years of secondary education is common practice all over the world, with the exception of Africa. In Oceania, Europe, Asia and the Americas, half or almost half of the countries display net enrolment rates that exceed 90%. Of the 37 European countries, only Bulgaria and Moldova have net enrolment rates below 90%. Despite the high general levels of participation several countries present net enrolment rates under 50%: Papua New Guinea (31%) and Vanuatu (39%) in Oceania; Afghanistan (13%), Cambodia (33%), Myanmar (42%), Pakistan (35%) and East Timor (41%) in Asia; and Guatemala (44%) in the Americas.

Gender parity and equality in access to education are important components of international goals. The first international goal with concrete deadlines requires the achievement of gender parity in access to primary education by 2005.

As we will see in the section on gender equity and in the corresponding tables, more than one in every three boys and girls live in countries without equitable access to primary education. In all countries lacking gender equity in primary education access, girls are the most affected.

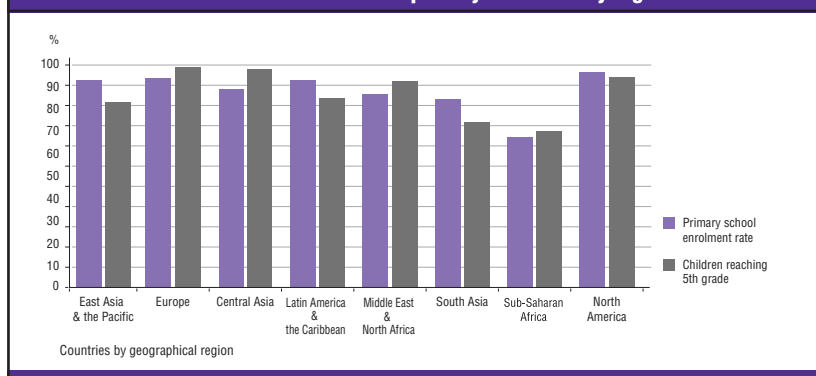
When considering the general situation of countries in terms of education, and looking at the three available indicators together, it is possible to observe that the majority of countries (84 out of 139) are above the world average. In the 25 countries in the worst performance group, more than 72% have been able to improve their situation in recent years and almost 30% have achieved significant progress (Table 3).

**Table 3. Present situation and recent evolution in education**

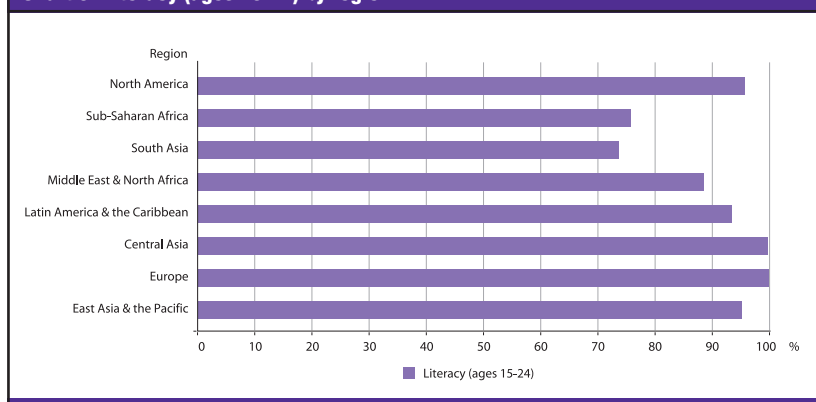
PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN EDUCATION					
	←	←		→	→	TOTAL*
Countries in worse relative situation			7	11	7	25
Countries below average	2		5	5	8	20
Countries above average	2		8	7	4	21
Countries in better relative situation	6		3	30	4	73
Total *	0	10	53	53	23	139

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

**Chart 4. Enrolment and retention rates in primary education by region**



**Chart 5. Literacy (ages 15-24) by region**



**Table 4. Education: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		LITERACY (AGES 15-24) (%)	PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT NET RATE (%)	CHILDREN REACHING 5 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE (%)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	66.7	61.8	58.5
	Number of countries	25	25	21
Countries in better relative situation	Average	98.4	94.9	93.9
	Number of countries	60	76	55

The most worrying scenarios are those of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Mauritania, Nepal, Papua New Guinea and Senegal, since they are stagnant and have the lowest education figures in the world. In some cases, such as that of Mauritania, circumstances are particularly serious since the illiteracy rate is around 50%.

As is the case in other dimensions, deep inequalities are evident between different regions of

the world in the education field (Chart 4). Very diverse education contexts co-exist throughout the world: from Sub-Saharan Africa, whose countries do not average 70% in primary education enrolment and retention, to the situation in North America and Europe where these figures exceed 90%.

The primary education figures from the various regions are clearly linked to the corresponding literacy rates (Chart 5) in such a way that the regions

lagging behind in enrolment and retention of children in school are the same as the ones with the worst literacy rates.

The gap dividing countries into better and worse situations (Table 4) reveals a considerable distance between one group and the other. In countries where data is available, the literacy of the general population as well as enrolment and retention rates are over 90% in countries with better situations, while in countries with stagnant situations the figures are around 60%. As is to be expected, the three education indicators are strongly correlated.

#### 4. Health security: morbidity and mortality

##### Selected indicators:

- Malaria (cases every 100,000 people)
- Tuberculosis (cases every 100,000 people)
- HIV/AIDS (% in ages 15-49)
- Infant mortality (every 1,000 live births)
- Mortality in children under 5 (every 1,000 live births)

The situation of health security in the world reveals deep inequalities. The specific morbidity and mortality indicators presented by Social Watch, as well as the latest publications by the World Health Organization (WHO),<sup>28</sup> which are included for reference, clearly express this reality. Demographic and health policy factors have an impact on health conditions, but the general lifestyle of each country's population is equally important.

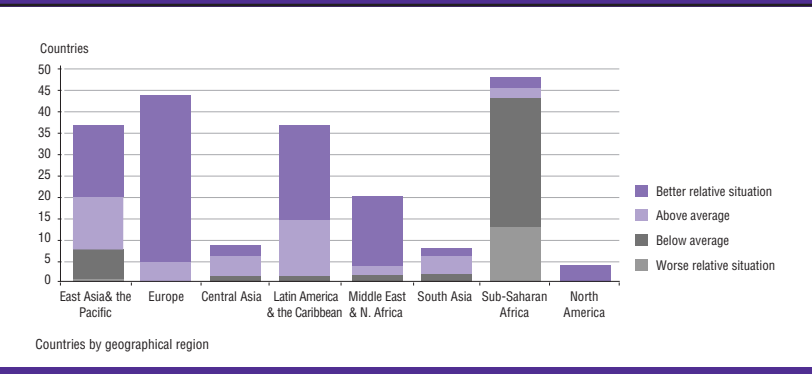
Sub-Saharan Africa is the region most affected by poor health conditions. There are enormous contrasts resulting from global social development inequality. While a girl born today in Japan has a life expectancy of 85, a girl born in Sierra Leone can only expect to live 36 years.

On a global scale, infant mortality has not diminished while life expectancy has been gradually growing over the last years. Despite this fact, it is particularly serious to learn that in 14 African countries the present levels of child mortality are higher than those registered in 1990. In other terms, 35% of children run more mortal risks today (2005) than 10 years ago. Perinatal disorders, respiratory infections, diarrhea-related diseases and malaria only strengthen the effects of malnutrition, a risk associated with mortality. Adding to this, the HIV/AIDS pandemic aggravates the situation and once again demonstrates the huge divide between rich and poor in their struggle against diseases.

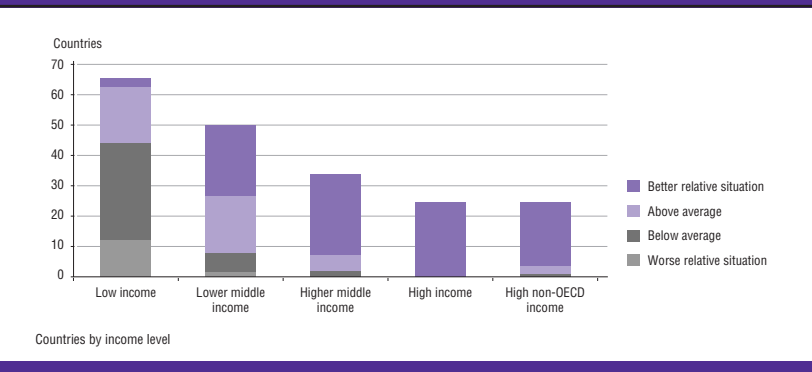
Indicators draw attention to a group of countries where child mortality rate progress made in the 1990s is reverting. Something similar is happening with life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa where life expectancy is falling below the age of 46, when it had

<sup>28</sup> World Health Organization. *World Health Report 2003 and World Health Report 2004.*

**Chart 6. Present situation in morbidity and mortality by region**



**Chart 7. Present situation in morbidity and mortality by income level**



exceeded the age of 49 during the 1980s. This situation becomes more complicated as problems related more specifically to population health are inter-dependent. For example, HIV/AIDS infection increases the risk of tuberculosis, a disease on the rise in countries with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

One of the challenges most aggressively tackled by the international community is that of child survival which is closely related to the fall of mortality rates in children under the age of 5. By this last measure, the large majority (98%) of those deaths occur in developing countries. In Africa, prior to 1990 some improvement was experienced with this indicator, but to a large extent the HIV/AIDS pandemic destroyed this progress. Infectious and parasitic diseases are the primary causes of death and are intimately related to HIV/AIDS.

Socio-economic differences bring about inequalities not only between countries but also within each national territory where mortality levels vary significantly across income groups. The magnitude of this variation also differs between countries: while in Niger a poor child has a chance of dying that is 13% higher than that of a non-poor child, in Bangladesh this difference is reduced to 3%.

Recent years show a decline in health-related social benefits and an increase in inequality. In addition to this and partly as a result, the burden of morbidity is becoming more complex. We know that in developed countries over 60% of deaths relate to people over the age of 70, while in develop-

The possibility of attaining the MDGs is seriously undermined by HIV/AIDS. In countries with high mortality resulting from this pandemic, the macro-economic consequences are very important, to such an extent that they make it difficult to reduce extreme poverty (MDG 1). Achieving the other objectives will also likely prove to be difficult given the situation unleashed by HIV/AIDS. Attaining universal primary education, for example, is unlikely in contexts such as Uganda's, where 80% of children affected by HIV/AIDS were removed from schools. The gender equality goal will also be of limited success since girls and women are increasingly assuming the role of care providers, in addition to being subject to different forms of discrimination when they themselves are HIV-positive. MDG 4 and 5 (to reduce infant mortality and improve maternal health) are even more closely related to the pandemic.

ing countries this proportion is around 30%. The WHO has pointed out that even though the mortality gap between developed and developing countries has been narrowing since the 1970s, the new challenge lies in stopping the accentuation of the differences between the various developing regions. According to this reality, a poor child in Africa has almost twice the chance of dying as a poor Latin American child.

Considering the aforementioned factors, the general situation of countries reveals a remarkable difference as we move from one region to the next. The worst situation is again that of Sub-Saharan Africa, where almost the majority of countries display values below the world average (Chart 6). It is quite significant that all countries in worse relative situations, with the exception of Kiribati, belong to that region. The remainder of the regions presents relative heterogeneous situations, except Europe where all of its countries are above the average, and North America whose countries are all in a better relative situation.

There is a close link between the income level of countries and their situation in terms of morbidity and mortality, which reinforces the presence of a strong correlation between the different dimensions of development. Nations identified in worse relative situations only have low and lower middle incomes, while those with higher incomes enjoy a better situation.

The majority of countries with low incomes are below the world average in terms of their health security. On the other end of the spectrum, OECD countries with higher income are exclusively in the best relative situation. In short, health security is an area of crucial importance where the worst faces of inequality are shown, as can be seen in the infant mortality figures. (Chart 7).

Recent evolution in this area allows us to observe the paths that the different countries are taking (Table 5). To this effect, it is notable to see just one country with a significant regression within the group of countries in worse relative situations (Swaziland).

Out of the 194 countries with sufficient data to study their evolution in this area, 116 have slightly progressed and 47 are stagnant. The most worrying situation is that of countries below the world average since in that group more than half are stagnant or experiencing some regression.

Child mortality is one of the core challenges facing nation states in terms of social development. Regarding the recent evolution of this indicator, there are many countries that experienced stagnation or slight regressions, although the majority of countries experienced slight or even significant progress (this progress also includes low and lower middle income countries). In 15 of the 182 countries regressions have been experienced. In terms of the relation between this evolution and the income level (Table 6), it can be noted that no countries with higher incomes experienced a regression while the poorest countries display a wider variety of situations.

The only countries that have regressed in relation to this indicator are those below the world average. It is also worrying to observe that only half of the 32 countries in worse relative situations have been able to make progress (Table 7).

Swaziland, Zimbabwe, Kazakhstan, Botswana and Iraq, are not only in the worst relative situation in terms of infant mortality compared with the rest of the countries in the world, but they have also experienced significant regressions in this indicator.

Table 5. Present situation and recent evolution in morbidity and mortality						
PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	1	1	4	5	3	14
Countries below average		6	13	16	5	40
Countries above average		2	13	26	3	44
Countries in better relative situation		1	17	69	6	93
Total *	1	10	47	116	17	191

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

Table 6. Infant mortality by income level						
PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN INFANT MORTALITY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Low income	1	9	10	15	30	65
Lower middle income	3	1	5	18	24	51
Higher middle income	1		2	25	4	32
High income			8	16		24
High non-OECD income				10		10
Total *	5	10	25	84	58	182

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

Table 7. Present situation and recent evolution in infant mortality						
PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN INFANT MORTALITY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	2	4	9	5	12	32
Countries below average	3	4	3	9	19	38
Countries above average		2	3	23	24	52
Countries in better relative situation			10	47	3	60
Total *	5	10	25	84	58	182

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

Table 8. Mortality in children under 5 by income level				
PRESENT SITUATION	WORSE RELATIVE SITUATION	BELOW AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	BETTER RELATIVE SITUATION
Low income	30	27	9	
Lower middle income	2	9	33	7
Higher middle income		2	11	21
High income				24
High non-OECD income				14
TOTAL	32	38	53	66

When mortality rates in children under the age of 5 are observed in each country by income level (Table 8), it is once again possible to observe a very clear relationship: the poorest countries are in worse situations. Almost all countries with higher mortality rates are also in the low income group. At the other extreme, high-income countries, whether they belong to the OECD or not, are without exception within the better relative situation bracket, with the lowest mortality rates in children under 5 in the world.

In terms of transmittable diseases, in addition to HIV/AIDS, the prevalence of tuberculosis and malaria has increased, causing substantial health regressions. In the case of malaria, one of the main causes of child deaths, the most affected region is again Sub-Saharan Africa where all countries in

The large impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is greater than the number of deaths it actually causes. One of its consequences, which is alerting the world to these impacts, is the growing number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. According to WHO, 14 million African children have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS and this figure is expected to rise to 25 million by 2010. The outlook is very troubling especially considering that each year 2.2 million HIV positive women give birth, and that the future situation will depend on prevention policies and the population's access to anti-retroviral therapy. In Brazil, where the government has been able to provide universal access to this therapy, the average survival period of HIV positive people rose from six months to five years.

**Table 9. Morbidity and mortality: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		INFANT MORTALITY (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)	MORTALITY IN CHILDREN UNDER 5 (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)	MALARIA PREVALENCE (CASES PER 100,000 PEOPLE)	TUBERCULOSIS PREVALENCE (CASES PER 100,000 PEOPLE)	HIV/AIDS PREVALENCE (% AGES 15 TO 49)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	110	173	20,748	231	15.4
	Number of countries	14	14	11	14	10
Countries in better relative situation	Average	12	15	84	20	0.3
	Number of countries	94	94	21	102	69

worse relative situations are located. Something similar occurs in the case of HIV/AIDS, while the prevalence of tuberculosis occurs most problematically in East Asia and the Pacific region. If countries are taken into account according to income groups, the relation between tuberculosis and wealth is the one we should expect in the context of the present inequality: while the poorest countries are the most affected, out of the 81 high or middle-income with sufficient data, only six are below the world average.

A summary of morbidity and mortality indicators reflects sharp contrasts (Table 9). For example, countries in worse relative situations have infant mortality averages of 110 (for every 1,000 live births), which is 9 times the average of countries in better situations.

A closer look at countries in worse relative situations (Angola, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe) points to the strong prevalence of Sub-Saharan Africa nations in this group.

It is also within this region that are found the countries worst affected by the most dramatic indicators, such as the prevalence of people infected by HIV/AIDS or infant mortality rates.

COUNTRIES WITH HIGHER PREVALENCE OF HIV/AIDS *	
Swaziland	38,8
Botswana	37,3
Lesotho	28,9
Zimbabwe	24,6
South Africa	21,5
* % in ages 15 to 49	

COUNTRIES WITH HIGHER INFANT MORTALITY *	
Sierra Leone	166
Afghanistan	165
Liberia	157
Angola	154
Niger	154
* per 1,000 live births	

**Chart 8. Immunization: present situation by region**



## 5. Health security: immunization

### Selected indicators:

- DPT<sup>29</sup> immunized children under age 1 (%)
- Polio immunized children under age 1 (%)
- Measles immunized children under age 1 (%)
- Tuberculosis immunized children under age 1 (%)

Progress in immunization has been a decisive factor in the present health status of the world's population. The lives of millions of children have been saved as the use of vaccines has spread around the world. Vaccination is the most powerful tool in the prevention of diseases and children have a right to receive this type of protection. Access to vaccines is a core goal for meeting human rights and alleviating poverty. As stated in the report *State of the World's Vaccines and Immunization*,<sup>30</sup> the near-eradication of polio, as well as the drastic reduction in the incidence of measles and maternal and neonatal tetanus, represent the most positive effects produced by immunization.

Nevertheless inequity is still a source of concern both in terms of benchmarking at the level of nations as well as within each nation. On a global level, it is estimated that in the year 2000, 37 million children did not receive basic vaccination during their first year of life.

The present regional situation in children's basic immunological coverage (polio, measles, tuberculosis and diphtheria) identifies Sub-Saharan Africa once again as the region in the worst situation (37 out of 48 countries with available data are classified within the two lowest brackets).

Botswana, Rwanda, Seychelles, Swaziland and Tanzania are the only five countries in this region that reach the level of those in better relative situations, with coverage over 90%. Meanwhile, the average situation of immunological coverage for these diseases for the rest of the region is substantially lower with values around 70%, with the exception of tuberculosis immunization, which reaches 81% coverage. (Chart 8).

The critical situation in Sub-Saharan Africa is evident especially in DPT and polio immunization coverage, where it shows the greatest gap in relation to other regions of the world. (Tables 10 and 11).

Similarly, if the average of countries in worse relative situations is analyzed (indicated in Chart 9 as the lowest income countries), the difference with the average of countries in better situations becomes even wider. Immunization against DPT, measles and polio is below 56% for countries in worse situations while these same immunization rates exceed 96% in countries in better situations.

It is not surprising to find a close connection between the classification of countries according to their income levels and their general situation in terms of basic immunological coverage. The poorest countries invariably present the lowest levels of coverage. Within the group of lower middle income countries, a fairly large number is above average. A clear relation can be observed between income and current coverage of immunization, although income is not as decisive a factor as in other morbidity and

29 DPT: diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus.

30 WHO, UNICEF, World Bank. *State of the World's Vaccines and Immunization 2002*. [www.who.int/vaccines/en/sowvi2002.shtml](http://www.who.int/vaccines/en/sowvi2002.shtml)

IMMUNIZATION: COUNTRIES IN THE WORST RELATIVE SITUATIONS THAT HAVE ALSO REGRESSED
Central African Republic
Comoros
Congo Democratic Republic
Djibouti
Gabon
Papua New Guinea
Sudan
Vanuatu
Yemen

mortality indicators (malaria, tuberculosis, infant mortality, etc.). (Chart 9).

An assessment of the progress and regression which have occurred since 1990 reveals that 65% of countries have made progress, 20% have not shown any changes and 15% have regressed (Table 12). In general, the greatest progress in vaccination coverage has taken place in low income countries, where the lowest levels of vaccination were initially observed. However the highest regression is also concentrated in countries in worse relative situations and corresponds to countries with historically low levels of immunization coverage. Regression also occurs in some middle-income countries, namely the Central and Eastern European countries which became independent since 1990.

International commitments assumed by countries at the Beijing, Copenhagen and Millennium summits have placed priority on increasing vaccination coverage as one of the basic instruments to combat infant mortality. Attention paid to the poorest countries in the world in this aspect has been particularly emphasized both by governments and by international cooperation organizations. (Chart 10).

Countries that have not presented changes are mostly those where coverage levels are above average.

Unequal access to basic vaccination services during childhood is only one example of inequality at the level of immunological protection. Inequity is even more pronounced in access to new vaccines introduced since 1985.

## 6. Environment

### Selected indicators:

- Population with access to improved water sources (%)
- Population with access to sanitation (%)

One of the cross-cutting topics in social development is sustainable development. During the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro, the international community adopted Agenda 21 as a global action plan for sustainable development.

Agenda 21 reintroduced a series of recommendations for all areas of environmental interest. These

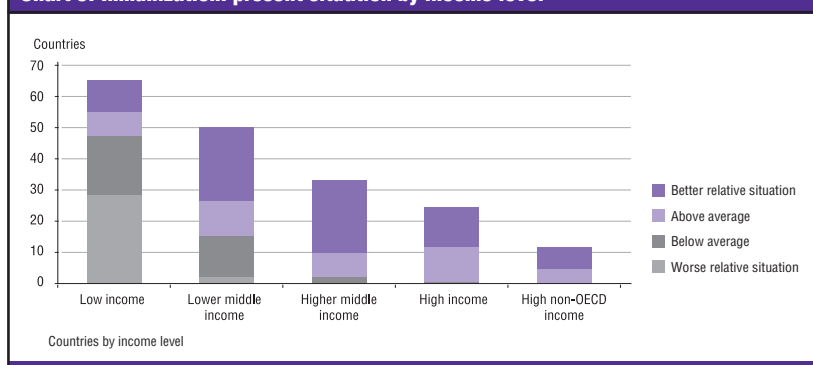
**Table 10. Immunization: coverage averages by disease (%)**

	DPT	MEASLES	TUBERCULOSIS	POLIO
East Asia and the Pacific	84.7	83.2	87.5	84.7
Europe	94.1	91.4	91.9	94.6
Central Asia	92.4	94.0	96.8	93.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	86.5	89.5	92.7	88.2
Middle East and North Africa	92.0	91.7	91.0	92.0
South Asia	80.8	76.6	86.9	80.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	69.5	69.1	81.0	69.3
North America	93.5	94.0		89.5

**Table 11. Immunization: coverage averages for countries in better and worse relative situation (%)**

PRESENT SITUATION		DPT	MEASLES	TUBERCULOSIS	POLIO
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	55.8	55.9	70.8	55
	Number of countries	35	35	35	35
Countries in better relative situation	Average	96.2	95.7	97.5	96.8
	Number of countries	79	79	59	79

**Chart 9. Immunization: present situation by income level**

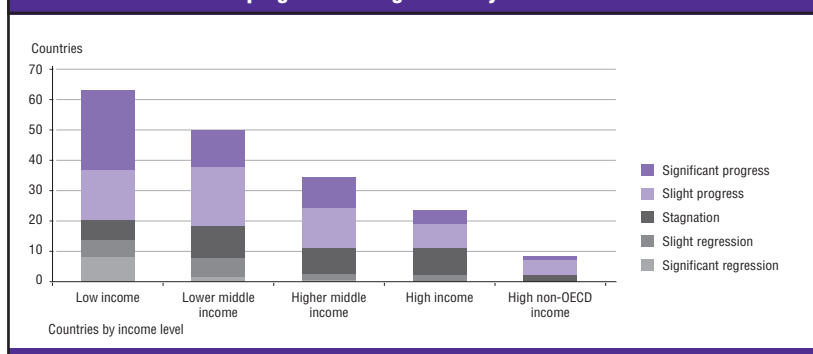


**Table 12. Immunization: present situation by income level**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN IMMUNIZATION					TOTAL *
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	9	5		3	15	32
Countries below average	2	5	9	11	6	33
Countries above average	1	3	11	17	10	42
Countries in better relative situation		2	16	32	21	71
Total *	12	15	36	63	52	178

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

**Chart 10: Immunization: progress and regression by income level**





recommendations recognize human rights with respect to the environment and the need to integrate environmental problems into socio-economic and sectoral policies, as well as into national administrative and productive systems.

After the Earth Summit different international conferences revisited some of the items in Agenda 21 and integrated them into other development issues. For example, the UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat) held in Istanbul in 1996 set goals which included sustainable development into the vision and study of human settlements. Similarly the MDGs include a specific area devoted to this issue. However none of the goals or indicators was sufficiently comprehensive.

In 2002, ten years after the Earth Summit, the World Summit on Sustainable Development took place in Johannesburg. It provided a unique opportunity to adopt specific measures and to identify measurable objectives for improving the implementation of Agenda 21. During the summit it was clear that the vision of sustainable development had shifted towards the concept of "sustainable economic growth" and strengthening of markets.

Measuring the advances and setbacks of countries in environmental commitments is very difficult since complete and up-to-date information is unavailable at an international level.

Agenda 21 presented proposals for sustainability indicator systems which could act as the foundation in decision-making processes: "It is necessary to develop sustainable development indicators to provide a solid foundation for decision making at all levels and to contribute to the self-regulated sustainability of integrated environmental and development systems."<sup>31</sup>

Sustainable development indicators<sup>32</sup> are an attempt to systematize environment, development and urban growth information. They combine data from economic, social, environmental and institutional areas.

In 2000 a series of indicators were developed for the assessment of MDG 7. The indicators link access to water and sanitation to sustainable development, the environment and land. The series also links variables from sustainable urban and territorial development, habitat, drinking water access and squatter settlements or slums. Additionally MDG 7 aims to reduce by half the percentage of people who lack access to drinking water and calls for a significant improvement in the life of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

The rapid growth of urban population and its impact on the environment need to be considered.

Over 70% of the urban population in poor countries live in squatter settlements or slums where they have no access to basic services such as drinking water and sanitation and where living conditions violate the human rights of the dwellers.

The real progress and regression of countries in achieving international goals is difficult to measure. The only available data measures water and sanitation access, while secure right to tenure or housing quality goes largely unmeasured.

Even though many countries do not have systematized registries with secure tenure data, the UN Statistics Division has published a secure tenure index developed by UN Habitat. The goal is to measure the proportion of homes with secure tenure of the dwelling. This index is new and is currently undergoing an evaluation process. It employs indirect variables to quantify access to secure tenure, given the difficulties of obtaining direct data.<sup>33</sup>

At the same time, the UN Environment Programme has defined a series of variables and indicators to evaluate the environment.<sup>34</sup> The dimensions include indicators (vulnerability, human settlements and sustainable cities); social issues (health, inequity and poverty); and economic aspects (competitiveness, trade and production and consumption patterns, where energy issues are highlighted).

Once again, the majority of the indicators do not have systematized data at the national level. Due to the importance of the issues involved this information is quickly needed. The international community must cooperate in the implementation of regional and national data collection programmes.

On 16 February 2005, the Kyoto Protocol came into force which is a significant event for the environment and habitat. The protocol obliges signatory industrialized countries to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 5% of 1990 levels by 2012. The refusal by the United States to sign the protocol reflects the belief that environmental protection will thwart economic growth.

In addition to the international regulations foreseen in the protocol, it is important to rely on figures which permit evaluation of its implementation and which allow citizens to monitor its progress. These figures must be related to other environment data in order to provide a thorough picture of the situation when it comes to urging governments to comply with international commitments.

In 2002 the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights approved General Comment No. 15,<sup>35</sup> which recognizes the human right to wa-

Adequate habitats and standards of living have been addressed by different international conferences and human rights treaties. These topics must be approached from an integrated perspective since they are interrelated to other factors such as health, water, sanitation, and adequate housing. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights sets forth a series of obligations for proper living condition standards. These standards or socially assumed values were also formulated in the Copenhagen Summit and at the Beijing Conference, as well as during other conferences. The commitments were finally compiled in the Millennium Declaration and quantified in MDG 7. However there are other dimensions which cut across these commitments such as the relationship between habitat and health, habitat and poverty, and habitat and discrimination. Bearing in mind that poverty and discrimination are very closely related, within discriminated groups (aborigines, afro-descendants, migrants, the homeless, among others) women face two to three times more discrimination. In order to reverse this situation specific policies directed towards women must be created. Policies must focus on increasing women's access to drinking water, sanitation and housing, as the fundamental and structural foundation for meeting commitments made to reduce poverty, provide work, protect children's health and safeguard reproductive health (MDGs 2, 4 and 5).

ter as an indispensable factor in human dignity. The document explicitly states the connection between water, life and health by linking lack of adequate sanitation to illnesses that do not allow people to enjoy the right to health. Also the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution to declare 2005-2015 the International Decade for Action: "Water for Life" due to the importance of water access for life, in order to reach international goals and in order to lay foundations for future progress.<sup>36</sup>

Ten years after the Copenhagen and Beijing agreements and five years after the Millennium Declaration more than 1.1 billion people do not have access to drinking water (approximately 7% of the world's population). More than 40% of the world's population lack basic sanitation services.

The urbanization of poverty must also be examined. According to UN-Habitat,<sup>37</sup> current levels of global urban poverty will grow from 30% to between 45% and 50% by 2020. The report also shows a close inverse relationship between the values reached by the Human Development Index (HDI) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the proportion of the population living in squatter settlements. According to HDI measurements, there is a larger proportion of people living in settlements in

30 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Agenda 21, Section IV, Chapter 40 "Information for decision-making", para. 40.4. Rio de Janeiro, 1992.

31 United Nations. *Indicators of Sustainable Development: Framework and Methodologies*. Department of Social and Economic Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, 1996. [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/indisdis/english/english.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/indisdis/english/english.htm)

33 United Nations, Statistics Division. Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi\\_indicator\\_xrxx.asp?ind\\_code=32](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_indicator_xrxx.asp?ind_code=32)

34 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Regional Workshop, Costa Rica, 2003. [www.pnuma.org/reunion%20indicadores/documentos/EMA-IDS\\_PNUMA03.pdf](http://www.pnuma.org/reunion%20indicadores/documentos/EMA-IDS_PNUMA03.pdf)

35 Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. General Comment No. 15 (2002). "The right to water (arts. 11 and 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)". Geneva, November 2002.

36 [www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/worldwaterday.html](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/worldwaterday.html)

37 UN-Habitat. *State of the World's Cities 2004/2005 - Globalization and Urban Culture*. 2004.

countries with low human development scores. The relationship between squatter settlements, water access, sanitation and housing demonstrates the need for very specific policies to meet the international commitments.

Although the documentation and registration of situations through reports and statistics is the first step in finding solutions to the problem, it is currently impossible to measure progress in secure tenure and housing conditions due to a lack of data. This report therefore will focus on indicators with available information in order to shed light, insofar as the availability of data allows it, on the global water and sanitation access situation.

In studying access to drinking water one cannot leave aside the influence of worldwide changes in urbanization, the impact of globalization on a demographic level (on land, human settlements and natural resources), the growth of urban mobility of citizens and the growth or expansion of cities.

According to UNICEF 20 litres of water a day are needed to cover the basic needs of a child (this amount is equivalent to two pails of water). However approximately 4,000 children die every day simply because they have no access to drinking water.

Gender discrimination is also an issue to be tackled in this area. Due to discrimination in land tenure, as well as access to sources of production and drinking water, women must travel far from their homes. In most cases women have children to take care of and find their areas of opportunity on the outskirts of cities which further increases the population of squatter settlements or slums.

In the agricultural sector, where women have always played a fundamental role, there are still many countries where women face difficulties accessing land tenure (women have been excluded in agrarian reforms in El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, where they only hold between 4% and 25% of all ownership deeds). In Kenya, a woman can only own land if her husband or children are alive. If she lacks stable income and property deeds she is systematically marginalized from the credit market. Therefore in many African countries where women represent 60% of agricultural labour and 80% of the total food production labour force, they receive less than 10% of the credit granted to small farmers and 1% of total agricultural credit.

Additionally, General Comment No. 15 on water linked the need for drinking water, beyond domestic and personal use, to the production of food and public hygiene and health.

According to UNICEF figures,<sup>38</sup> we currently run the risk of not complying with MDG 7 which is aimed at halving, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water sources within 15 minutes' walking distance from their dwellings. This figure is currently 1 billion and rising.

If circumstantial conditions such as armed conflict and natural disasters are added to structural

SANITATION COVERAGE BELOW 15%		DRINKING WATER COVERAGE BELOW 45%	
Guinea	13	Equatorial Guinea	44
Niger	12	Mozambique	42
Burkina Faso	12	Chad	34
Congo Republic	9	Somalia	29
Eritrea	9	Ethiopia	22
Chad	8		
Ethiopia	6		

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION					
	←	←		→	→	TOTAL*
Countries in worse relative situation		4	4	11	8	27
Countries below average	1		4	11	15	31
Countries above average		1	6	10	7	24
Countries in better relative situation		3	45	3	2	53
Total *	1	8	59	35	32	135

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

ones, complying with international commitments requires additional effort on the part of the national and international communities. For example in March 2003 the Iraq conflict left Basra - one of the first cities to be bombed - with 1 million inhabitants without access to water. These people could only rely on 2 litres of water per day, which is only one tenth of what is stipulated as the minimum for survival. Up until 2003, six million people in Baghdad were without access to electricity, water or telecommunications.

The UN-Habitat<sup>39</sup> report highlights the lack of access to sanitation services in urban settlements. The study suggests that channelling investment towards improving access to sanitation would have a great impact on the living conditions of squatter settlement and slum inhabitants especially women and children. The gap between rural and urban situations is enormous: 73% of urban dwellers have access to sanitation while only 31% of rural dwellers do.

In order to achieve MDG 7, every day 370,000 people without sanitation should have access to it before 2015. Service losses due to natural disasters must be added to the former calculation. The Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004 caused regression in the region through the destruction of previous improvements in sanitation, although figures of the destruction are incomplete.

Although the developed world has not reached total access to water and sanitation in all cases (values exceed 90% in both variables), inequalities exist in comparison to developing countries. More than half of the total population without adequate sanitation live in China and India; Sub-Saharan Africa reveals a coverage of only 36.5%. Two-thirds of the people without access to drinking water live

in Asia; and Sub-Saharan Africa experiences the worst situation globally with an average of only 36.4%. (Table 13).

The critical situation is compounded by globalization policies which have accelerated privatization trends of basic services such as water. In some countries more than half of the urban population depend on private water suppliers, whose services tend to be more expensive than public ones.<sup>40</sup>

However it is important to note that some African countries, although still with low coverage rates, have made significant progress. This is the case of Ghana which went from 43% sanitation service coverage in 1990 to 58% coverage in 2002. Access to drinking water rose from 54% to 79% over the same period. Another example is Malawi where the proportion of population with sanitation access rose from 36% to 46% between 1990 and 2002, while access to drinking water rose from 41% to 67%, during the same timeframe. Comoros also performed well, increasing access to drinking water from 89% to 94% during the period of 1990-2002.

In Latin America and the Caribbean the situation is improving and the percentage of population with access to sanitary services rose from 69% in 1990 to 78% in 2002. Access to drinking water in the same region improved from 83% to 91% over the same period of time. Guatemala, for example, experienced significant progress in access to water since service coverage rose from 77% to 95% between 1990 and 2002.

Fifty-nine percent of countries have not experienced any change in their situation. Countries above the world average have not undergone major progress: 45 countries in the group did not experience progress or regression. Meanwhile, three

38 World Water Day 2005, 20 March 2005. [www.unicef.org/wes/index\\_25637.html](http://www.unicef.org/wes/index_25637.html)

39 UN-Habitat, *op cit*.

40 UN-Habitat. *Water and Sanitation in the World's Cities: Local Action for Global Goals*. March, 2003.

countries have experienced slight regression, diminishing their coverage of drinking water and sanitation access.

Of the 31 below average countries, 11 have slightly progressed and 15 have made significant progress even though coverage levels continue to be unsatisfactory. (Table 14).

The majority of low-income countries belong to the worse situation categories since they have less coverage. Conversely, better income countries are above average or in a better relative situation. While countries in worse situations have sanitation access coverage of 31%, countries in better situations and with better incomes have 96% coverage. Meanwhile, countries in the worse situations provide 54% water access coverage compared with 98% coverage in countries with better relative situations. (Table 15).

Inequality between countries is very high. Data published in Social Watch show that while in Ethiopia 6 out of every 100 inhabitants have sanitation access, 100% of inhabitants do so in high-income countries such as Norway, the United States and the Netherlands. Afghanistan presents the most serious situation in access to water. In 2002 only 13 of every 100 people could access improved water sources. Similarly to what happens with sanitation access, countries with high incomes have the best indices and in most cases provide complete water access coverage.

There is a strong correlation between countries, their income and their situation in this field. However there are cases that do not follow this trend; for example, Sri Lanka experienced significant progress in sanitary service coverage, improving from 70% in 1990 to 91% in 2002. This ranks Sri Lanka together with those countries in better relative situations.

## 7. Gender equity

In the tables presented in the Social Watch Report 2005, the year 1995 was taken as the starting point to measure gender equity progress and regression since this was the year when the Beijing commitments were made. In order to make comparisons, the latest available data in each indicator was selected.

Even though gender inequity cuts across all dimensions of social analysis, specific indicators have been chosen in order to address the main areas where inequity hinders women's human rights and their evolution.

The gender dimension cuts across all of the UN Millennium Development Goals to such a degree that none of them will be achieved if no significant progress is made in this area. MDG 3, which refers to gender equity and the empowerment of women, is of strategic importance. Given present conditions the burden of poverty falls on chiefly on women (MDG 1); women are the main caretakers of children (MDG 2) and face situations of risk during pregnancy (MDG 4 and 5). Likewise, women are increasingly vulnerable to the HIV/AIDS pandemic (MDG 6), they play an irreplaceable role in

**Table 15. Environment: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO SANITATION (%)	POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES (%)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	30.9	54.2
	Number of countries	42	42
Countries in better relative situation	Average	96.0	97.6
	Number of countries	50	58

natural resource management (MDG 7) and must have the capability to access the benefits of globalization in the same measure as men do (MDG 8). More than only a series of specific actions, it is important to focus actions towards greater gender equity within a broad framework of transformation as proposed during the World Conference in Beijing in 1995.

To alter the traditional role of women in society, and to change relations between men and women both within and outside the domestic environment, represents a complex challenge calling for policy elaboration and evaluation. Indicators and statistics on their evolution are required. There is more and more disaggregated data which demonstrates the differences between men and women in different social indicators however there is no agreement on how to measure gender equity overall in a way which allows for regional or country comparison.

In March 2005 the follow-up conference on the Beijing agreement was held. One of the main conclusions of the conference was that 10 years after Beijing there is still a long way to go before women achieve full access to education, equal remuneration, healthcare, as well as other rights they have been denied for centuries. Although the greatest achievements by women in their struggle against discrimination have been made in rich countries, it must be remembered that women still suffer from discrimination in many of these countries.

The growing participation of women in different areas of society has not guaranteed their recognition in these roles or improved their quality of life. Women cannot fully participate in economic and public life; they have limited access to positions of influence and power; their labour options are fewer and they receive lower remuneration for equal jobs.

Domestic violence is a worldwide phenomenon and one of the primary causes of injury and death for women worldwide. This violence is present throughout the world to different degrees and it is

often ignored or tolerated by states on the grounds that it is a private matter.

### 7.1. Education

#### *Selected indicators:*

- Literacy gap (women/men)
- Net primary education enrolment rate gap (women/men)
- Net secondary education enrolment rate gap (women/men)
- Gross tertiary education enrolment rate gap (women/men)

According to UNESCO data gender equity in education is particularly relevant: at least two-thirds (573 million) of the 860 million illiterate people (the majority living in developing countries) are women.

The majority of illiterate women in the world live in rural areas in developing countries, particularly in Africa, the Arab countries and East and South Asia where illiteracy rates among women exceed 60%. There are 140 million illiterate youth; more than half of them female (86 million). UNESCO projections predict that if present trends continue, by 2015 there will be 107 million illiterate youth, 67 million of whom will be female.

In access to secondary education, most countries have attained gender equity and 63% of countries even have more girls registered than boys. This is due to many boys never completing their secondary education. The 34% of countries with less female enrolment are located mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Poverty levels in these regions, and a cultural preference to better feed and educate males, are decisive factors.

A reverse gender gap exists in other regions such as North Africa, Central Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. In the latter region, 23 countries register higher female

**Table 16. Present situation and recent evolution in gender equity: education**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION OF THE GENDER GAP IN EDUCATION					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	2	1	8	11	22	
Countries below average	1	4	5	8	18	
Countries above average	1	6	4	5	16	
Countries in better relative situation	8	77	19	2	106	
Total *	0	12	88	36	26	162

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

secondary education enrolment, while only four countries have higher male enrolment. This is also common in developed countries.

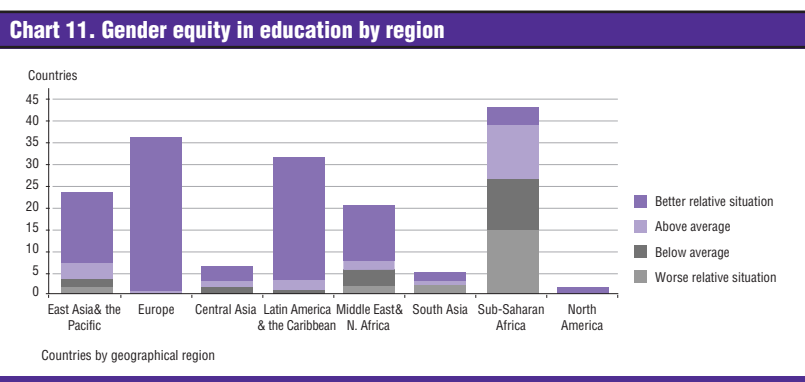
These four indicators together give us a global picture of gender inequity levels in education (Table 16). At the same time, it is of interest to study the recent evolution of inequality in this area. Out of 162 countries with sufficient information, 62 reveal some improvement in education gender equity and no countries have experienced significant regression. Although most countries in better situation are stagnant, among higher inequity countries almost 90% have improved their situation. Half of the countries that were falling behind have experienced significant progress.

Although progress is noted in many countries, gender inequality in access to education still exists in most developing countries and is far from being eradicated.

The largest disparities in primary education access are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. In secondary education disparities observed in the region are even greater with average values of approximately 0.8.

In tertiary education regional disparities are on the rise. In Western Europe there are 93 women for every 100 men in higher education. In Southeast Asia there are 58 women for every 100 men, in North Africa 63 per 100 and in East Asia 71 women per 100 men. The difference is even greater in South Asia (38 per 100) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (30 per 100). In Latin America, the Caribbean and West Asia, the number of women in tertiary education exceeds the number of men.

Gender inequity in education is revealed in a clearly differentiated way (Chart 11). North America,



**Table 17. Gender equity: education. Averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		LITERACY GAP (WOMEN/MEN)	PRIMARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATE GAP	SECONDARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATE GAP	TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATE GAP
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.4
	Number of countries	22	22	15	15
Countries in better relative situation	Average	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.3
	Number of countries	78	110	102	96

Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean are the areas whose countries display the least inequity, while the remaining regions present heterogeneous situations. Once again, Sub-Saharan Africa is the region where most countries experience serious levels of inequality.

A comparison of the averages observed for each indicator for the countries in better and worse situations shows significant distances between both groups (Table 17). Even though inequity is evident in all indicators, in certain cases it is reflected with greater intensity. The women/men ratio in tertiary education enrolment rates displays the greatest distance. In the group of countries with greater inequities this ratio reaches an average value of 0.4 while in countries with better situations the average is three times higher at 1.3.

## 7. 2. Economic activity

### Selected indicators:

- Wage-earning women in the non-agricultural sector (% of total non-agricultural wage-earners)
- Estimated income ratio (women/men)

Participation in economic activity is directly related to poverty issues. Seventy per cent of the world's estimated 1.3 billion poor are women. The situation is the same in both the most rural and the most industrialized societies. Some reasons for the higher feminization of poverty are unequal conditions in access to the labour market and labour discrimination, which result in lower remuneration for women in equal jobs.

Most countries have not been successful in this area. Women do not get equal remuneration for equal jobs. Women's salaries compared with those of men only approach 90% in five countries: Iceland, Australia, Tanzania, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. An in-depth analysis is needed to explain why this is so in countries with such different contexts.

Studies of gender inequity in economic activity are conducted using two indicators: the percentage of wage-earning women in the non-agricultural sector and the income gap between female and male remuneration in the labour market. Taken together, these indicators show a similar number of countries above and below the world average. (Table 18).

Evolution has been uneven in countries where gender equity in economic activities is in the worst relative situation. Regression took place in some

COUNTRIES IN WORSE SITUATION IN LITERACY RATIO (WOMEN/MEN)	
Niger	0.46
Iraq	0.51
Benin	0.55
Mali	0.57
Burkina Faso	0.58
Nepal	0.63
Pakistan	0.64
Yemen	0.67

GENDER GAP IN PRIMARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT: COUNTRIES IN WORSE SITUATIONS	
Yemen	0.66
Chad	0.67
Niger	0.68
Benin	0.69
Burkina Faso	0.71
Guinea Bissau	0.72
Mali	0.73
Ivory Coast	0.74
Pakistan	0.75

**Table 18. Present situation and recent evolution in gender equity: economic activity**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	3	3	9	9	3	27
Countries below average		3	8	13	7	31
Countries above average	1	1	5	11	4	22
Countries in better relative situation	2	3	22	7	6	40
Total *	6	10	44	40	20	120

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.



cases while the majority of countries either advanced or remained stagnant. Of the 58 nations below the world average, nine experienced regressions while 22 advanced. The more equal countries have mainly remained stagnant or, in a significant number, progressed towards greater equity.

Participation of women in the non-agricultural sectors is almost on equal standing with the participation of men (around 45% to 55%) in less than half of the countries with available information.

Although there is a global trend towards increased economic participation by women, discrimination still exists in the labour sector. Statistics in this field remain insufficient and scarce in many regions of the world. The International Labour Organization (ILO) informs that of the 13 African countries with available information there is a range of different situations; from Botswana, where women account for 47% of non-agricultural workers, to Chad, where they represent less than 10%. In Central Asia, variation is also great; from Kazakhstan, where women participate on an equal standing with men, to Turkey where they account for less than 10%. These figures underestimate the economic participation of women since they only reflect formal work when in many of these countries, the highest participation indices are found in the informal sector. In East Asia and the Pacific, the participation of women in economic life ranges from 30% to 47%.

In countries with higher gender equity in the economy almost half of the wage-earning population in the non-agricultural sector are women. In the less equal countries women do not even account for one quarter of the working population. Another element that illustrates this same point (Table 19) is the income gap or the women/men income ratio. In countries in better situations this ratio is only 0.65. In the most unequal countries the situation is much worse since women's incomes constitute only one third of the remuneration of men.

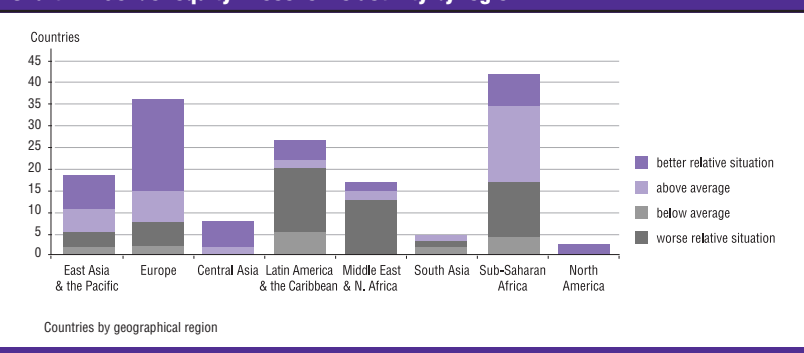
Gender inequity in economic activity on a regional level (Chart 12), illustrates that contrary to what happens with other indicators, the Sub-Saharan African countries are not all in the worst situation. There is significant disparity within almost all regions. The greatest gender inequity in economic activity is in countries in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. In North America and Europe inequity is lower, although in the latter region there are also countries whose levels of inequity are among the worst worldwide.

### 7. 3. Empowerment

#### Selected indicators:

- Female professional and technical workers (%)
- Female legislators, senior officials and managers (%)
- Female members of parliament (%)
- Women in governmental decision-making positions at ministerial levels (%)

**Chart 12. Gender equity in economic activity by region**



**Table 19. Gender equity: economic activity. Averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		WAGE-EARNING WOMEN IN THE NON-AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (%)	ESTIMATED INCOME RATIO (WOMEN/MEN)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	23.8	0.33
	Number of countries	27	29
Countries in better relative situation	Average	49.3	0.65
	Number of countries	41	49

**Table 20. Present situation and recent evolution in gender equity: empowerment**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN EMPOWERMENT					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	1	9	14	11	4	39
Countries below average		3	10	18	14	45
Countries above average		1	4	15	19	39
Countries in better relative situation		1	1	9	9	20
Total *	1	14	29	53	46	143

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

Throughout the world women are practically absent from parliament. On average they account for less than 15% of parliament and no systematic differences are observed by region or by income level. The report *Progress of the World's Women*<sup>41</sup> by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) notes that contrary to what happens in the case of other development aspects women's level of involvement in politics does not depend on the wealth or poverty of a country.

The report stresses that the presence of women in decision-making positions is the only gender inequity indicator which does not vary according to a country's level of poverty. Some of the richest countries in the world such as the United States, France and Japan, have between 10% and 12% women representation in their parliaments. This is lower than the 13% average in Sub-Saharan African countries which are the poorest countries in the world. In South Africa and Mozambique, the share of women in parliament is

30%, while in Rwanda and Uganda it is 26.7% and 25%, respectively.

The growing number of female members of parliament may be attributed to agreements made in the last decade. Several countries have a self-imposed objective of maintaining 30% women participation in parliament following recommendations from international conferences such as Beijing. However by 2004 only 11 countries attained this goal (Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Finland, Norway, Iceland, the Netherlands, South Africa, Costa Rica, Argentina and Mozambique).

To strengthen the position of women in the world is one of the eight objectives established in the Millennium Declaration. Within this framework empowerment is a dimension of growing consideration. Empowerment is measured by the number of women with access to positions of power and decision-making in each country. The presence of women in professional, technical, management, parliamentary and ministerial positions is studied in comparison with men's participation in the same fields.

In Table 20 we note a large number of countries in situations considerably more unequal than the world average. Nevertheless the majority of

<sup>41</sup> Elson, Diane and Hande Keklik. *Progress of the World's Women 2002, Volume Two: Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals*. UNIFEM, 2003.



**Table 21. Gender equity: empowerment. Averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		WOMEN AS MANAGERS AND TOP-RANKING POSITIONS (%)	FEMALE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS (%)	WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT POSITIONS AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL (%)	FEMALE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (%)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	9.3	32.7	5.9	6.6
	Number of countries	17	17	34	42
Countries in better relative situation	Average	36.6	56.2	32.5	25.8
	Number of countries	14	14	17	19

countries are progressing while only 10% have experienced some regression. There is however one situation which causes concern: there are 10 countries which have experienced regressions despite already being in the worst relative situation.

When examining countries by geographic region, the Middle East, Northern Africa and South Asia have the most countries with the most serious empowerment inequalities (Chart 13). Nevertheless in almost all regions there are countries with empowerment inequities. This reinforces the idea that a nation's wealth or poverty is relatively independent of gender inequity levels in positions of power and decision-making.

The main empowerment deficits are observed by looking at the situation of each indicator in countries in worse and better relative situations. In more equal countries parliamentary seats held by women hardly account for one quarter of the total. On average countries falling behind in this field do not have more than 6% of women in parliament. Similarly strong inequities occur in management and high-ranking positions, as well as in government positions at ministerial levels (Table 21).

## 8. Reproductive health

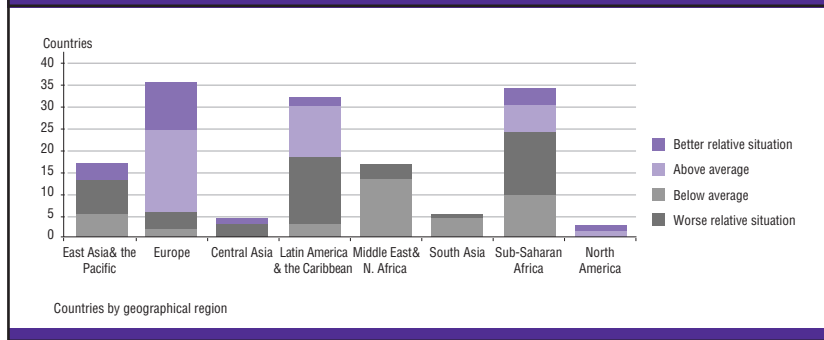
### Selected indicators:

- Women aged 15 to 49 attended to at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (%)
- Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)
- Estimated maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)
- Contraceptive use among married women aged 15 to 49 (%)

During the UN International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994, the international community adopted a new, broader concept of reproductive health and of reproductive rights which includes family planning and sexual health. ICPD called for the integration of family planning and maternal-child health care into a wider series of services, among them the struggle against HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD).

ICPD set the objectives for ensuring voluntary and universal access to a series of reproductive health services and related information before 2015. It was also then agreed that sexual and reproductive health is a human right and part of the general right to health. Reproductive health encom-

**Chart 13. Gender equity in empowerment by region**



passes a general state of physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes and not simply to the absence of disease or illness. Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the ability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so. The right of men and women to be informed and to have access to their choice of family planning services is implicit in this last condition as is access to legal, safe, efficient and affordable contraceptive methods. It also includes the right to receive adequate healthcare services which will enable women to have a safe pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy child.

Since 1994 important progress has been made towards the ICPD goal of universal access to reproductive health services. The World Survey conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2003<sup>42</sup> confirmed that the majority of countries established or expanded reproductive health policies and programmes. Many have substantially changed the way they offer maternal-child healthcare services and family planning services by redirecting services to improve quality and best meet the needs and wishes of the users. A high rate of contraceptive use by couples indicates that there is more access to family planning methods.

42 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). *Investing in People: National Progress in Implementing the ICPD Programme of Action*. New York: UNFPA; and World Health Organization (WHO). *Reproductive Health. Draft Strategy to Accelerate Progress towards the Attainment of International Development Goals and Targets* (EB11/15 Add.1). Geneva: WHO, 2003.

Programmes now reach out to more people in need of services, and family planning has become a part of prenatal, postnatal, and childbirth services. STD and HIV/AIDS prevention programmes have also expanded; cervical cancer detection programmes and referral to other treatment services, where necessary, have increased.

More emphasis has been placed on providing greater access to groups lacking sufficient services (the very poor and rural dwellers) as well as providing means for their participation in the formulation of policies in order that both the services and the information provided may be geared to their special circumstances. Likewise many countries are integrating reproductive health services (including family planning and sexual health) into primary healthcare services, within the framework of health sector reforms. They are also carrying out significant changes in terms of organization, administration and funding.

In May 2004 the 57th World Health Assembly approved for the first time the WHO reproductive health strategy. Its goal is to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the reproductive health MDG and the objectives stated in the ICPD, as well as on its five-year review approved by Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 1999.

Despite progress in coverage and quality in women's healthcare attention, there are still serious qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in the provision of services. This is reflected in poor health indicators such as high maternal mortality, low prevalence of contraceptive use and low percentage of adequately attended births.

Worldwide, 1,600 women die every day due to complications during pregnancy and delivery. This figure reveals considerable inequities when examined further, since maternal mortality is 18 times higher in developing countries than in industrialized

ones. In addition, 50 million women annually suffer pregnancy and delivery-related complications. Since women in developing countries have more pregnancies and obstetric attention is inadequate, their exposure to maternal mortality risks is 40 times greater than in the developed world. Half of perinatal deaths are due mainly to inappropriate or non-existing maternal prenatal and obstetric attention.

In developed countries practically full access to adequate healthcare services during pregnancy and childbirth, availability of medicines and safe surgical procedures, together with high rates of contraceptive use and low levels of fertility, contribute to overall good reproductive health. The situation is different in developing countries: over 95% of adult deaths related to poor reproductive health occur in these countries, where fertility rates are also higher.

Complications during pregnancy and delivery are among the primary causes of death and disease for women of reproductive age in many developing countries. Every year, about 8 million women suffer complications that threaten their lives during pregnancy and as a consequence, more than 529,000 die. Ninety-nine percent of these women live in developing countries.<sup>43</sup>

In the developing world, one-third of pregnant women do not receive any kind of healthcare during pregnancy and 60% of childbirths take place far from health centres, where only half receive the attention of skilled health personnel.

Donor countries have only provided half of the external resources that ICPD determined were necessary to implement its Action Plan. Donors agreed to contribute USD 6.1 billion a year to population and reproductive health programmes by 2005, which is one-third of the resources needed. However between 1999 and 2001 contributions remained at around USD 2.6 billion and in 2002 they rose to USD 3.1 billion. The UNFPA has pointed out that despite the increase, the amount may not be sustainable and investment could be used entirely in HIV/AIDS prevention programmes rather than in the adoption of an integrated reproductive health strategy. Due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic there are additional needs such as a reliable and sufficient supply of reproductive health products, namely male and female condoms.

Inadequacies in reproductive and sexual health services cause almost one-fifth of global premature morbidity and mortality and one-third of the diseases and deaths of women of child-bearing age.<sup>44</sup> Reproductive health can be properly attended to only if its close link to gender and health security is understood by all.

In this report measurements are taken on the basis of four indicators: percentage of women at-

43 WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA. *Maternal Mortality in 2000: Estimates Developed by WHO, UNICEF, and UNFPA*. Geneva: WHO, 2003; and WHO. *Reproductive Health*, *op cit*.

44 Singh, S. et al, *op cit*; and UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

**Table 22. Present situation and recent evolution in reproductive health**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH					
	←	←		→	→	TOTAL*
Countries in worse relative situation	0	3	7	6	16	
Countries below average	2	4	7	6	19	
Countries above average	1	1	5	3	10	
Countries in better relative situation	3	2	4	0	9	
Total *	0	6	10	23	15	54

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

**Table 23. Reproductive health: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)	WOMEN AGES 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	959	16.9	33.6
	Number of countries	31	26	31
Countries in better relative situation	Average	41	62.5	98.1
	Number of countries	87	23	73

tended by skilled health personnel during pregnancy, maternal mortality rate, rates of contraceptive use methods by married women aged 15-49 and percentage of childbirths attended by skilled health personnel.

All four indicators grouped together can give us an idea of the current general reproductive health situation; however in order to show evolution in recent years, only three of the four indicators have been used since there are difficulties in comparing maternal mortality indicators.

All groups of countries show a trend towards progress in this area. Despite a group of six countries which regressed in reproductive health, the absence of countries with significant regression must be noted. It is interesting to observe the relation between the current situation and recent evolution (Table 22).

A look at countries with sufficient data shows a clear majority whose recent progress is significant. Of a total of 54 countries, reproductive health indicators have improved in 38. Among countries in worse situations (16), over 80% (13) have made progress despite not being able to move out of the worst position. In countries in the best positions, three out of 9 have regressed in reproductive health.

Taken separately, each indicator shows the vast inequity between countries in better situations and countries in worse situations (Table 23). In the most advanced countries the percentage of deliveries attended by skilled health personnel is 98.1%, while in countries in worse situations this figure does not reach 33.6% in most cases. Maternal mortality rates are also remarkably unequal since in one group they reach 959 deaths for every 100,000 live births while in the other they reach 41 for every 100,000 live births.

If we focus on the relation between some of these indicators and other dimensions of development we can perceive the correlation between the

The role of reproductive health is fundamental in the reduction of hunger and extreme poverty (MDG 1). Secretary General Kofi Annan pointed out that in order to improve these indicators public investment in education and health must increase and gender inequities must be reduced. Recently the quest for greater synergy between ICPD objectives and MDGs made significant progress when the UN declared that universal access to sexual and reproductive health (ICPD priority) is a strategic objective in the attainment of the MDGs.

**COUNTRIES WITH THE HIGHEST MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES \***

Sierra Leone	2,000
Afghanistan	1,900
Malawi	1,800
Angola	1,700
Niger	1,600

\* Estimated maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)

percentage of deliveries attended by skilled personnel (Chart 14) or the maternal mortality rate (Chart 15) and a country's wealth.

In both cases this correlation is high. For deliveries attended by skilled health personnel, low-income countries are almost 30% below the rest of the world, while the maternal mortality rate shows a similar disparity. Inequality is so high that the rate of the poorest countries is four times higher than that of middle-lower income countries.

Reproductive health indicators by region also show a very high correlation, in which profound inequalities still persist. In maternal mortality (Chart 16), the distance between Sub-Saharan Africa and other regions speaks for itself: there are 800 deaths out of every 100,000 live births in Sub-Saharan

Africa while in North America and Europe the figure is almost insignificant.

Since 1994 the use of family planning methods has increased worldwide from 55% of married couples to almost 61%. In 68% of countries with available data use has increased by at least 1% each year and in 15% of these countries, at a rate of at least 2% a year. The use of methods varies from region to region, from 25% in Africa to almost 65% in Asia (where the high rates in China raise the average), and 70% in Latin America and the Caribbean and more developed regions.

However in many countries including the poorest ones access to contraceptives is still restricted. If we exclude China, with its very large population and high contraceptive usage rate, from its regional group, it turns out that only 46% of married women in Asia use contraceptives. In less developed countries the proportion is much lower.

The overall encouraging evolution of reproductive health indicators globally coexists with striking inequalities between regions.

## 9. Information, science and technology

### Indicators selected:

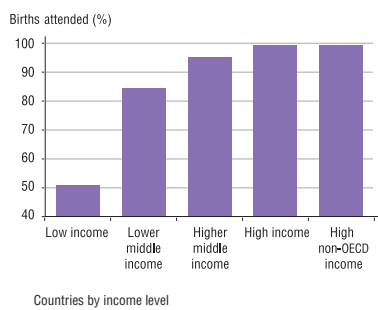
- Internet users (per 1,000 people)
- Personal computers (per 1,000 people)
- Telephone lines (per 1,000 people)
- Scientists and engineers in research and development (per million people)
- Expenditure on information and communication technology (% of GDP)
- Gross enrolment rate in higher education (%)

Sustainable development is inconceivable if countries do not have the endogenous ability to generate the scientific and technological knowledge that is essential for improving quality of life. UNESCO sponsored the Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge (better known as the Budapest Declaration) speaks to this point. Science is considered an instrument at the service of knowledge, which is an indispensable tool for progress. The inherent function of scientists is to systematically and thoroughly study nature and society in order to obtain new knowledge. This new knowledge is a source of educational, cultural and intellectual nourishment, and it generates technological progress and economic benefits.

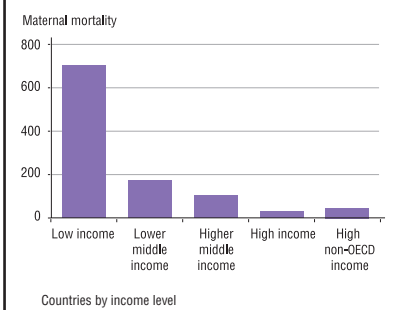
Recent economic growth theories include knowledge as another production factor since it is reflected in more effective methods of production and organization, and in new and better products and services. Innovation emerges as the result of multiple interactions between different agents: universities, public and private research centres and bodies, enterprises and entrepreneurial groups, financial organizations, users and public administrations.

Several countries have undergone technological development in the last three decades. In these

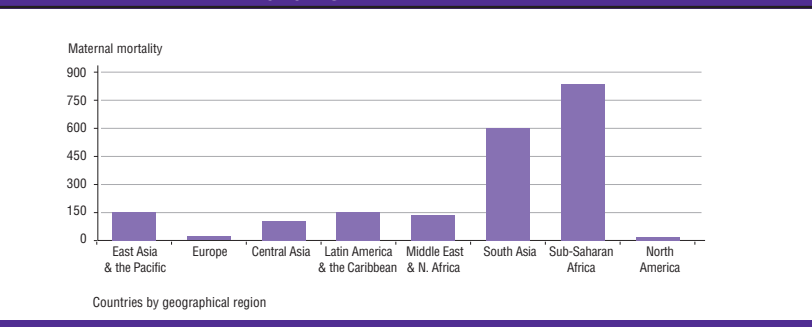
**Chart 14. Births attended by skilled health personnel (%) by income level**



**Chart 15. Estimated maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births) by income level**



**Chart 16. Maternal mortality by region**



cases development has resulted from planned middle- and long-term investment in scientific and technological activities. Investment has brought about substantial improvements in quality of life (economic, medical, food, housing, city planning). These improvements demonstrate that countries which invest in scientific and technological activities (experimental research and development, scientific and technical education and teaching, scientific and technological services) make an investment that will bear fruit in the near future. This is demonstrated by the United States, Germany, France, Japan and other nations which have become international technological leaders through the construction of productive chains, the exportation of technology, and the production and diffusion of knowledge. These countries invest a considerable percentage of their GDP in research and development and as a result, they have more trained human resources (i.e., master's degrees and doctorates) working in the field of science and technology.

Similarly larger and better scientific and technological infrastructure is essential in generating and developing knowledge which will result in high technology goods. The impact of the above-mentioned activities in economies globally has come to the attention of international organizations such as the OECD and UNESCO. They have made agreements to generate the conceptual framework that governs the generation of indicators for scientific and technological activities.

At first glance it may appear that country performance in the field of information, science and technology is not as closely linked as other areas to the Millennium Development Goals. However there are good reasons to connect the two. It might be possible to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1) using solid and sustainable growth as a base. And this growth can only be guaranteed if autonomous and critical generation of scientific and technological knowledge also takes place. Similar considerations could apply to the environmental challenges addressed in MDG 7. The Millennium Project was set up by the United Nations in 2002 to monitor compliance with the MDGs, and it includes a task force on innovation, science and technology.

The indicators that shed light on this field were adopted by Social Watch in 2004. They are designed to measure access to new technologies, as well as the technological potential of countries based on access to higher levels of education and the presence of research and development scientists and engineers. There is a high degree of correlation between the behaviour of these indicators, which underlines the value of this area.

Although countries with lower levels of development make up 79% of the population of the planet they only contribute 27% of the total number of researchers in the world. Likewise these countries only account for 19% of total world investment in research

and development, but they account for 39% of the world's GDP. Less than 1% (0.9%) of their GDP goes towards research and development, while the more developed countries invest over 2.4% of GDP.<sup>45</sup>

Certain aspects of information, science and technology are strategically important. At the beginning of the new millennium almost every country in the world has direct connection to the Internet. Although this is an impressive achievement we should bear in mind that the penetration rates of information and communication technologies vary between and within countries, creating a digital divide between high and low access areas.

At the end of 2003, 80% of the people in the world did not have access to basic communication infrastructure, and less than 10% had access to the Internet. Less than 1% of the population of South Asia (a region that contains a fifth of the world's population) was online.

The region in the worst situation is Africa. There are only 1 million Internet users on the whole continent (which has a population of 700 million), while in the United Kingdom alone there are 10.5 million users.<sup>46</sup> About 10% of the world's population lives in Sub-Saharan Africa, but it only has 0.2% of the planet's 1 billion telephone lines.

To evaluate the dynamics of development in this field it is necessary to consider the expansion of technology and communication processes, together with those related to human resources in research and development. The former have been very dynamic over the last decade however this has not been the case for human resources. Some countries have even regressed during the 1995-2004 period.

When we take a general look at the information, science and technology situation (Table 24), and study the averages of the six indicators used, we can see that only less than one third of the world's countries find themselves above world averages and that 44% of countries (127) are in the worst situation.

The most encouraging data is linked to recent evolution. Only two countries (Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) of the 186 with available data have regressed slightly. In most cases (127 countries) the information, science and technology situation has improved.

Development in communications has improved in almost all the countries with available data but the pace of this development varies. Telephone lines, personal computers and Internet users have increased their weight per capita, but the evolution of human resources training and research and development funding shows heterogeneous behaviour. Still countries that have made some type of progress predominate.

None of the lower-income countries have made significant progress. Some show slight progress but

45 UNESCO. Institute of Statistics, Science and Technology. [www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org)

46 Conference by Koichiro Matsuura, General Director of UNESCO, at the Roundtable on "Science, Society and Information and the Millennium Development Goals", at the World Summit on the Information Society, Geneva, 11 December 2003.

**Table 24. Present situation and recent evolution in information, science and technology**

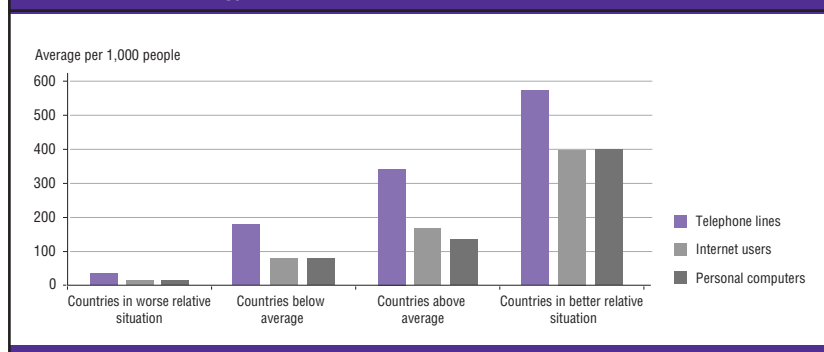
PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN INFORMATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Countries in worse relative situation	2	52	28	1		83
Countries below average		4	29	10		43
Countries above average			11	16		27
Countries in better relative situation			1	15	17	33
Total *	0	2	57	83	44	186

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

**Table 25. Information, science and technology by income level**

COUNTRIES BY INCOME LEVEL	EVOLUTION IN INFORMATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY					TOTAL*
	←	←		→	→	
Low income	2	47	13			62
Lower middle income		8	35	5		48
Higher middle income		1	14	18		33
High income		1	14	9		24
High non-OECD income			7	11		18
Total *	0	2	57	83	43	185

**Chart 17. Access to means of communication by present situation in information, science and technology**

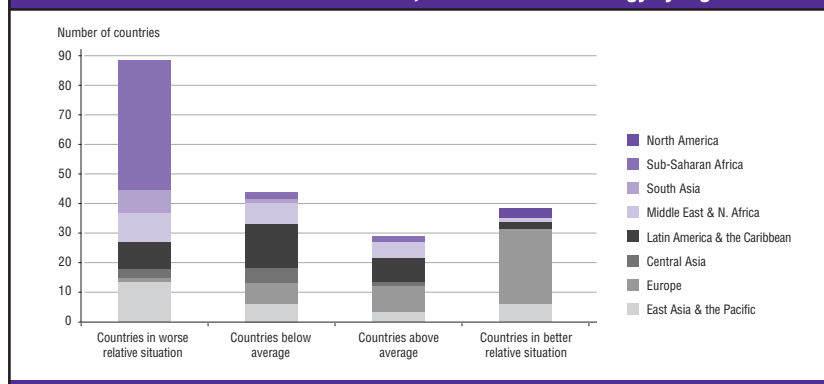


most are at a standstill. The rich countries continue to make headway, which means that the scientific-technological gap is still widening (Table 25).

When the countries that are in better situations in this field are compared with those in worse situations (Table 26) significant inequities are noted. The different available indicators show that there is

an average of 13 personal computers per 1,000 people in the less developed countries, while the figure in countries in better situations is 30 times higher (403 per 1,000). Data on the number of telephone lines, Internet users and enrolment in higher education confirms that there is a large gap between the two groups of countries.

**Chart 18. Present situation in information, science and technology by region**



**Table 26. Information, science and technology: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		TELEPHONE LINES (PER 1,000 PEOPLE)	GROSS ENROLMENT RATE IN HIGHER EDUCATION (%)	INTERNET USERS (PER 1,000 PEOPLE)	PERSONAL COMPUTERS (PER 1,000 PEOPLE)	EXPENDITURE ON INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (% OF GDP)	SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (PER MILLION PEOPLE)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	33	7	13	16	2.6	147
	Number of countries	89	83	88	74	5	23
Countries in better relative situation	Average	562	55	403	412	5.8	2,598
	Number of countries	40	31	40	34	27	30

The prospects for reducing inequalities in the future will be related to the data from two other important indicators: expenditure on information and communication technology as a percentage of GDP, and the number of scientists and engineers in research and development per million people. The former indicator shows that expenditure in countries in better situations is double that of the countries in the most disadvantaged group. The figures also speak volumes regarding the number of scientists and engineers: there are 17 times more professionals in this field in countries with greater scientific and technological development. Besides differences in access to means of communication (Chart 17) there are large differences in these two indicators which are strategically important for reducing inequality in the future.

By looking at the different geographical regions (Chart 18) we can see that certain patterns of inequality recur. Sub-Saharan Africa is again the most disadvantaged region, and all the African countries are in the worst situation group. Likewise, South Asia is in an unfavourable situation, while the situation in Latin America and the Caribbean, Central Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific is more heterogeneous. The United States and Canada are in better situations.

## 10. Public expenditure

*Indicators selected:*

- Public health expenditure (% of GDP)
- Public education expenditure (% of GDP)
- Foreign debt servicing (% of GNI)
- Military expenditure (% of GDP)

A study of public expenditure enables us to evaluate government priorities. However, social expenditure by itself does not ensure an improvement in living conditions. Social policies and the way budgets are executed also make a difference and have an impact on quality of life.

Public social expenditure competes with other areas of spending within a budget structure and this structure reveals the government's resource management priorities and restrictions. Governments must satisfy economic, social and cultural rights, while meeting their legal obligations outlined in numerous of human rights agreements. Budgets are mechanisms for allocating public resources and are therefore key instruments for ensuring that these rights are satisfied.

**Table 27. Public expenditure: averages for countries in better and worse relative situation**

PRESENT SITUATION		FOREIGN DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)	MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)	PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)
Countries in worse relative situation	Average	9.2	4.7	1.9	2.9
	Number of countries	14	15	22	18
Countries in better relative situation	Average	1.6	1.6	5.9	6.5
	Number of countries	7	25	37	31

Without an adequate social expenditure minimum it is impossible to obtain the resources needed to implement social policies which allow development to take place. According to the World Bank,<sup>47</sup> world average per capita expenditure on health was USD 482 in 2000. However in some regions like Sub-Saharan Africa it was no more than USD 29, and in South Asia it was even lower (USD 21). In both of these regions spending amounted to less than 5% of GDP. In contrast, expenditure in higher income countries was USD 2,700, that is, 10% of GDP. Added to these significant differences is the fact that private spending on health services in the poorer countries is proportionally higher than total public expenditure in this sphere (73%, in contrast to 38% in richer countries). In most cases, public expenditure does not reach the people for whom access is most difficult. In 2000 average world per capita expenditure on education was estimated at USD 629, but in Sub-Saharan Africa this figure was only USD 48, and in South Asia USD 38.

Two other important dimensions of budget allocation are military expenditure and debt servicing. In 2003 total military expenditure in the world reached USD 956,000 million, a rise of 11% over the previous year. This increase was mainly due to the extra costs incurred by the United States in the Iraq war. The United States accounts for almost 50% of world military spending and if we add the amount spent by 31 other high-income countries, the proportion of total world military spending by this group rises to 75%.<sup>48</sup> Military expenditure is only a relatively small proportion of GDP in these countries because they have enormous incomes, so they do not figure prominently

when relative indicators such as military spending as a percentage of GDP or GNI are studied. However, other comparisons demonstrate absurd situations such as the fact that the resources that these countries allocate to the military sector are ten times greater than their expenditure on official development aid, for example.<sup>49</sup>

Expenditure on foreign debt servicing results in a direct restriction on the resources available for development. From a strictly financial point of view, multilateral banks understand that for a large number of countries the weight of these payments constitutes a serious obstacle to growth and economic stability. In 1996, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund set up the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative as "...a first general attempt to eliminate an unbearable debt in the poorest and most indebted countries in the world."<sup>50</sup>

A survey of countries with available information shows that average government spending on health and education is in the order of 8% of GDP, while military expenditure is slightly lower than 3% of GDP. Better said, expenditure on health and education services is three times higher than military spending. However, these global figures obscure the vast differences that exist between different countries and different regions. (Table 27).

In countries in better public spending situation (37 countries), on average 12% of GDP goes towards education and health and less than 2% to military expenditure. This is an 8 to 1 ratio. On the other hand, in the countries that are classified in worse situations (24 countries), total spending on health and education barely exceeds what is allocated for military purposes.

47 World Bank. "Report on Development Indicators 2003". Press release. [web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS)

48 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. SIPRI Yearbook 2004. *Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*. [www.sipri.org](http://www.sipri.org)

49 *Ibid.*

50 International Monetary Fund and International Development Association. "Initiative for the reduction of debt in heavily indebted poor countries. Prospects of the current framework and options for the future". Prepared by IMF and World Bank staff. Approved by Jack Boorman and Masood Ahmed. 2 April 1999.



The world average for debt servicing is somewhere below 6% of GNI. However the average in countries in worse situations is 9%, while in countries in better situations it is only 2%.

The average weight of education spending as a percentage of GDP is between 4% and 5% for all country groups by income level. The health spending figure in lower income countries is 2%, and 6% in higher income OECD countries, while middle and middle-higher income countries spend 4%. The obvious difference is in the absolute expenditure values where there are unequal figures between the richer and poorer countries.

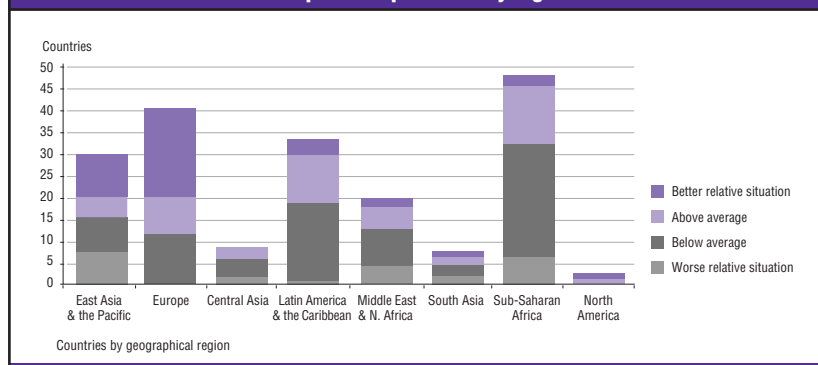
When we consider the relationship between income and debt servicing, countries with lower middle incomes are the most affected, with average debt servicing of 9% of GNI. It is important to note that these countries do not qualify for the HIPCS initiative.

The indicators show that Central Asia is the region with the highest percentage of countries in worse or below-average situations (eight of nine countries). The regional comparison shows that the composition of public spending is heterogeneous in relation to selected indicators. However more than 25% of East Asian and Pacific countries, as well as countries in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia are in the worst relative situation group.

Central and South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa have the lowest average weight of social expenditure (education and health): only 6% of GDP. South Asia is in the worst health expenditure situation (3%) while the lowest average allocation for education is in Sub-Saharan Africa (2%). The Middle East and North Africa is the region with the worst ratio of social to military expenditure. On average for each monetary unit allocated to the military a little more than one monetary unit goes to health and education combined. (Table 28).

The evolution of public expenditure is directly connected to all the Millennium Development Goals. The possibilities for countries to develop depend to a large extent on the allocations governments make in their budgets. The impact of this is felt primarily by the most vulnerable citizens in each society. When governments joined the International Pact on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, they made commitments to allocate the most resources possible to achieving the effective enjoyment of human rights. In addition countries should be able to manage their foreign debt in a way that does not jeopardize national development goals. Reducing foreign debt and making it more flexible falls under MDG 8. It commits the international community, and in particular the creditor countries and the multilateral bank, to pursuing negotiations which will lead to real improvements in the ways that debtor countries manage their resources.

**Chart 19. Present situation of public expenditure by region**



**Table 28. Countries in which budget allocations for military expenditure exceed the combined total for education and health**

	1 MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)	2 EDUCATION AND HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% GDP)	RATIO 2/1
Eritrea	28	7	0.25
Oman	13	6	0.46
Myanmar	2	1	0.50
Pakistan	5	3	0.60
Burundi	8	6	0.75
Sri Lanka	4	3	0.75
Singapore	5	4	0.80
Kuwait	11	10	0.91

The debt servicing situation has worsened in the higher middle-income countries from 5% to 9% of GNI. In lower income countries the average (4%) has not changed, and in lower middle-income countries it has improved somewhat (8% to 6%). Geographically, Central Asia is the only region where there is a predominance of countries undergoing regression. Seven of the 9 countries in the region have regressed due to the greater weight

of debt servicing. The regions which show increased debt servicing as a percentage of GNI are Central Asia, Europe and Latin America with 9%, 8% and 8% respectively.

The evolution of public expenditure between 1990 and the early years of the 21st century shows that while there has not been significant progress on a global level, 30% of countries have made some progress. On the other hand nearly 20% of

**Table 29. Present situation and recent evolution in public expenditure**

PRESENT SITUATION	EVOLUTION IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE					
	←	←		→	→	TOTAL*
Countries in worse relative situation	2	6	9	2		19
Countries below average	4	11	46	19		80
Countries above average		4	18	22		44
Countries in better relative situation			18	10		28
Total *	6	21	91	53		171

\* Total countries with sufficient information to be included in the ranking by present situation and evolution.

**Table 30. Countries where debt servicing amounts to 15% or more of GNI**

COUNTRY	REGION	CLASSIFICATION BY INCOME LEVEL	DEBT SERVICE AS % OF GNI (2002)
Hungary	Europe	Higher middle income	24
Belize	Latin America and the Caribbean	Lower middle income	23
Dem. Rep. of Congo	Sub-Saharan Africa	Low income	17
Kazakhstan	Central Asia	Lower middle income	17
Thailand	East Asia and the Pacific	Lower middle income	16
Turkey	Central Asia	Lower middle income	15

countries have fallen back on public expenditure allocation, and six countries have experienced a significant regression. (Table 29).

On average there has been almost no change in the countries in the worse and better groups with the exception of one. The indicator that links debt servicing to GNI shows that the countries in worse relative situation underwent serious deterioration (from 5% to 9%). On average there was a slight improvement in education spending as a percentage of GDP for countries in better situations (5% to 6%). However, these averages obscure the changes made in different directions by the countries within these groups in different indicators. (Table 30).

## 11. Development aid

### Indicator selected:

- Official Development Aid from the DAC countries and multilateral organizations to developing countries (% of GNI)

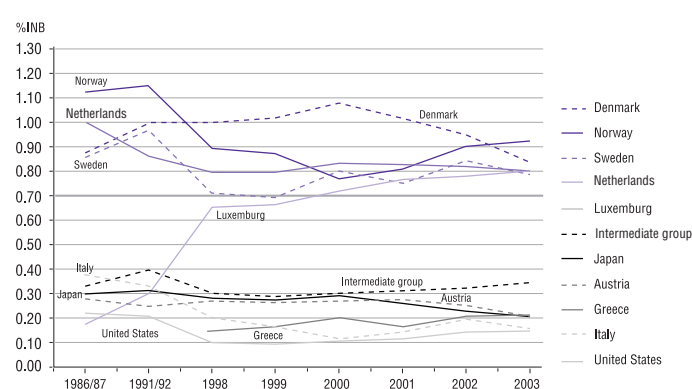
Development aid is a basic component of international cooperation. It helps achieve better living conditions in all countries and a reduction in current inequalities. Although total aid in 2003, which amounted to USD 69,000 million, was the highest figure to date (both in nominal and in real terms), when measured as a percentage of GNI it is still below the average level achieved between 1982 and 1990. In 2003 total aid was 0.25% of total GNI in donor countries, compared to 0.33% in the 1980s.<sup>51</sup>

In 2003 donor countries gave an average of 0.41% of their respective GNIs to developing countries but the degree of commitment was very heterogeneous. The only countries which have reached the UN proposed target of 0.7% of GNI are Norway, Denmark, Luxemburg, Holland and Sweden. If we consider only these countries and the five countries with the lowest donations, the average is 0.33% of GNI which is far below the target level. In the past year there has been good progress and various donor governments have made explicit commitments to reaching the proposed goal in the near future. Additionally, Sweden, Norway and Luxemburg made a commitment (with different time frames) to raise their contributions to 1% of GNI.

MDG 8 proposes that a world development association be created. There is a commitment by the richest countries to provide development aid and a responsibility on the part of the recipient countries to channel it in such a way that it supports social development. The contribution from international cooperation that is needed to achieve the MDGs is considerably higher than the target of 0.7% of donor country GNI.

51 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). "Final ODA Data for 2003". [www.oecd.org/dataoecd/19/52/34352584.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/19/52/34352584.pdf)

**Chart 20. Net ODA disbursements at current prices and exchange rates (% of GNI), 1986-2003 \***



\* Evolution of the countries with highest and lowest contributions in 2003, and the average value of the intermediate contribution countries.

An evaluation of development aid cannot be limited to the quantification of funds involved. There is increasing concern about the quality of this aid, that is to say its efficacy, its transparency and its real impact. For this reason evaluation tools to improve follow-up on the real effects of aid are being implemented.

## 12. International commitments and human rights

### Indicators selected:

- Status of ratifications of fundamental ILO conventions
- Status of ratification of the main International Human Rights Treaties
- Status of ratification of International Treaties mentioned in the Millennium Declaration
- Status of ratifications of the CEDAW and related protocols

Finally we will carry out an inventory of the UN countries' demonstrated willingness to pursue social development. This can be gauged by whether countries have signed and ratified international conventions and agreements considered vital for the defence of human rights and the improvement of quality of life.

The 2005 edition of the Social Watch Report focuses on the situation of women 10 years after the Beijing Conference. An in-depth study was carried out of the international instrument for women's rights: the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which came into force on 3 September 1981. Government behaviour with respect to this convention will be analysed in the article **25 years of the CEDAW**, and will be dealt with in-depth in thematic articles included in the Social Watch 2005 annual report.

Since 1995 Social Watch has been pressuring governments, the United Nations and international institutions for an account of the extent to which national, regional and international commitments to eradicating poverty have been met. A key tool in Social Watch's work is lobbying by member organizations to demand that national and international authorities meet their commitments.

On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations passed and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Since that time governments have signed a series of international treaties<sup>52</sup> on basic human rights, which have the force of international law. As well as proclaiming the civil and political rights of the individual, these international treaties and agreements recognize the right to health, to education, to decent housing, to non-discrimination, to decent work for all men and women, and also children's rights. The obligations which governments assumed when they signed and ratified these international treaties include a commitment that the provisions in them would be executed by passing laws and implementing policies.

When governments ratified these obligations, especially the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), they committed themselves to guaranteeing the enjoyment of these rights. They are also obliged to submit periodic reports to the appropriate monitoring bodies.

The table **Status of ratifications of the main International Human Rights Treaties** shows the signing and ratification status of all UN member countries. Two other tables address reporting issues: **Reports to be submitted to the UN Treaty Bodies during 2005-2006**, and **Status of official countries' reports to the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies**. These reports are particularly useful in that they contain details of government implementation as well as specifying government approaches at the national level on the fulfilment of their citizens' rights.

52 See footnote 4.

Every year Social Watch compiles a series of statistical tables which show country progress made towards international goals in social development and equity.<sup>52</sup> Since the international treaties represent strong commitments made by UN countries, the tables also incorporate a human rights dimension.

In each table, areas of development are directly linked to the respective human rights treaty that the majority of the governments in question have signed.

For example:

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

*The right to universal education is enshrined in:*

**UDHR** - Art. 26

**CERD** - Art. 5

**CESCR** - Art. 13 & 14

**CEDAW** - Art. 5, 10 & 14

**CRC** - Art. 28 & 29

#### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

*Education is considered in:*

**Millennium Development Goals - Goal 2**

**World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 1**

**Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern**

Matching the development areas to treaties and agreements makes it possible to see how carrying out the commitments made at UN international conferences involves more than political will. The treaties and agreements force countries to comply with their obligations since there is international law framework which gives the commitments legal force. The commitments to improving health, education, morbidity and mortality rates, reproductive health, access to information, environment, housing and gender equity are inherent rights of each human being, and hence they cannot be given or taken away. Governments are obliged to respect these rights, to protect them, and to do everything in their power in order for them to be fulfilled or implemented. Human rights are universal, that is to say valid and exactable, in any part of the world. Besides this they are indivisible. This is a holistic understanding of rights: they cannot be sub-divided

When a government signs and/or ratifies the ICESCR it makes a commitment to do everything in its power to guarantying the enjoyment of these rights in a progressive way. The policies and programmes for securing basic development goals must be geared towards enabling the whole population to enjoy these rights. That is to say, governments are making a com-

<sup>52</sup> According to the broad guidelines proposed in the following international summits: World Summit on Social Development (1995), Fourth World Women's Conference (1995), and the Millennium Summit (2000).

#### Ratifications of fundamental ILO Conventions:

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948.
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949.
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951.
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957.
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958.
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973.
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999.

#### Ratifications of the main International Human Rights Treaties:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966. Entry into force: 3 January 1976.
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966. Entry into force: 23 March 1976.
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965. Entry into force: 4 January 1969.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981.
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984. Entry into force: 26 June 1987.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. Entry into force: 2 September 1990.
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948. Entry into force: 12 January 1951.
- Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951. Entry into force: 22 April 1954.
- International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990. Entry into force: 1 July 2003.

#### Ratifications of International Treaties mentioned in the Millennium Declaration:

- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998. Entry into force: 1 July 2002.
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, 1997. Entry into force: 1 March 1999.
- Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, 1996. Entry into force: 3 December 1998.
- Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1997. Entry into force: 16 February 2005.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. Entry into force: 2 September 1990.
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2000. Entry into force: 12 February 2002.
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000. Entry into force: 18 January 2002.
- Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992. Entry into force: 29 December 1993.
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, 1994. Entry into force: 26 December 1996.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981. ■

mitment to take action with a focus on human rights. Therefore each policy or programme that a government implements must ensure that, in the different areas dealt with in that programme, the general framework of human rights is respected.

In the tables which Social Watch normally presents, progress and regression in the quality of life of a country's citizens is reflected in the evolution of a series of basic indicators (access to education, health service cover, access to drinking water, the participation of women in decision-making, etc.). From a human rights perspective these indicators can be read differently: when a country regresses

in one of the areas in which it has committed to international development goals, the government is not fulfilling its obligation to respect, protect, and comply with or implement human rights. Therefore the human rights of the citizens of the country are being violated.

The international human rights treaties, the commitments agreed on in UN conferences and in the Millennium Development Goals can become tools for NGOs to lobby governments for the eradication of poverty and its causes and demand equitable wealth distribution and the full enjoyment of human rights. ■

# Basic Capabilities Index

## Poverty dimensions: Responsibilities to be undertaken by governments

The study of poverty and social development cannot be reduced to only the consideration of people's and countries' income levels. Other dimensions must be taken into account. To evaluate the progress of a country or community towards improving the well being of its people, it is crucial to assess several indicators of the different capabilities that will enable women and men to function effectively as individuals and collectively.

To assess progress towards the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), for example, the United Nations has identified 48 indicators. While those indicators are extremely useful to look at how each commitment is doing in detail, they do not make it easy to see the "big picture". Further, on many indicators data are only available for a limited number of countries and lack historical series, which makes it very difficult to assess how nations are evolving or how they stand in comparison with their peers.

The public needs a clear answer to questions like "how fast are we progressing overall? Are we doing better or worse than our neighbour country? And for that, indexes are extremely useful, merging different indicators in a single number.

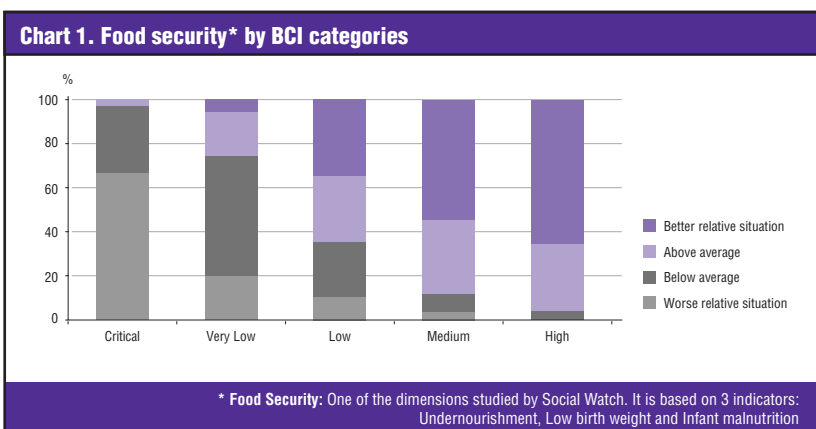
In 2004 Social Watch published for the first time a summary index to compare and to classify countries according to their progress on social development. This **Basic Capabilities Index (BCI)**<sup>1</sup> is based on three indicators:

- deliveries attended by skilled health personnel
- mortality among children under five years old, and
- number of children remaining in the school system up to the fifth grade.

Contrary to income, that can grow without any limit (theoretically), all these three indicators have a "ceiling", they reach a maximum possible level when all women have medical attention while giving birth and no children are out of school by fifth grade. It might be impossible to reduce infant mortality to zero, but some countries have values so low that they are in practice close to it. An index of 100, the achievement of that ceiling on all three indicators, does not imply a high level of social development. What it means is that the country has achieved universal coverage of the minimum essential requirements to be able to make progress towards improved well being. A departure point, rather than a destination.

In the real world, though, few countries are close to 100 and too many rate "critical level" on the BCI scale (under 70). The next category, with "very low" BCI ratings (under 80), covers countries in which there are big obstacles to achieving minimum standards like those set by the MDGs. The

1 In the 2004 Social Watch Report this index was called the "Quality of Life Index".



"low" BCI level is a heterogeneous group, including poor countries that are improving their social development and relatively rich countries with high inequalities. The countries in the top two categories, "medium" and "high" BCI ratings (over 90 in the index), have been able to satisfy most or all of their citizens' basic needs.

If the MDGs are achieved by the year 2015 in each and every country, all girls and boys will be attending school, all mothers will have medical assistance when delivering and infant mortality will be reduced by two thirds. The BCI will therefore be at least at a medium level for all nations.

### The BCI, an efficient summary

The BCI is an efficient summary indicator for classifying countries in line with the basic dimensions that are normally associated with social development and for which international goals have been set. That "efficiency" derives from the capacity to arrive to a conclusion using three indicators that is similar to what we would learn using a much larger set of measures. A set that for too many countries is not available.

The BCI is built in very much the same way as the Human Development Index (HDI) estimated by the UNDP.<sup>2</sup> The main difference is that HDI includes in its three components an indicator of income while the BCI does not.<sup>3</sup> The end result is not very different, because, obviously, countries with higher income are able to provide better social services and what the BCI measures is a result of efficient delivery of basic social services. Not having income as a component frees the BCI from short term variations in the economy and at the same time makes its calculation easy, since it does not depend from costly

2 The correlation between the HDI and the BCI can be found in "General classification of countries: situation by thematic area and Quality of Life Index (QLI)", in *Social Watch Report 2004. Fear and Want*. Montevideo: ITEM, 2004.

3 The other two components of the HDI are life expectancy and literacy.

household surveys that, in practice, only governments can carry out.

The BCI is consistent with national and international statistical systems and it can be derived with simple calculations from indicators made public by governmental and intergovernmental agencies. The BCI can be applied to states, provinces or municipalities within a country, which makes it particularly useful to monitor local policies. It is also possible to follow the evolution of the index over time, thus allowing to watch the evolution of poverty situations.

The BCI is already in use in different regions, with some minor methodological adjustments to local realities. For example, the 2001 Report by Social Watch Philippines<sup>4</sup> used the BCI to compare provinces and to promote local civil society monitoring of municipal social policies. In Latin America the BCI was used to compare the basic capabilities for population groups with different levels of income.<sup>5</sup>

The BCI ranking of a country shows a high correlation with the categories in each separate development dimension studied by Social Watch and shown in the tables for the different thematic areas in this report.<sup>6</sup> In these tables, countries are ranked by their average performance in a group of specific indicators in each dimension of development, and they are divided into four groups: *Countries in better relative situation*, *Countries above average*, *Countries below average* and *Countries in worse relative situation*.<sup>7</sup>

4 Raya, Rene. "An alternative measure of poverty and human capability: Introducing the Quality of Life Index", 2001; [www.socialwatch.org/en/informelmpreso/pdfs/articlei2001\\_phi.pdf](http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informelmpreso/pdfs/articlei2001_phi.pdf)

5 Batthyány, Karina, Mariana Cabrera and Daniel Macadar. "La pobreza y la desigualdad en América Latina". *Cuadernos Ocasionales* No. 4. September 2004; [www.socialwatch.org/en/informelmpreso/images/otrasPublicaciones/ZOOM-04-esp.pdf](http://www.socialwatch.org/en/informelmpreso/images/otrasPublicaciones/ZOOM-04-esp.pdf)

6 Food security, health, reproductive health, education, public expenditure, science and technology, water and sanitation, and gender equity.

7 For further details about this classification see the section on methodology.

**Table 1. Basic Capabilities Index (BCI) by country \***

Critical level	BCI	Very low level	BCI	Low level	BCI	Medium level	BCI	High level	BCI
Chad	47	Côte d'Ivoire	71	Azerbaijan	80	Trinidad and Tobago	90	Albania	98
Ethiopia	50	Gambia	71	Congo, Rep. of	81	Botswana	91	Belarus	98
Rwanda	50	Kenya	71	Ecuador	81	Lebanon	91	Bulgaria	98
Guinea-Bissau	51	Senegal	71	Peru	81	Mexico	91	Croatia	98
Niger	54	Comoros	72	South Africa	81	Tonga	91	Cuba	98
Madagascar	56	Nicaragua	72	Colombia	82	Vanuatu	91	United Arab Emirates	98
Bangladesh	57	Honduras	73	Cook Islands	83	Viet Nam	91	Russian Federation	98
Burundi	57	Lesotho	73	El Salvador	84	Georgia	92	Hungary	98
Lao PDR	57	Togo	73	Indonesia	84	Panama	92	Jordan	98
Pakistan	57	Cameroon	75	Guyana	85	Turkey	92	Latvia	98
Haiti	58	Iraq	75	Tajikistan	85	Armenia	93	Lithuania	98
Burkina Faso	60	Papua New Guinea	75	Maldives	86	Cape Verde	93	Ukraine	98
Nepal	60	Sao Tome and Principe	76	Zimbabwe	86	Iran	93	Bahrain	99
Equatorial Guinea	61	Swaziland	76	Belize	87	Libya	93	Canada	99
Mozambique	61	Benin	78	Sudan	87	Bahamas	94	Slovenia	99
Eritrea	62	Djibouti	78	Brazil	88	Jamaica	94	United States of America	99
Cambodia	63	Philippines	78	Egypt	88	Kuwait	94	Estonia	99
Guatemala	64	Paraguay	78	Namibia	88	Palau	94	France	99
India	64	Bolivia	79	Syria	89	Qatar	94	Ireland	99
Liberia	64	Morocco	79	Dominican Republic	89	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	94	Israel	99
Central African Republic	64					Tunisia	94	Italy	99
Uganda	64					Algeria	95	Malta	99
Mauritania	65					Barbados	95	Mauritius	99
Malawi	66					Dominica	95	Poland	99
Nigeria	66					Fiji	95	United Kingdom	99
Tanzania	66					Uzbekistan	95	Czech Republic	99
Yemen	66					Kazakhstan	96	Singapore	99
Zambia	67					Uruguay	96	Germany	99+
Ghana	68					Venezuela	96	Australia	99+
Guinea	68					Saudi Arabia	97	Austria	99+
Mali	68					Argentina	97	Belgium	99+
Myanmar	68					Brunei	97	Chile	99+
Bhutan	69					China	97	Cyprus	99+
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	69					Costa Rica	97	Korea, Rep. of	99+
						Malaysia	97	Denmark	99+
						Moldavia	97	Spain	99+
						Oman	97	Finland	99+
						Romania	97	Greece	99+
						Samoa	97	Iceland	99+
						Sri Lanka	97	Japan	99+
						Thailand	97	Luxembourg	99+
								Norway	99+
								New Zealand	99+
								Netherlands	99+
								Portugal	99+
								Sweden	99+
								Switzerland	99+

\* Countries for which there is sufficient information available to construct the index. See Methodological Notes.



It seems obvious that a country performing well in health or education will also have a good BCI ranking, since the BCI averages indicators are related to health and education. But the correlation is also very high between BCI and, for example, food security (see Chart 1).

Almost all the countries in the critical BCI category are also below the average or in a worse relative situation in the food security ratings. The exception is Nigeria, which is above the average. In the very low BCI category only a quarter of the countries are above the average, and Paraguay stands out as being in the better relative situation group. Of the countries with high BCI ratings only one, the United Arab Emirates, is below the average for food security. This coincidence in the performance of countries according to the BCI and all the different social development dimensions studied in detail allow to formulate plausible judgements for situations where no data are available.

Thus, for example, a country at BCI critical level is very likely to suffer from nutritional problems. The countries with the lowest basic capabilities are disadvantaged in all the dimensions of development.

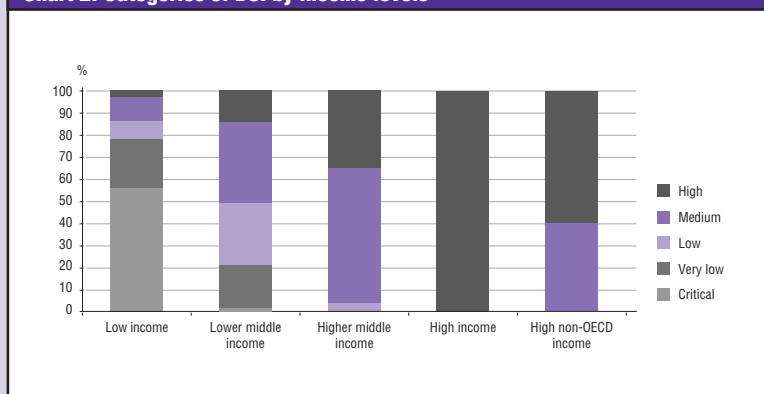
### BCI and MDGs: Progress is too slow to achieve the goals

In the same way that market analysts assess the evolution of the stock exchange from the behaviour of a few companies summarized in indexes like the Dow Jones, the evolution of the BCI can throw light on how countries are doing in terms of the internationally agreed MDGs.

The MDGs set target for 2015 that require gradual progress every year. The evidence of progress is not enough to ascertain whether the goals will be met. It is also necessary to know the speed of progress.

## The development of basic capabilities as a reflection of wealth inequalities among countries

Chart 2. Categories of BCI by income levels



Sixty percent of the countries with the lowest income levels<sup>8</sup> are in the worst situation regarding the improvement of their citizens' basic capabilities. Moreover, none of the countries with very low or critical BCI ratings have more than a middle-low income level.

8 Economies are divided in accordance with their per capita GNI in 2003, calculated by the World Bank Atlas method. The groups are as follows: low income, USD 765 or less; middle low income, USD 766 to USD 3,035; middle high income, USD 3,036 to USD 9,385; and high income USD 9,386 and over. See: [www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html](http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/countryclass.html)

At the other end of the scale, the high-income countries that are members of the OECD are all in the top BCI category, and all or nearly all of their basic capabilities are fully satisfied. The other high-income countries are all in the top two BCI categories. To sum up, basic capabilities are at their highest levels in countries with high income.

However, there are some low-income countries that have managed to achieve medium BCI ratings, which shows that it is possible to develop the basic capabilities of a population even if a country is not very wealthy. ■

Table 2. BCI evolution in 39 countries

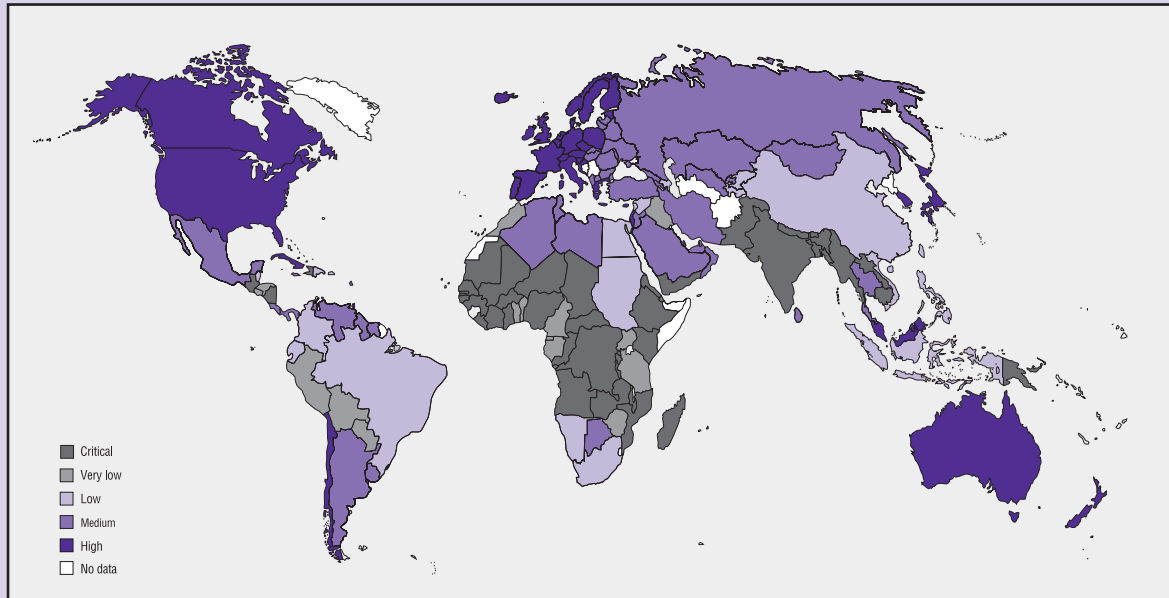
	BCI AROUND 1990	BCI 2003*
Cape Verde	69	93
El Salvador	68	84
Indonesia	69	84
Jordan	94	98
Tunisia	84	94
Panama	88	92
Namibia	74	88
Colombia	78	82
Ecuador	79	81
Peru	77	81
Togo	55	73
Nicaragua	66	72
Côte d'Ivoire	68	71
Chile	97	99+
Mauricio	98	99
Cuba	97	98
Costa Rica	93	97
Oman	93	97
Venezuela	93	96
Jamaica	91	94
Botswana	93	91
Philippines	74	78
Paraguay	73	78
Cameroon	70	75
Lesotho	70	73
Senegal	71	71
Mali	60	68
Guinea	55	68
Tanzania	69	66
India	60	64
Guatemala	59	64
Cambodia	57	63
Burkina Faso	64	60
Madagascar	54	56
Niger	48	54
Rwanda	56	50
Chad	49	47
Trinidad - Tobago	97	90
Guyana	91	85

\* Or latest available year.

On many of the indicators selected to measure the MDGs information is not available for a great number of countries. And in many cases, data exist to show the present situation but not for the recent past. Thus it is possible to know where the country is and maybe also if it is moving forward, but not how fast.

In the case of BCI, reliable information exists to calculate for 39 developing countries what their index was around 1990 and where they stand now (table 2). Those countries are scattered all over the world and have very different sizes and levels of income.<sup>9</sup>

9 Measured according to GDP per capita.



## The geography of the BCI

The worst deficiencies in basic capabilities are in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia: 82% percent of the countries with the lowest basic capabilities are in these regions, but nearly 70% of them are in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

These two regions have the highest percentage of countries in the lowest BCI categories. In sub-Saharan Africa 55% of the countries are in the critical BCI category and another 26% are in the very low category.

In South Asia, on the other hand, while there are 5 countries in the critical category there are also two in the low and higher categories.

In Latin America 6 out of 28 countries for which there is available information rate very low or critical, all in Central America or the Caribbean. Chile and Cuba are the only countries in the region with high basic capabilities.

Five of the countries in East Asia and the Pacific have critical or very low BCI, but five other nations in the region rate high.

The Middle East and North Africa region also has a heterogeneous mix: there are three countries in the critical BCI category, but there are five in the group with high ratings.

The situation is better in Central Asia, where countries are in the low, medium or high BCI categories, while OECD countries have medium or high rankings. ■

What the table shows is disappointing. While the majority shows improvement in their BCI ranking, only seven countries (18% of the group) progress more than 10 points. And other seven countries have lower BCI now than a decade ago. Progress is so slow that 24 countries out of 39 did not improve enough to move into the next level. And of 11 out of the 17 that had critical levels in 1990 continue ranking at the same critical level.

The target date for the MDGs is only ten years away. At the present speed of progress, as measured by the BCI, by 2015 there will still be some 70 countries with unacceptable deficiencies in basic capabilities,<sup>10</sup> and at least 25 still in critical situation. Without a dramatic uplift in the present trends, the internationally agreed goals will not be met. ■

<sup>10</sup> BCI levels lower than "medium"

**Table 3. Number of countries in different BCI categories in 1990 and 2003**

		BCI 2003*					TOTAL
		CRITICAL	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	
BCI AROUND 1990	CRITICAL	11	3	2	1		17
	VERY LOW		5	4			9
	LOW				2		2
	MEDIUM			1	5	1	7
	HIGH				1	3	4
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>

\* Or latest available year

# No country treats its women the same as its men

## The Gender Equity Index - a new perspective

When we compare a Gender Equity Index with a Basic Capabilities Index we find that some countries with major poverty problems have still made progress to eliminate inequity between women and men. Countries with higher income and less people living in poverty often do better in gender equity, but there is no nation in the world today in which women have the same opportunities as men, and while progress has been made in recent years, women are still disadvantaged in economic and political life around the world.

Social Watch Research Team<sup>1</sup>

More than 60% of the world's poor are women.<sup>2</sup> Half a million women a year die from complications that arise in pregnancy and childbirth. The risk of death resulting from pregnancy is 180 times greater for a woman in Africa than for one in Western Europe. In developing countries only 50% of births are attended by trained personnel and the figure drops to just 2% in some regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. Each year between 3 and 4 million women are the victims of violence worldwide. In the United States there is one physical attack on a woman every 15 seconds, and the perpetrator is usually her husband. In India between 18% and 45% of married men admit that they have mistreated their wives. Two thirds of the adults in the world who are illiterate are women. In some regions the rates for women in paid employment have hardly risen at all since 1990, and almost everywhere they are lower than the rates for men.<sup>3</sup> In most of the regions of the world women are still seriously under-represented in national parliaments.

To achieve gender equity means to build a society in which there are equal opportunities, and in which relations between people are based on respect for differences. The concept of gender equity is complex and multi-faceted and therefore difficult to measure.

In order to contribute to the ongoing debate and to allow for consistent monitoring of the situation of women, Social Watch developed in 2004 a Gender Equity Index (GEI). The GEI allows countries to be ranked in function of relevant indicators of gender inequity, chosen among those for which information is available for enough countries to make comparisons.<sup>4</sup>

1 The members of the team are: Karina Batthyány (Coordinator), Mariana Sol Cabrera, Graciela Dede, Daniel Macadar and Ignacio Pardo.

2 The source of these and subsequent data can be found at <http://serpiente.dgsca.unam.mx/cinu/mujer/m19.htm> y <http://agendadelasmujeres.com.ar>

3 The regions with the highest participation are Latin America and the Caribbean (43%) and East Asia (40%). Only in the Nordic countries do women occupy 40% of the seats. In 14 countries they have 30% or more of the seats, while in North Africa, Southern and Western Asia and Oceania the figure is under 10%.

4 Details of the methodological construction of this index can be found in the section on methodology.

### The GEI and other gender indexes

The Gender-related Development Index (GDI) was constructed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to measure development taking the gender dimension into account. The GDI takes the same areas or dimensions used in the Human Development Index (HDI) and incorporates the differences between men and women into each of the variables and dimensions that make it up: health, education and income.

The Gender Equity Index (GEI) developed by Social Watch is conceptually different in that it is designed to *measure the degree of gender equity* in different countries without any connection to the average level of socio-economic development of the population.

This difference in perspective means that a country's ranking on the GDI may be very different to where it appears on the GEI scale. For example, in the Social Watch GEI classification Moldova figures among the 25 countries with the least gender inequity and Ireland is one place below on the list, in the third group of countries. In contrast, in the UNDP calculation of GDI ranking Ireland comes 10<sup>th</sup> and Moldova 113<sup>th</sup>. What lies behind these differences?

On the GDI Moldova and Ireland are quite similar when compared in dimensions like life expectancy at birth, the adult literacy rate or the combined (primary, secondary and tertiary) net enrolment rate. However, when it comes to the

index of estimated income (purchasing power parity in dollars) there are big differences between men and women. In Moldova, annual average income is USD 1,168 for women and USD 1,788 for men, but the figures for Ireland are USD 21,056 and USD 52,008 respectively. It can be seen that in Ireland men's estimated income is more than twice that of women, but in Moldova the gap is considerably narrower.

Therefore, although there is greater gender inequity in Ireland, it ranks higher on the DGI scale than Moldova. This is because the higher average income in Ireland has considerable weight in the way this index is calculated by UNDP.

Another important factor is that the GEI focuses exclusively on gender equity, and one of the dimensions assessed is empowerment. But in the UNDP report this dimension is covered by a specific index which is separate: the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM).

The World Economic Forum recently designed another index to measure gender inequity around the world, the Gender Gap Index (GGI). This seems an attractive idea because it takes a wider range of factors into consideration,<sup>5</sup> but so far this greater descriptive capacity has meant that fewer countries can be assessed using the indicator. The GEI calculated by Social Watch can be applied to around 130 countries, whereas the GGI only provides information on 58. ■

### Gender inequity in different regions

Not a single country in the world has achieved gender equity: nowhere do women receive the same treatment as men. What has definitely changed in the last two decades is that this inequity is now recognized as a problem in most countries.

Yet, methodologies to measure the different dimensions of gender inequities in society have only emerged relatively recently, and this is a challenge for researchers. More instruments are needed not just for purposes of evaluation but also to strengthen efforts in two crucial areas: designing active gender equity policies and monitoring how public policies in general affect gender equity. In both of these areas there must be an input

from dependable and easily applicable tools that show how the situation of women compares to that of men in different areas.

This is why the GEI developed by Social Watch is useful: it allows countries to be compared and yields a rating for the degree of progress or regression in each dimension covered: education, participation in the economy, and empowerment.

In the GEI ranking Australia, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have the highest values. These are developed countries, and all but one are in

5 The GGI covers five dimensions: economic participation, economic opportunities, political empowerment, educational achievement, health and well-being.

**TABLE 1. Countries with best and worst GEI performance**

Best performance	Worst performance
<i>Value 12</i>	<i>Value 3</i>
Australia	Yemen
Finland	<i>Value 4</i>
Iceland	Pakistan
Norway	Côte d'Ivoire
Sweden	Togo
<i>Value 11</i>	Egypt
Bahamas	<i>Value 5</i>
Bulgaria	India
Canada	Nepal
Colombia	Turkey
Denmark	Guatemala
Slovakia	Syria
United States of America	Algeria
Estonia	Saudi Arabia
Russian Federation	Lebanon
Philippines	Sudan
France	
Hungary	
Latvia	
Lithuania	
Moldova	
Mongolia	
New Zealand	
Poland	
United Kingdom	

In the GEI system ranking depends on relative performance, therefore countries that have moved closer to equity are awarded a higher score.

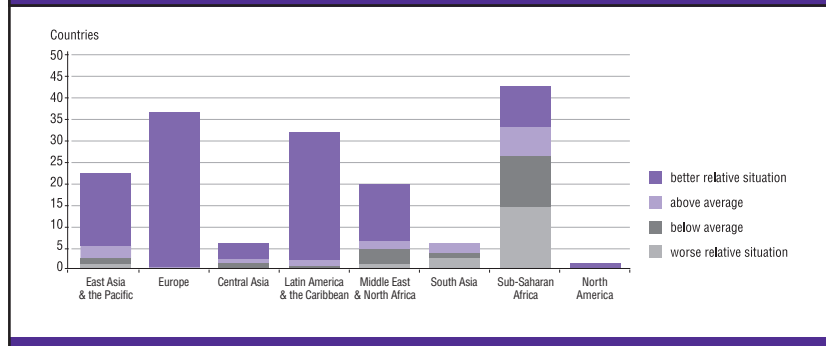
Europe. The Nordic countries are at the top of the list, probably because they started implementing active gender policies relatively early and these policies are now well-developed. Most of the countries in the second group are also European, including some from Eastern Europe like Moldova, Latvia and Lithuania.

**The dimensions in the GEI**

The GEI is made up of several different dimensions, and a separate rating is estimated for each of them.

The **education dimension** of gender equity is measured by indicators that show the literacy gap, and compared enrolment rates in primary, secondary and tertiary education. In education, the high ranking countries form a heterogeneous group, covering different continents and levels of income, including for example, Japan, Iceland, Vanuatu and Bahrain. The countries in which gender inequity in

**CHART 1. Gender equity situation (education dimension) of countries by geographical region**



education is worst are all in Africa, Asia and the Middle East (see chart 1).

The **economic participation dimension** uses two indicators to detect inequity: the percentage of women in the total of paid jobs (excluding the agricultural sector), and the estimated income women/men ratio.

Globally, women have less access to the labour market and when they work their pay is lower. In 1990, the proportion of women in the global economically active population was only 39.5% as against a figure of 58% for men.

The worst economic inequities are in the Middle East, North Africa, and some countries in Latin America like Mexico, Peru and Chile.

The group that performs best in this respect is made up of 52 countries in which the average gap between men's and women's income is 0.65, and in which, on average, women account for nearly 50% of the total population with paid jobs (excluding agriculture).

Lastly there is the **empowerment dimension**. This is calculated from the percentage of women who are qualified for professional and technical jobs, those in high administrative and management positions, with seats in parliament and in decision-

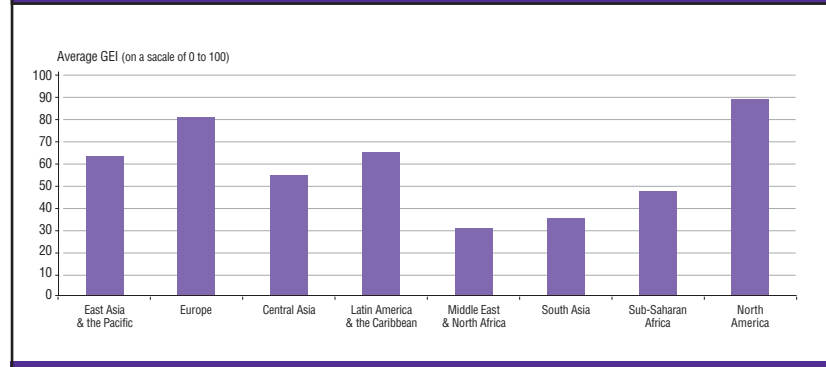
**TABLE 2. Income gap (women/men) by geographical region**

Region	Average
East Asia and the Pacific	0.59
Europe	0.57
Central Asia	0.63
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.43
Middle East and North Africa	0.33
Southern Asia	0.47
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.56
North America	0.63
Total	0.52

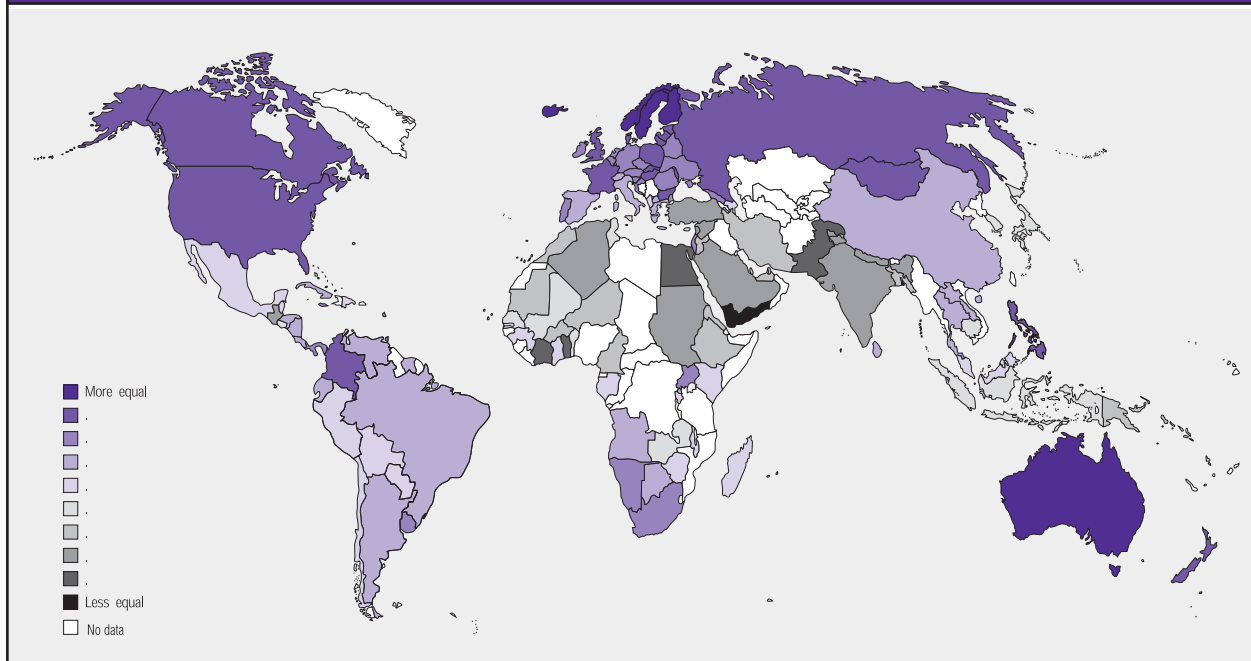
making posts at ministerial level.

Complete gender equity would require equal representation of women in all decision-making processes. Yet, according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), on average only 15% of seats in parliaments are occupied by women. The fact that there are relatively few women in government positions makes it inevitable that national, regional and local priorities are defined with hardly any contribution from women and without the female point of view being taken into account. But women's

**CHART 2. GEI average by geographical region**



MAP 1. GEI average by geographical region



experience of life and their perspective could make a big difference to the ways that the community's needs, concerns and priorities are perceived. Decision-making is one of the areas where inequity is most obvious.

The exclusion of women from politics is very visible. Women make up more than half the population of the planet but they hold a mere 6% of the positions in government cabinets. Only in countries like Norway, Sweden and Finland do women fill more than 40% of ministerial posts. In fact, in 1995, half the members of the Swedish cabinet were women, something that had never happened before in the history of the world. International studies show that if women are to exercise any real influence on political processes they will have to hold at least 30% of political positions, but women exceed this rate in only four countries, and they are all Scandinavian: Finland and Norway (39%), Sweden (34%) and Denmark (33%).

However women are not necessarily in a better situation just because they live in rich societies. In some developing countries like South Africa, Cuba, and China women's share of political positions is above 20%, while in relatively rich countries like Greece, Kuwait, the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Singapore they are limited to 5% or less.

National decision-makers (maybe because of the exclusion of women from their groups) tend to be reluctant when having to deal with issues that concern women: 47 countries in the United Nations

have not signed or ratified the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and other 43 countries have only done so with reservations.

There are only a score of countries in the top group of the empowerment dimension of the GEI rankings, and these are mostly in Europe, Grenada from the Caribbean and Uganda, Seychelles and South Africa from sub-Saharan Africa are among them.

Table 3. Countries with worse GEI performance and corresponding region

Country	Region
Yemen	Middle East and North Africa
Pakistan	South Asia
Côte d'Ivoire	Sub-Saharan Africa
Togo	Sub-Saharan Africa
Egypt	Middle East and North Africa
India	South Asia
Nepal	South Asia
Turkey	Central Asia
Guatemala	Latin America and the Caribbean
Syria	Middle East and North Africa
Algeria	Middle East and North Africa
Saudi Arabia	Middle East and North Africa
Lebanon	Middle East and North Africa
Sudan	Sub-Saharan Africa

### Gender inequity by regions and by countries' income

When the results of the GEI are shown on a world map we can see how different regions perform in terms of gender equity.

All the countries that score best on the GEI scale (except for Australia) are European. Those on the second level are mostly European as well, a few from East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. Most of the Latin American countries are in middle or higher positions on the list. On the other hand the countries in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are mostly in middle or low positions in the ranking, which indicates that gender inequity is worse in those areas.

When the GEI is analyzed by national levels of income the picture that emerges is fairly heterogeneous. For example, among the low income countries we find the likes of Moldova and Mongolia, which rank high as regards gender equity, but there are also a large number of poor countries (Yemen, Côte d'Ivoire, Pakistan, Togo) at the bottom of the gender equity ranking.

While the countries that perform best as regards gender equity are in the richest group, not all rich countries rate high in this respect. This confirms that there is no direct relation between degree of gender equity and level of wealth. The fact that a country has a high level of income does not



automatically guarantee that it will be in a better situation as regards gender equity. China, for example, has only one fifth of the income of Saudi Arabia but Chinese women are treated somewhat better. Thailand ranks higher than Spain in gender equity but has only half the income.

### Basic capabilities and gender equity: a comparative perspective

A good way to suggest or confirm hypotheses about the relation between gender equity and degree of development is to study the GEI<sup>6</sup> and Basic Capabilities Index (BCI) together (see the map included on the inserted poster). Countries with the same BCI have very different gender equity rankings (see charts 3 to 6).

In the group of nations where there is no significant lack of basic capabilities (so their BCI rating more than 98) GEI values are highest in Norway, Sweden and New Zealand, but this group also includes countries such as Japan and Chile whose GEI values are much lower. The Netherlands, Portugal and Germany fall between these two extremes, their BCI rating is close to 100 and their GEI rating is below 80.

A general improvement in dealing with basic capabilities in a country is not in itself a factor that generates greater gender equity, and nor does a high BCI rating mean a better position in this respect. Gender equity is an independent phenomenon: it does not come about simply because a country meets the basic needs of its population in line with a social development policy.

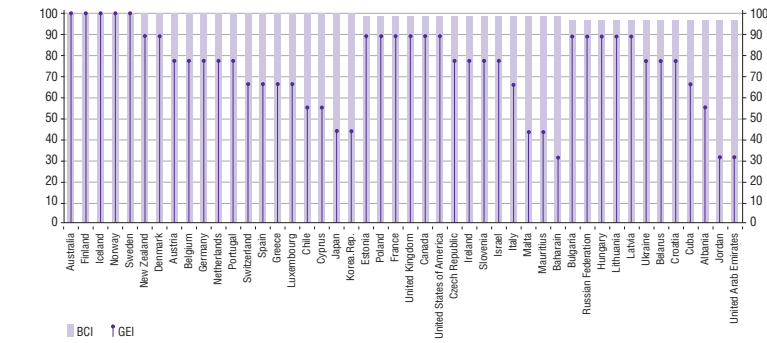
This can be confirmed by looking at the group whose BCI rating is 99. Here we find some countries with very high GEI ratings (greater relative equity) like the United States, which scores 99, or Canada, the United Kingdom or France with values of just below 90. On the other hand there are also countries like Malta and Bahrain which rate high on the BCI but perform atrociously on the GEI, with values of just over 30.

The rest of the data confirm that a high BCI rating does not in itself constitute a determinant factor in better gender equity. There are a very few cases like the Philippines and Rwanda in which GEI values are higher than BCI values, but as a general rule countries tend to perform better at covering basic needs than in the sphere of gender equity.

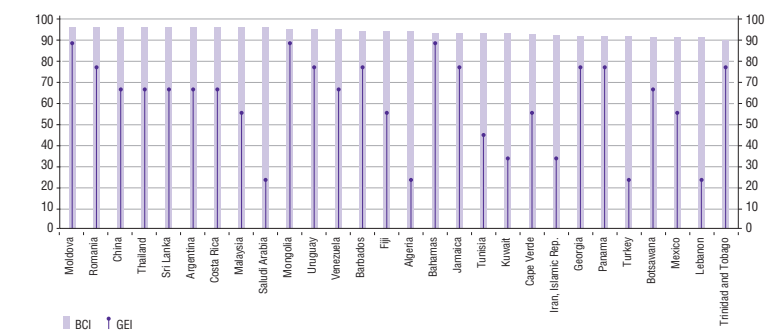
This also applies to countries that rank lowest on the BCI scale. There are some, like Rwanda, with a BCI rating of around 50 whose GEI rating is the same or higher, but there are others like Niger and Ethiopia whose GEI values are only around 20.

6 The data were adapted so the GEI, like the BCI, would give a rating between 0 and 100, so the two indexes could be compared.

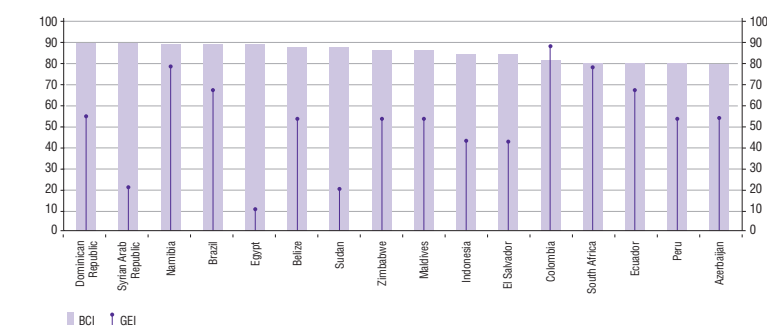
#### CHART 3. BCI and GEI for countries with high BCI ratings



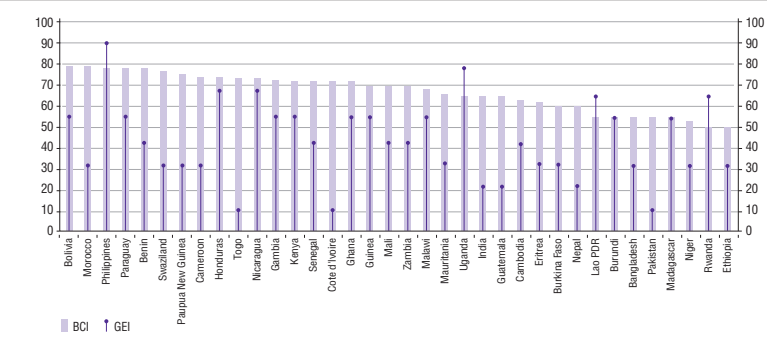
#### CHART 4. BCI and GEI for countries with medium BCI ratings



#### CHART 5. BCI and GEI for countries with low BCI ratings



#### CHART 6. BCI and GEI for countries with very low and critical BCI ratings



**Table 4. Basic Capabilities Index (by ranking)**

Number of countries		%
CRITICAL (up to 69 points)	34	20.9
VERY LOW (70 to 79)	20	12.3
LOW (80 to 89)	20	12.3
MEDIUM (90 to 97)	42	25.8
HIGH (98 to 99+)	47	28.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The non automatical correspondence between the high values of BCI and GEI indexes can be seen more clearly when ratings on these two indexes are considered in the context of geographical regions. In Europe BCI values are higher than 90 but the gender equity situation is quite varied, ranging from the countries that have the highest gender equity values (Sweden, Iceland, Finland) to others which only have values of around 60 (Cyprus, Greece, Italy).

It is also very revealing to compare the BCI and GEI ratings when countries are grouped by income. The richest nations have the highest BCI values, but as was seen above, their GEI ratings vary a great deal.

In high income countries that are not members of the OECD, GEI values are extremely low. Some Arab nations like Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait figure in this group. (Chart 9).

In the countries with middle high, middle low and low income there is a wide range of different situations, and they can be summed up as follows: the higher a country's income the higher its BCI value, but GEI values are very varied.

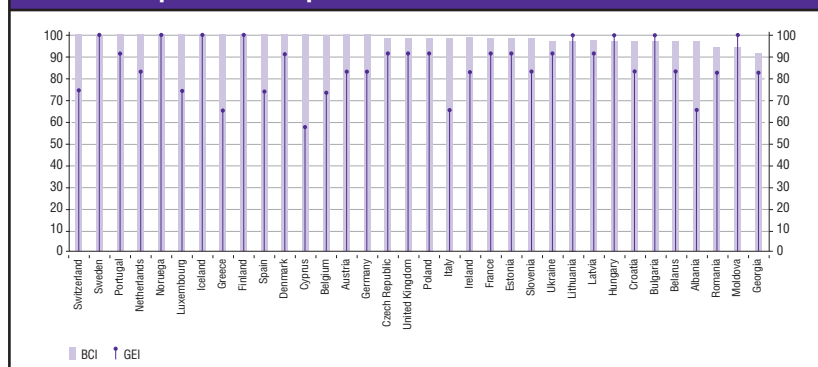
### Conclusions

With conclusive and irrefutable data, the GEI shows that:

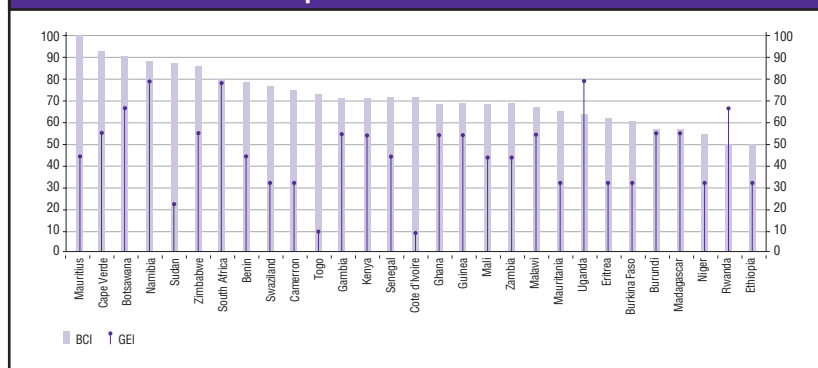
- There is no country in the world where women enjoy the same opportunities as men.
- To eliminate gender inequities a country does not have to have a high level of income.
- While the situation of women has improved in certain respects over the years, it is clear that their economic and political prospects are still limited.

An index like the GEI makes it possible for the problem of inequalities between women and men to be put on the development agenda. It is

**CHART 7. Europe: BCI and GEI performance of countries**



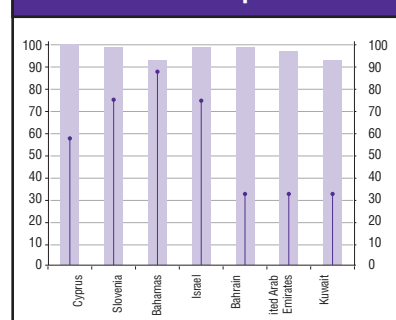
**CHART 8. Africa: BCI and GEI performance of countries**



useful for political, social and economic actors to study composite indexes of this type - both for their own countries and for others - so they will be able to draw political conclusions about critical deficiencies in what women are able or allowed to do, and about what should be given priority in plans for action.

The GEI places 134 countries in a global ranking and allows to compare women's situation in different countries. Scandinavia ranks at the top, which is not surprising, since these nations have adopted explicit national policies for achieving gender equality and for increasing women's power and participation. ■

**CHART 9. Non-OECD high income countries: BCI and GEI performance**



## THE PRESENT SITUATION OF POVERTY IN THE WORLD

	GINI INDEX		POPULATION LIVING WITH LESS THAN USD 1 A DAY (INTERNATIONAL POVERTY LINE)		POVERTY GAP OF POPULATION LIVING WITH LESS THAN USD 1 A DAY (INTERNATIONAL POVERTY LINE)		POPULATION BELOW THE NATIONAL POVERTY LINE		SHARE OF POOREST QUINTILE CONSUMPTION	
	YEAR		YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)
Albania	2002	28.2 <sup>C-D</sup>	2002	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2002	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	2002	25	2002	9.1 <sup>C-D</sup>
Algeria	1995	35.3 <sup>C-D</sup>	1995	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1995	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1998	12	1995	7.0 <sup>C-D</sup>
Angola										
Argentina	2001	52.2 <sup>E-F</sup>	2001	3.3 <sup>B</sup>	2001	0.5 <sup>B</sup>			2001	3.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Armenia	1998	37.9 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	12.8 <sup>A</sup>	1998	3.3 <sup>A</sup>	1998/99	54	1998	6.7 <sup>C-D</sup>
Australia	1994	35.2 <sup>E-F</sup>							1994	5.9 <sup>E-F</sup>
Austria	1997	30.0 <sup>E-F</sup>							1997	8.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Azerbaijan	2001	36.5 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	3.7 <sup>A</sup>	2001	<1.0 <sup>A</sup>	2001	50	2001	7.4 <sup>C-D</sup>
Bangladesh	2000	31.8 <sup>C-D</sup>	2000	36.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	8.1 <sup>A</sup>	2000	50	2000	9.0 <sup>C-D</sup>
Belarus	2000	30.4 <sup>C-D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	2000	42	2000	8.4 <sup>C-D</sup>
Belgium	1996	25.0 <sup>E-F</sup>							1996	8.3 <sup>E-F</sup>
Benin							1995	33		
Bolivia	1999	44.7 <sup>C-D</sup>	1999	14.4 <sup>A</sup>	1999	5.4 <sup>A</sup>	1999	63	1999	4.0 <sup>C-D</sup>
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2001	26.2 <sup>C-D</sup>					2001/02	20	2001	9.5 <sup>C-D</sup>
Botswana	1993	63.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	1993	23.5 <sup>A</sup>	1993	7.7 <sup>A</sup>			1993	2.2 <sup>C-D</sup>
Brazil	1998	59.1 <sup>E-F</sup>	2001	8.2 <sup>B</sup>	2001	2.1 <sup>B</sup>	1990	17	1998	2.0 <sup>E-F</sup>
Bulgaria	2001	31.9 <sup>E-F</sup>	2001	4.7 <sup>A</sup>	2001	1.4 <sup>A</sup>	2001	13	2001	6.7 <sup>E-F</sup>
Burkina Faso	1998	48.2 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	44.9 <sup>A</sup>	1998	14.4 <sup>A</sup>	1998	45	1998	4.5 <sup>C-D</sup>
Burundi	1998	33.3 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	58.4 <sup>A</sup>	1998	24.9 <sup>A</sup>			1998	5.1 <sup>C-D</sup>
Cambodia	1997	40.4 <sup>C-D</sup>	1997	34.1 <sup>A</sup>	1997	9.7 <sup>A</sup>	1997	36	1997	6.9 <sup>C-D</sup>
Cameroon	2001	44.6 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	17.1 <sup>A</sup>	2001	4.1 <sup>A</sup>	2001	40	2001	5.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
Canada	1998	33.1 <sup>E-F</sup>							1998	7.0 <sup>E-F</sup>
Central African Republic	1993	61.3 <sup>C-D</sup>	1993	66.6 <sup>A</sup>	1993	38.1 <sup>A</sup>			1993	2.0 <sup>C-D</sup>
Chad							1995/96	64		
Chile	2000	57.1 <sup>E-F</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>	1998	17	2000	3.3 <sup>E-F</sup>
China	2001	44.7 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	16.6 <sup>A</sup>	2001	3.9 <sup>A</sup>	1998	5	2001	4.7 <sup>C-D</sup>
Colombia	1999	57.6 <sup>E-F</sup>	1999	8.2 <sup>B</sup>	1999	2.2 <sup>B</sup>	1999	64	1999	2.7 <sup>E-F</sup>
Costa Rica	2000	46.5 <sup>E-F</sup>	2000	2.0 <sup>B</sup>	2000	0.7 <sup>B</sup>	1992	22	2000	4.2 <sup>E-F</sup>
Côte d'Ivoire	1998	45.2 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	15.5 <sup>A</sup>	1998	3.8 <sup>A</sup>			1998	5.5 <sup>C-D</sup>
Croatia	2001	29.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			2001	8.3 <sup>C-D</sup>
Czech Republic	1996	25.4 <sup>E-F</sup>	1996	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1996	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>			1996	10.3 <sup>E-F</sup>
Denmark	1997	24.7 <sup>E-F</sup>							1997	8.3 <sup>E-F</sup>
Dominican Republic	1998	47.4 <sup>E-F</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>	1998	29	1998	5.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Ecuador	1998	43.7 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	17.7 <sup>B</sup>	1998	7.1 <sup>B</sup>	1994	35	1998	3.3 <sup>C-D</sup>
Egypt	1999	34.4 <sup>C-D</sup>	2000	3.1 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1999/00	17	1999	8.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
El Salvador	2000	53.2 <sup>E-F</sup>	2000	31.1 <sup>B</sup>	2000	14.1 <sup>B</sup>	1992	48	2000	2.9 <sup>E-F</sup>
Eritrea							1993/94	53		
Estonia	2000	37.2 <sup>E-F</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1995	9	2000	6.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Ethiopia	2000	30.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	1999/00	26.3 <sup>A</sup>	1999/00	5.7 <sup>A</sup>	1999/00	44	2000	9.1 <sup>C-D</sup>
Finland	2000	26.9 <sup>E-F</sup>							2000	9.6 <sup>E-F</sup>
France	1995	32.7 <sup>E-F</sup>							1995	7.2 <sup>E-F</sup>
Georgia	2001	36.9 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	2.7 <sup>A</sup>	2001	0.9 <sup>A</sup>	1997	11	2001	6.4 <sup>C-D</sup>
Germany	2000	28.3 <sup>E-F</sup>							2000	8.5 <sup>E-F</sup>
Ghana	1999	30.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	1999	44.8 <sup>A</sup>	1999	17.3 <sup>A</sup>	1998	40	1999	5.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
Greece	1998	35.4 <sup>E-F</sup>							1998	7.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Guatemala	2000	48.3 <sup>E-F</sup>	2000	16.0 <sup>B</sup>	2000	4.6 <sup>B</sup>	2000	56	2000	2.6 <sup>E-F</sup>
Guinea	1994	40.3 <sup>C-D</sup>					1994	40	1994	6.4 <sup>C-D</sup>
Haiti							1995	65		
Honduras	1999	55.0 <sup>E-F</sup>	1998	23.8 <sup>B</sup>	1998	11.6 <sup>B</sup>	1993	53	1999	2.7 <sup>E-F</sup>
Hong Kong China	1996	43.4 <sup>E-F</sup>							1996	5.3 <sup>E-F</sup>
Hungary	1999	24.4 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>	1997	17	1999	7.7 <sup>C-D</sup>
India	1999/00	32.5 <sup>C-D</sup>	1999/00	34.7 <sup>A</sup>	1999/00	8.2 <sup>A</sup>	1999/00	29	1999/00	8.9 <sup>C-D</sup>
Indonesia	2002	34.3 <sup>C-D</sup>	2002	7.5 <sup>A</sup>	2002	0.9 <sup>A</sup>	1999	27	2002	8.4 <sup>C-D</sup>
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1998	43.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			1998	5.1 <sup>C-D</sup>
Ireland	1996	35.9 <sup>E-F</sup>							1996	7.1 <sup>E-F</sup>
Israel	1997	35.5 <sup>E-F</sup>							1997	6.9 <sup>E-F</sup>
Italy	2000	36.0 <sup>E-F</sup>							2000	6.5 <sup>E-F</sup>
Jamaica	2000	37.9 <sup>C-D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	2000	19	2000	6.7 <sup>C-D</sup>
Japan	1993	24.9 <sup>E-F</sup>							1993	10.6 <sup>E-F</sup>
Jordan	1997	36.4 <sup>C-D</sup>	1997	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1997	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1997	12	1997	7.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
Kazakhstan	2001	31.3 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2001	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1996	35	2001	8.2 <sup>C-D</sup>
Kenya	1997	44.5 <sup>C-D</sup>	1997	23.0 <sup>A</sup>	1997	6.0 <sup>A</sup>	1997	52	1997	5.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
Korea, Rep.	1998	31.6 <sup>E-F</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>			1998	7.9 <sup>E-F</sup>
Kyrgyzstan	2001	29.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	2001	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2001	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1999	64	2001	9.1 <sup>C-D</sup>
Lao PDR	1997	37.0 <sup>C-D</sup>	1997/98	26.3 <sup>A</sup>	1997/98	6.3 <sup>A</sup>	1997/98	39	1997	7.6 <sup>C-D</sup>
Latvia	1998	32.4 <sup>E-F</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			1998	7.6 <sup>E-F</sup>

Source: World Development Report 2005, World Bank ([http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2005/Resources/complete\\_report.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2005/Resources/complete_report.pdf)).

## THE PRESENT SITUATION OF POVERTY IN THE WORLD

	GINI INDEX		POPULATION LIVING WITH LESS THAN USD 1 A DAY (INTERNATIONAL POVERTY LINE)		POVERTY GAP OF POPULATION LIVING WITH LESS THAN USD 1 A DAY (INTERNATIONAL POVERTY LINE)		POPULATION BELOW THE NATIONAL POVERTY LINE		SHARE OF POOREST QUINTILE CONSUMPTION	
	YEAR		YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)	YEAR	(%)
Lesotho	1995	63.2 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	36.4 <sup>A</sup>	1995	19.0 <sup>A</sup>			1995	1.5 <sup>C,D</sup>
Lithuania	2000	31.9 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			2000	7.9 <sup>C,D</sup>
Macedonia, FYR	1998	28.2 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			1998	8.4 <sup>C,D</sup>
Madagascar	2001	47.5 <sup>C,D</sup>	1999	49.1 <sup>A</sup>	1999	18.3 <sup>A</sup>	1999	71	2001	4.9 <sup>C,D</sup>
Malawi	1997	50.3 <sup>C,D</sup>	1997/98	41.7 <sup>A</sup>	1997/98	14.8 <sup>A</sup>	1997/98	65	1997	4.9 <sup>C,D</sup>
Malaysia	1997	49.2 <sup>E,F</sup>	1997	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1997	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>	1989	16	1997	4.4 <sup>E,F</sup>
Mali	1994	50.5 <sup>C,D</sup>	1994	72.8 <sup>A</sup>	1994	37.4 <sup>A</sup>	1998	64	1994	4.6 <sup>C,D</sup>
Mauritania	2000	39.0 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	25.9 <sup>A</sup>	2000	7.6 <sup>A</sup>	2000	46	2000	6.2 <sup>C,D</sup>
Mexico	2000	54.6 <sup>E,F</sup>	2000	9.9 <sup>B</sup>	2000	3.7 <sup>B</sup>	1988	10	2000	3.1 <sup>E,F</sup>
Moldova	2001	36.2 <sup>C,D</sup>	2001	22.0 <sup>A</sup>	2001	5.8 <sup>A</sup>	1997	23	2001	7.1 <sup>C,D</sup>
Mongolia	1998	44.0 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	13.9 <sup>A</sup>	1995	3.1 <sup>A</sup>	1995	36	1998	5.6 <sup>C,D</sup>
Morocco	1998/99	39.5 <sup>C,D</sup>	1999	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1999	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1998/99	19	1998/99	6.5 <sup>C,D</sup>
Mozambique	1996/97	39.6 <sup>C,D</sup>	1996	37.9 <sup>A</sup>	1996	12.0 <sup>A</sup>	1996/97	69	1996/97	6.5 <sup>C,D</sup>
Namibia	1993	70.7 <sup>E,F</sup>	1993	34.9 <sup>B</sup>	1993	14.0 <sup>B</sup>			1993	1.4 <sup>E,F</sup>
Nepal	1995/96	36.7 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	37.7 <sup>A</sup>	1995	9.7 <sup>A</sup>	1995/96	42	1995/96	7.6 <sup>C,D</sup>
Netherlands	1994	32.6 <sup>E,F</sup>							1994	7.3 <sup>E,F</sup>
New Zealand	1997	36.2 <sup>E,F</sup>							1997	6.4 <sup>E,F</sup>
Nicaragua	2001	55.1 <sup>E,F</sup>	2001	45.1 <sup>A</sup>	2001	16.7 <sup>A</sup>	1998	48	2001	3.6 <sup>E,F</sup>
Niger	1995	50.5 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	61.4 <sup>A</sup>	1995	33.9 <sup>A</sup>	1989/93	63	1995	2.6 <sup>C,D</sup>
Nigeria	1996/97	50.6 <sup>C,D</sup>	1997	70.2 <sup>A</sup>	1997	34.9 <sup>A</sup>	1992/93	34	1996/97	4.4 <sup>C,D</sup>
Norway	2000	25.8 <sup>E,F</sup>							2000	9.6 <sup>E,F</sup>
Pakistan	1998/99	33.0 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	13.4 <sup>A</sup>	1998	2.4 <sup>A</sup>	1998/99	33	1998/99	8.8 <sup>C,D</sup>
Panama	2000	56.4 <sup>E,F</sup>	2000	7.2 <sup>B</sup>	2000	2.3 <sup>B</sup>	1997	37	2000	2.4 <sup>E,F</sup>
Papua New Guinea	1996	50.9 <sup>C,D</sup>					1996	38	1996	4.5 <sup>C,D</sup>
Paraguay	1999	56.8 <sup>E,F</sup>	1999	14.9 <sup>B</sup>	1999	6.8 <sup>B</sup>	1991	22	1999	2.2 <sup>E,F</sup>
Peru	2000	49.8 <sup>E,F</sup>	2000	18.1 <sup>B</sup>	2000	9.1 <sup>B</sup>	1997	49	2000	2.9 <sup>E,F</sup>
Philippines	2000	46.1 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	14.6 <sup>A</sup>	2000	2.7 <sup>A</sup>	1997	37	2000	5.4 <sup>C,D</sup>
Poland	1999	31.6 <sup>C,D</sup>	1999	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1999	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>	1993	24	1999	7.3 <sup>C,D</sup>
Portugal	1997	38.5 <sup>E,F</sup>	1994	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1994	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>			1997	5.8 <sup>E,F</sup>
Romania	2000	30.3 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	2.1 <sup>A</sup>	2000	0.6 <sup>A</sup>	1994	22	2000	8.2 <sup>C,D</sup>
Russian Federation	2000	45.6 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	6.1 <sup>A</sup>	2000	1.2 <sup>A</sup>	1994	31	2000	4.9 <sup>C,D</sup>
Rwanda	1983/85	28.9 <sup>C,D</sup>	1983/85	35.7 <sup>A</sup>	1983/85	7.7 <sup>A</sup>	1993	51	1983/85	9.7 <sup>C,D</sup>
Senegal	1995	41.3 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	26.3 <sup>A</sup>	1995	7.0 <sup>A</sup>	1992	33	1995	6.4 <sup>C,D</sup>
Serbia and Montenegro										
Sierra Leone	1989	62.9 <sup>C,D</sup>	1989	57.0 <sup>A</sup>	1989	39.5 <sup>A</sup>	1989	68	1989	1.1 <sup>C,D</sup>
Singapore	1998	42.5 <sup>E,F</sup>							1998	5.0 <sup>E,F</sup>
Slovakia	1996	25.8 <sup>E,F</sup>	1996	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	1996	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>			1996	8.8 <sup>E,F</sup>
Slovenia	1998/99	28.4 <sup>E,F</sup>	1998	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	1998	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			1998/99	9.1 <sup>E,F</sup>
South Africa	1995	59.3 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995	7.1 <sup>A</sup>	1995	1.1 <sup>A</sup>			1995	2.0 <sup>C,D</sup>
Spain	1990	32.5 <sup>E,F</sup>							1990	7.5 <sup>E,F</sup>
Sri Lanka	1995	34.4 <sup>C,D</sup>	1995/96	6.6 <sup>A</sup>	1995/96	1.0 <sup>A</sup>	1995/96	25	1995	8.0 <sup>C,D</sup>
Sweden	2000	25.0 <sup>E,F</sup>							2000	9.1 <sup>E,F</sup>
Switzerland	1992	33.1 <sup>E,F</sup>							1992	6.9 <sup>E,F</sup>
Syrian Arab Republic										
Tajikistan	1998	34.7 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	10.3 <sup>A</sup>	1998	2.6 <sup>A</sup>			1998	8.0 <sup>C,D</sup>
Tanzania	1993	38.2 <sup>C,D</sup>	1993	19.9 <sup>A</sup>	1993	4.8 <sup>A</sup>	2000/01	36	1993	6.8 <sup>C,D</sup>
Thailand	2000	43.2 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1992	13	2000	6.1 <sup>C,D</sup>
Togo							1987/89	32		
Tunisia	2000	39.8 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>	1995	8	2000	6.0 <sup>C,D</sup>
Turkey	2000	40.0 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>A</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>A</sup>			2000	6.1 <sup>C,D</sup>
Turkmenistan	1998	40.8 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	12.1 <sup>A</sup>	1998	2.6 <sup>A</sup>			1998	6.1 <sup>C,D</sup>
Uganda	1999	43.0 <sup>C,D</sup>					1997	44	1999	5.9 <sup>C,D</sup>
Ukraine	1999	29.0 <sup>C,D</sup>	1999	2.9 <sup>B</sup>	1999	0.6 <sup>B</sup>	1995	32	1999	8.8 <sup>C,D</sup>
United Kingdom	1999	36.0 <sup>E,F</sup>							1999	6.1 <sup>E,F</sup>
United States of America	2000	40.8 <sup>E,F</sup>							2000	5.4 <sup>E,F</sup>
Uruguay	2000	44.6 <sup>E,F</sup>	2000	<2.0 <sup>B</sup>	2000	<0.5 <sup>B</sup>			2000	4.8 <sup>E,F</sup>
Uzbekistan	2000	26.8 <sup>C,D</sup>	2000	21.8 <sup>A</sup>	2000	5.4 <sup>A</sup>	2000	28	2000	9.2 <sup>C,D</sup>
Venezuela	1998	49.1 <sup>E,F</sup>	1998	15.0 <sup>B</sup>	1998	6.9 <sup>B</sup>	1989	31	1998	3.0 <sup>E,F</sup>
Viet Nam	1998	36.1 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	17.7 <sup>A</sup>	1998	3.3 <sup>A</sup>	1993	51	1998	8.0 <sup>C,D</sup>
Yemen	1998	33.4 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	15.7 <sup>A</sup>	1998	4.5 <sup>A</sup>	1998	42	1998	7.4 <sup>C,D</sup>
Zambia	1998	52.6 <sup>C,D</sup>	1998	63.7 <sup>A</sup>	1998	32.7 <sup>A</sup>	1998	73	1998	3.3 <sup>C,D</sup>
Zimbabwe	1995	56.8 <sup>C,D</sup>	1990/91	36.0 <sup>A</sup>	1990/91	9.6 <sup>A</sup>	1995/96	35	1995	4.6 <sup>C,D</sup>

**Notes:** Countries are listed in alphabetical order. **A:** Based on expenditure; **B:** Based on income; **C:** Refers to expenditure shares by percentiles of population; **D:** Ranked by per capita expenditure; **E:** Refers to income shares by percentiles of population; **F:** Ranked by per capita income.

Source: World Development Report 2005, World Bank ([http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2005/Resources/complete\\_report.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2005/Resources/complete_report.pdf)).

## FOOD SECURITY: The governments of the world agreed on...

"The Committee affirms that the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person and is indispensable for the fulfilment of other human rights... The right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement."

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,  
General Comment 12 on the Right to Adequate Food, 1999.

"We consider it intolerable that more than 800 million people throughout the world, and particularly in developing countries, do not have enough food to meet their basic nutritional needs."

World Food Summit Plan of Action. Rome, 1996.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to food is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 25  
CESCR - Art. 11  
CRC - Art. 24 & 27

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Food security is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goal 1  
World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 6  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	UNDERNOURISHMENT			ESTIMATED LOW BIRTH WEIGHT			UNDER-5 CHILDREN MALNUTRITION (WEIGHT FOR AGE)		
	1990/1992 (%)	2000/2002 (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>									
Albania	5 <sup>A</sup>	6		6.5 <sup>G</sup>	3.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		14.3 <sup>O</sup>	
Algeria	5	5		9.0 <sup>E</sup>	7.0 <sup>O</sup>		9.2 <sup>I</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>	→
Australia				6.3 <sup>K</sup>	6.6 <sup>O</sup>				
Azerbaijan	34 <sup>A</sup>	15	→	6.3 <sup>J</sup>	9.5 <sup>O</sup>	←		7.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Barbados				11.0 <sup>L</sup>	10.0 <sup>N</sup>	→		6.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Belarus				4.2 <sup>G</sup>	5.1 <sup>P</sup>				
Belize				0.3 <sup>L</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>	←		6.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	9 <sup>A</sup>	8			3.5 <sup>O</sup>			4.1 <sup>O</sup>	
Brazil	12	9	→	12.0 <sup>F</sup>	9.4 <sup>M</sup>	→	7.0 <sup>F</sup>	5.7 <sup>M</sup>	
Canada				5.6 <sup>D</sup>	5.8 <sup>O</sup>				
Chile	8	4	→	5.2 <sup>J</sup>	5.0 <sup>O</sup>		1.6 <sup>J</sup>	0.8 <sup>P</sup>	
China	16	11	→	6.0 <sup>H</sup>	5.9 <sup>O</sup>		17.4 <sup>I</sup>	9.6 <sup>O</sup>	→
Colombia	17	13	→	8.0 <sup>E</sup>	6.9 <sup>O</sup>		10.1 <sup>F</sup>	6.7 <sup>O</sup>	→
Cook Islands					3.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Costa Rica	6	4		6.3 <sup>H</sup>	6.3 <sup>P</sup>		2.8 <sup>G</sup>	5.1 <sup>M</sup>	←
Croatia	16 <sup>A</sup>	7	→	6.3 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>P</sup>		0.7 <sup>K</sup>	0.6 <sup>V</sup>	
Cuba	8	3	→	7.6 <sup>G</sup>	6.1 <sup>O</sup>			4.1 <sup>O</sup>	
Czech Republic				5.9 <sup>H</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>			1.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Denmark				5.4 <sup>H</sup>	5.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Egypt	4	3		9.0 <sup>I</sup>	10.0 <sup>O</sup>		10.4 <sup>G</sup>	9.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Estonia	9 <sup>A</sup>	5	→	4.0 <sup>G</sup>	4.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Fiji				18.0 <sup>H</sup>	10.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		8.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Finland				4.1 <sup>I</sup>	4.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Georgia	39 <sup>A</sup>	27	→	5.0 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>			3.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Hungary				9.3 <sup>G</sup>	9.0 <sup>P</sup>		2.2 <sup>E</sup>	2.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Iceland				2.9 <sup>I</sup>	4.0 <sup>O</sup>				
Iran, Islamic Rep.	4	4		8.0 <sup>H</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>		15.7 <sup>L</sup>	10.9 <sup>O</sup>	→
Ireland				4.4 <sup>D</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Italy					6.0 <sup>O</sup>				
Jamaica	14	10	→	4.7 <sup>F</sup>	9.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	4.6 <sup>H</sup>	3.9 <sup>P</sup>	
Jordan	4	7	←	2.0 <sup>L</sup>	9.8 <sup>M</sup>	←	6.4 <sup>G</sup>	4.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Kazakhstan		13		6.5 <sup>K</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	8.3 <sup>L</sup>	4.2 <sup>P</sup>	→
Kiribati				3.0 <sup>K</sup>	5.0 <sup>T</sup>	←	12.9 <sup>C</sup>	13.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Korea, Rep.				4.3 <sup>D</sup>	4.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Kuwait	23	5	→	3.3 <sup>E</sup>	7.0 <sup>O</sup>	←		9.8 <sup>M</sup>	
Kyrgyzstan	21 <sup>A</sup>	6	→	6.0 <sup>J</sup>	6.3 <sup>N</sup>			11.0 <sup>N</sup>	
Latvia	3 <sup>A</sup>	4		4.9 <sup>I</sup>	5.3 <sup>P</sup>				
Lebanon	3 <sup>B</sup>	3		9.5 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>	→		3.0 <sup>M</sup>	
Libya				4.0 <sup>I</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>	←		4.7 <sup>L</sup>	

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

Notes: Data source year: A: 1993/1995; B: 1995/1997; C: 1985; D: 1987; E: 1988; F: 1989; G: 1990; H: 1991; I: 1992; J: 1993; K: 1994; L: 1995; M: 1996; N: 1997; O: 1998; P: 1999; Q: 2000; R: 1990/1998; S: 1995/2003; U: 1996; V: 1995/1996; W: 1998/1999; X: 1999/2000.



	UNDERNOURISHMENT			ESTIMATED LOW BIRTH WEIGHT			UNDER-5 CHILDREN MALNUTRITION (WEIGHT FOR AGE)		
	1990/1992 (%)	2000/2002 (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
Lithuania	4 <sup>A</sup>			4.0 <sup>G</sup>	4.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Macedonia, FYR	15 <sup>A</sup>	11	→	7.7 <sup>J</sup>	5.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		6.0 <sup>P</sup>	
Malta				5.9 <sup>J</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Mexico	5	5		12.0 <sup>F</sup>	9.1 <sup>P</sup>	→	16.6 <sup>F</sup>	7.5 <sup>W</sup>	
Moldova	5 <sup>A</sup>	11	←	6.6 <sup>I</sup>	5.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		3.2 <sup>M</sup>	
New Zealand				5.7 <sup>K</sup>	6.2 <sup>N</sup>				
Niue					0.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Norway				5.6 <sup>H</sup>	5.0 <sup>N</sup>				
Paraguay	18	14	→	8.7 <sup>I</sup>	8.9 <sup>M</sup>		3.7 <sup>G</sup>	5.0 <sup>D</sup>	
Poland				8.4 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>	→			
Qatar				5.0 <sup>D</sup>	9.7 <sup>P</sup>	←		6.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Romania				7.1 <sup>G</sup>	8.7 <sup>P</sup>			6.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Russian Federation	4 <sup>A</sup>	4		5.3 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>		4.2 <sup>J</sup>	3.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Samoa				4.0 <sup>H</sup>	4.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Serbia and Montenegro	5 <sup>A</sup>	11	←		4.0 <sup>S</sup>			2.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Seychelles				10.0 <sup>D</sup>	10.0 <sup>G</sup>		5.7 <sup>E</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Slovakia	4 <sup>A</sup>	5		6.4 <sup>H</sup>	7.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Slovenia	3 <sup>A</sup>			5.6 <sup>H</sup>	6.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Spain				5.1 <sup>F</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Sweden				4.4 <sup>G</sup>	4.0 <sup>O</sup>				
Switzerland				5.2 <sup>I</sup>	6.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Syrian Arab Republic	5	4		11.0 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>	→	12.1 <sup>J</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Tonga					0.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Tunisia				9.2 <sup>F</sup>	5.4 <sup>O</sup>	→	10.3 <sup>E</sup>	4.0 <sup>O</sup>	→
Turkey		3		7.0 <sup>E</sup>	15.2 <sup>O</sup>	←	10.4 <sup>J</sup>	8.3 <sup>O</sup>	→
Turkmenistan	13 <sup>A</sup>	9	→	5.2 <sup>I</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>			12.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Tuvalu					5.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Ukraine		3		8.0 <sup>K</sup>	5.7 <sup>P</sup>	→		3.0 <sup>D</sup>	
United States of America				7.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.6 <sup>P</sup>			1.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Uruguay	6	4		8.4 <sup>I</sup>	8.0 <sup>T</sup>		6.2 <sup>F</sup>	5.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Uzbekistan	8 <sup>A</sup>	26	←	5.5 <sup>I</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>			8.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Venezuela	11	17	←	16.0 <sup>I</sup>	6.1 <sup>O</sup>	→	7.7 <sup>G</sup>	4.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
West Bank and Gaza				6.0 <sup>L</sup>	8.6 <sup>O</sup>	←		4.4 <sup>M</sup>	
<b>Countries above average</b>									
Antigua and Barbuda					8.0 <sup>S</sup>			10.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Argentina				5.9 <sup>I</sup>	7.1 <sup>P</sup>		1.9 <sup>K</sup>		
Armenia	52 <sup>A</sup>	34	→		7.0 <sup>S</sup>			2.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Austria				5.6 <sup>G</sup>	7.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Bahamas				8.0 <sup>D</sup>	7.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Bahrain				7.3 <sup>J</sup>	9.6 <sup>O</sup>	←	7.2 <sup>F</sup>	8.7 <sup>L</sup>	←
Belgium				6.1 <sup>F</sup>	8.0 <sup>M</sup>	←			
Bolivia	28	21	→	6.0 <sup>I</sup>	9.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	11.1 <sup>G</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Botswana	23	32	←	8.0 <sup>E</sup>	10.0 <sup>S</sup>			12.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Brunei Darussalam				5.0 <sup>K</sup>	10.0 <sup>T</sup>	←			
Bulgaria	8 <sup>A</sup>	11	←	6.3 <sup>F</sup>	10.0 <sup>S</sup>	←			
Dominica				11.0 <sup>C</sup>	10.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Dominican Republic	27	25		11.0 <sup>H</sup>	11.0 <sup>S</sup>		10.3 <sup>H</sup>	4.6 <sup>O</sup>	→
Ecuador	8	4	→	13.0 <sup>I</sup>	16.1 <sup>P</sup>	←	16.5 <sup>U</sup>	12.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
El Salvador	12	11		7.1 <sup>I</sup>	13.0 <sup>O</sup>	←	15.2 <sup>E</sup>	10.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
France				5.6 <sup>H</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Gabon	10	6	→	7.7 <sup>D</sup>	14.0 <sup>T</sup>	←		12.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Germany					7.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Greece				6.0 <sup>C</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Grenada				9.0 <sup>L</sup>	9.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Guyana	21	9	→	12.0 <sup>D</sup>	12.0 <sup>S</sup>		18.3 <sup>J</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Indonesia	9	6	→	8.2 <sup>D</sup>	8.5 <sup>N</sup>		39.9 <sup>D</sup>	26.4 <sup>P</sup>	→
Israel				7.4 <sup>H</sup>	8.0 <sup>P</sup>				
Japan				6.3 <sup>G</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Luxembourg				5.5 <sup>F</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>	←			

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Malaysia	3			6.9 <sup>H</sup>	9.2 <sup>N</sup>	←	25.0 <sup>G</sup>	12.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Mauritius	6	6		9.0 <sup>E</sup>	12.7 <sup>P</sup>	←		15.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Mongolia	34	28	→	4.5 <sup>G</sup>	5.5 <sup>O</sup>		12.3 <sup>I</sup>	12.7 <sup>O</sup>	
Morocco	6	7			11.0 <sup>S</sup>			9.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Nigeria	13	9	→	20.0 <sup>E</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	35.3 <sup>S</sup>	29.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Palau				9.6 <sup>K</sup>	9.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Panama	21	26	←	8.5 <sup>I</sup>	10.0 <sup>N</sup>	←	6.1 <sup>I</sup>	6.8 <sup>N</sup>	
Peru	42	13	→	8.0 <sup>I</sup>	11.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	10.7 <sup>I</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Portugal				5.4 <sup>F</sup>	8.0 <sup>S</sup>	←			
São Tomé and Príncipe				7.0 <sup>O</sup>	7.0 <sup>O</sup>		16.6 <sup>U</sup>	13.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Saudi Arabia	4	3		8.3 <sup>F</sup>	11.0 <sup>S</sup>	←		14.3 <sup>M</sup>	
Singapore				8.3 <sup>I</sup>	7.8 <sup>O</sup>			14.0 <sup>S</sup>	
St. Kitts and Nevis				12.0 <sup>L</sup>	9.0 <sup>T</sup>	→			
St. Lucia				9.0 <sup>L</sup>	8.0 <sup>P</sup>	→		14.0 <sup>S</sup>	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines					10.0 <sup>R</sup>				
Suriname	13	11		13.0 <sup>O</sup>	13.0 <sup>S</sup>			13.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Swaziland	14	19	←	7.0 <sup>C</sup>	9.0 <sup>T</sup>			10.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Thailand	28	20	→	18.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.2 <sup>O</sup>	→	25.3 <sup>O</sup>	19.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Trinidad and Tobago	13	12		16.0 <sup>H</sup>	23.0 <sup>T</sup>	←	6.7 <sup>O</sup>	7.0 <sup>S</sup>	
United Kingdom				6.8 <sup>I</sup>	7.6 <sup>O</sup>				
Vanuatu				9.0 <sup>G</sup>	6.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		20.0 <sup>S</sup>	
<b>Countries below average</b>									
Angola	58	40	→	21.0 <sup>O</sup>	12.0 <sup>T</sup>	→	20.0 <sup>F</sup>	31.0 <sup>S</sup>	←
Bangladesh	35	30	→	50.0 <sup>O</sup>	30.0 <sup>O</sup>	→	65.8 <sup>G</sup>	47.8 <sup>X</sup>	→
Benin	20	15	→	9.6 <sup>G</sup>	16.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	35.0 <sup>O</sup>	23.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Bhutan				15.0 <sup>K</sup>	15.0 <sup>P</sup>		37.9 <sup>E</sup>	18.7 <sup>P</sup>	→
Burundi	48	68	←	16.0 <sup>K</sup>	16.0 <sup>S</sup>		37.5 <sup>O</sup>	45.1 <sup>O</sup>	←
Cambodia	43	33	→	18.0 <sup>J</sup>	8.9 <sup>O</sup>	→		45.9 <sup>O</sup>	
Cameroon	33	25	→	10.0 <sup>O</sup>	11.0 <sup>S</sup>		15.1 <sup>H</sup>	21.0 <sup>O</sup>	←
Cape Verde					12.9 <sup>O</sup>			14.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	32	71	←		12.0 <sup>S</sup>			31.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Congo, Rep.	54	37	→				23.9 <sup>O</sup>	13.9 <sup>W</sup>	
Côte d'Ivoire	18	14	→	15.0 <sup>O</sup>	17.2 <sup>P</sup>		12.4 <sup>U</sup>	21.4 <sup>W</sup>	
Djibouti				20.0 <sup>I</sup>			22.9 <sup>F</sup>	18.2 <sup>M</sup>	→
Equatorial Guinea					13.0 <sup>T</sup>				
Ethiopia	61 <sup>B</sup>	46	→	8.9 <sup>J</sup>	12.3 <sup>O</sup>	←	47.7 <sup>I</sup>	47.1 <sup>O</sup>	
Gambia	22	27	←	24.0 <sup>F</sup>	14.0 <sup>O</sup>	→		17.0 <sup>O</sup>	
Ghana	37	13	→	17.0 <sup>E</sup>	11.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	30.3 <sup>E</sup>	24.9 <sup>O</sup>	→
Guatemala	16	24	←	7.4 <sup>I</sup>	12.4 <sup>P</sup>	←	33.2 <sup>O</sup>	23.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Guinea	39	26	→	25.0 <sup>E</sup>	12.0 <sup>S</sup>	→		23.2 <sup>P</sup>	
Honduras	23	22		9.0 <sup>I</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	18.0 <sup>I</sup>	17.0 <sup>S</sup>	
India	25	21	→	28.0 <sup>H</sup>	30.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	63.9 <sup>G</sup>	47.0 <sup>W</sup>	
Iraq				8.0 <sup>H</sup>	15.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	11.9 <sup>H</sup>	15.9 <sup>O</sup>	←
Kenya	44	33	→		11.0 <sup>S</sup>		22.6 <sup>J</sup>	22.7 <sup>O</sup>	
Korea, Dem. Rep.	18	36	←		7.0 <sup>T</sup>			21.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Lesotho	17	12	→	10.0 <sup>O</sup>	14.0 <sup>T</sup>	←	15.8 <sup>I</sup>	18.0 <sup>S</sup>	←
Madagascar	35	37		10.0 <sup>E</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	40.9 <sup>I</sup>	33.1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Malawi	50	33	→	20.0 <sup>E</sup>	16.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	27.6 <sup>I</sup>	25.4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Mali	29	29		17.0 <sup>E</sup>	23.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	30.6 <sup>O</sup>	33.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Marshall Islands					12.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Myanmar	10	6	→	14.0 <sup>G</sup>	15.0 <sup>S</sup>		32.4 <sup>G</sup>	36.0 <sup>O</sup>	←
Namibia	35	22	→	12.0 <sup>G</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	←		24.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Nicaragua	30	27	→	8.0 <sup>I</sup>	12.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	11.0 <sup>J</sup>	10.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Oman				8.7 <sup>G</sup>	7.9 <sup>P</sup>		24.3 <sup>H</sup>	24.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Philippines	26	22	→	8.7 <sup>J</sup>	20.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	33.5 <sup>G</sup>	31.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Rwanda	44	37	→	17.0 <sup>C</sup>	9.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	29.4 <sup>I</sup>	29.0 <sup>O</sup>	
Sierra Leone	46	50	←	17.0 <sup>E</sup>	22.0 <sup>O</sup>	←	28.7 <sup>G</sup>	27.2 <sup>O</sup>	
Solomon Islands				20.0 <sup>H</sup>	13.0 <sup>T</sup>	→	21.3 <sup>F</sup>	21.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Somalia								25.8 <sup>P</sup>	

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	1990/1992 (%)	2000/2002 (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
South Africa									
Sri Lanka	28	22	→	19.0 <sup>J</sup>	17.0 <sup>Q</sup>	→	37.3 <sup>D</sup>	33.0 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Sudan	32	27	→	13.0 <sup>G</sup>	31.0 <sup>T</sup>	←	33.9 <sup>J</sup>	17.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Timor-Leste					10.0 <sup>S</sup>			43.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Togo	33	26	→	20.0 <sup>E</sup>	15.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	24.6 <sup>E</sup>	25.1 <sup>D</sup>	
Uganda	24	19	→		12.0 <sup>S</sup>		23.0 <sup>F</sup>	23.0 <sup>S</sup>	
United Arab Emirates	4			6.0 <sup>I</sup>	15.0 <sup>T</sup>	←		14.4 <sup>L</sup>	
Viet Nam	31	19	→	15.0 <sup>F</sup>	8.9 <sup>N</sup>	→	45.0 <sup>F</sup>	33.1 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Zimbabwe	45	44		5.6 <sup>F</sup>	10.1 <sup>P</sup>	←	11.5 <sup>E</sup>	13.0 <sup>P</sup>	
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>									
Afghanistan				20.0 <sup>I</sup>				48.0 <sup>N</sup>	
Burkina Faso	21	19		11.0 <sup>D</sup>	18.3 <sup>P</sup>	←	32.7 <sup>J</sup>	34.3 <sup>W</sup>	
Central African Republic	50	43	→	15.0 <sup>E</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>		23.2 <sup>L</sup>	24.3 <sup>D</sup>	←
Chad	58	34	→		23.5 <sup>Q</sup>		35.0 <sup>G</sup>	27.6 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Comoros				6.8 <sup>D</sup>	25.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	18.5 <sup>I</sup>	25.4 <sup>Q</sup>	←
Eritrea	68 <sup>B</sup>	73	←		21.0 <sup>S</sup>		41.0 <sup>J</sup>	40.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Guinea-Bissau				20.0 <sup>D</sup>	19.5 <sup>Q</sup>			23.1 <sup>Q</sup>	
Haiti	65	47	→	15.0 <sup>D</sup>	21.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	26.8 <sup>G</sup>	17.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Lao PDR	29	22	→	60.0 <sup>H</sup>	14.0 <sup>T</sup>	→	44.0 <sup>J</sup>	40.0 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Liberia	34	46	←					26.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Maldives				20.0 <sup>J</sup>	22.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	39.0 <sup>K</sup>	30.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Mauritania	15	10	→	13.0 <sup>J</sup>	42.0 <sup>T</sup>	←	47.6 <sup>H</sup>	32.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.					18.0 <sup>S</sup>				
Mozambique	66	47	→	20.0 <sup>E</sup>	14.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	27.0 <sup>L</sup>	24.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Nepal	20	17	→	23.0 <sup>J</sup>	20.9 <sup>Q</sup>	→	48.5 <sup>L</sup>	47.1 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Niger	41	34	→	20.0 <sup>C</sup>	11.7 <sup>Q</sup>	→	42.6 <sup>I</sup>	39.6 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Pakistan	24	20	→	25.0 <sup>E</sup>	19.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	40.2 <sup>H</sup>	38.0 <sup>S</sup>	→
Papua New Guinea				16.0 <sup>K</sup>	11.0 <sup>T</sup>	→		35.0 <sup>S</sup>	
Senegal	23	24		10.0 <sup>C</sup>	18.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	21.6 <sup>I</sup>	18.4 <sup>Q</sup>	→
Tajikistan	21 <sup>A</sup>	61	←	8.3 <sup>L</sup>	13.3 <sup>Q</sup>	←			
Tanzania	37	44	←	8.6 <sup>H</sup>	13.0 <sup>S</sup>	←	28.9 <sup>I</sup>	29.4 <sup>P</sup>	
Yemen	34	36		47.0 <sup>K</sup>	32.0 <sup>S</sup>	→	30.0 <sup>I</sup>	46.1 <sup>N</sup>	←
Zambia	48	49		2.3 <sup>C</sup>	11.3 <sup>M</sup>	←	25.2 <sup>I</sup>	28.0 <sup>S</sup>	←
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>									
Bermuda				7.0 <sup>L</sup>					
Cyprus				9.0 <sup>J</sup>					
Faeroe Islands				3.0 <sup>C</sup>					
French Polynesia				5.3 <sup>K</sup>					
Greenland				5.7 <sup>I</sup>					
Guam				7.1 <sup>E</sup>					
Hong Kong (China)				5.0 <sup>K</sup>					
Macao (China)				4.5 <sup>K</sup>					
New Caledonia				8.6 <sup>H</sup>					
Puerto Rico				14.0 <sup>L</sup>					
San Marino				10.0 <sup>C</sup>					

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Sources:**

**Undernourishment:** The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2004, FAO ([www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org)).  
**Estimated low birth weight:** World Development Indicators 2004 website ([www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/](http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/)), World Bank; UNICEF End Decade Website Database ([www.childinfo.org](http://www.childinfo.org)) and The State of the World's Children 2005, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)).  
**Under-5 children malnutrition:** World Development Indicators 2004 website ([www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/](http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/)); UNICEF End Decade Website Database ([www.childinfo.org](http://www.childinfo.org)) and The State of the World's Children 2005, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)).

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

**Notes:** Data source year: A: 1993/1995; B: 1995/1997; C: 1985; D: 1987; E: 1988; F: 1989; G: 1990; H: 1991; I: 1992; J: 1993; K: 1994; L: 1995; M: 1996; N: 1997; O: 1998; P: 1999; Q: 2000; R: 1990/1998; S: 1995/2003; U: 1996; V: 1995/1996; W: 1998/1999; X: 1999/2000.

## EDUCATION: The governments of the world agreed on...

"Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding [and] tolerance..."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26, 1948.

"To ensure that [by 2015] children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education."

Millennium Declaration, Paragraph 19, 2000.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to universal education is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 26      CEDAW - Art. 5, 10 & 14  
CERD - Art. 5      CRC - Art. 28 & 29  
CESCR - Art. 13 & 14

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS





Education is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goal 2  
World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 1  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE			LITERACY (15-24 YEARS OLD)			PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATIO (NET)		
	1990 (%)	2000/2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2005 (%)	Progress or regression	1990/1991 (%)	2001/2002 (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>									
Albania	82 <sup>I</sup>			94.8	98.6	→	95.1	97 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Algeria	94	96		77.3	92.0	→	93.3	90	
Argentina		93		98.2	98.7		93.8	100	→
Aruba		97						98	
Bahamas				96.5	97.5		96.0 <sup>F</sup>	86	←
Bahrain	89	99	→	95.6	99.0	→	99.0	91	←
Barbados		95		99.8	99.8		83.0 <sup>D</sup>	100	→
Belarus				99.8	99.8			94	
Belize	67	81 <sup>N-O</sup>	→	96.0	98.6		94.0 <sup>F</sup>	96 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Bermuda		96						100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Brazil	72 <sup>F</sup>			91.8	96.1	→	86.4	97	→
Brunei Darussalam	95 <sup>F</sup>	93	←	97.9	99.6		91.0 <sup>F</sup>		
Bulgaria	91			99.4	99.7		86.1	93 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Cape Verde	60 <sup>C</sup>	93	→	81.5	90.7	→	99.0 <sup>D</sup>	99	
Chile	92 <sup>I</sup>	100 <sup>N-O</sup>	→	98.1	99.2		87.7	89 <sup>O-P</sup>	
China	86	98	→	95.3	98.6	→	97.4	93 <sup>O-P</sup>	←
Costa Rica	82	94	→	97.4	98.6		86.3	91	→
Croatia	100 <sup>G</sup>			99.6	99.8		78.8	88	→
Cuba	92	95 <sup>N-O</sup>	→	99.3	99.8		91.8	96	→
Cyprus	100	99 <sup>N-O</sup>		99.7	99.8		100.0 <sup>E</sup>	95 <sup>O-P</sup>	←
Czech Republic		97						86.7	88
Denmark	94	100 <sup>N-O</sup>	→				98.3	99 <sup>N-O</sup>	
Ecuador	77 <sup>H</sup>	78		95.5	97.9		90.0 <sup>H</sup>	99	→
Estonia	93 <sup>G</sup>	99	→	99.8	99.7		100.0	98 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Fiji		88		97.8	99.5		100.0 <sup>F</sup>	100	
Finland	100	100					98.3	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
France		98 <sup>M-N</sup>					100.0	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Greece	99			99.5	99.8		94.6	95 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Guyana	87	77 <sup>N-O</sup>	←	99.8	99.8		88.9	98 <sup>N-O</sup>	→
Hong Kong (China)	100			98.2	99.5			98	
Hungary	98 <sup>F</sup>			99.7	99.8		91.3	91	
Iceland	99 <sup>H</sup>	99					100.0	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Indonesia	84	89	→	95.0	98.5	→	96.8	92	←
Iran, Islamic Rep.	90	94	→	86.3	95.9	→	95.0 <sup>D</sup>	87	←
Ireland	100	99					90.4	94 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Israel				98.7	99.7		91.9	100	→
Italy	100	96	←	99.8	99.8		100.0	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Jamaica	96 <sup>D</sup>	90	←	91.2	95.1	→	95.7	95	
Jordan	100	98 <sup>M-N</sup>	←	96.7	99.6		94.1	91	←






→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

Notes: Data source year: A: 1986; B: 1987; C: 1988; D: 1989; E: 1990; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002.

	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE			LITERACY (15-24 YEARS OLD)			PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATIO (NET)		
	1990 (%)	2000/2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2005 (%)	Progress or regression	1990/1991 (%)	2001/2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Kazakhstan				99.8	99.8		86.7	90	→
Korea, Rep.	99	99 <sup>P-Q</sup>		99.8	99.8		100.0	100	
Latvia				99.8	99.8		90.4	91 <sup>D-P</sup>	
Lebanon		94		92.1	96.3	→		90	
Lithuania				99.8	99.8			97 <sup>D-P</sup>	
Luxembourg		99					81.6	96 <sup>D-P</sup>	→
Macao (China)		99 <sup>N-O</sup>		97.2	99.3		81.2	86	→
Malaysia	98			94.8	98.3	→	93.7	95	
Maldives				98.1	99.4			96	
Malta	100	100		97.5	98.9		97.0	98 <sup>D-P</sup>	
Mauritius	98	99		91.1	94.9	→	95.0	93	
Mexico	80	90	→	95.2	97.7		100.0	99	
Mongolia				98.9	99.2		90.1	87	←
Netherlands		100 <sup>N-O</sup>					95.3	99 <sup>D-P</sup>	→
Netherlands Antilles		83 <sup>M-N</sup>		97.5	98.5			88	
Oman	96	96		85.6	99.4	→	70.3	75	→
Palau		84 <sup>M-N</sup>						97 <sup>D-P</sup>	
Panama	82 <sup>C</sup>	89	→	95.3	97.4		91.4	99	→
Peru	92 <sup>C</sup>	86	←	94.5	97.6	→	87.5	100	→
Poland	98	99		99.8	99.8		96.7	98	
Romania				99.3	99.7		81.2	93 <sup>D-P</sup>	→
Samoa	86 <sup>J</sup>	94	→	99.0	99.5		100.0	95	←
Seychelles	93 <sup>F</sup>	91	←					100	
Slovenia				99.8	99.8		100.0	93 <sup>D-P</sup>	←
Spain				99.6	99.8		100.0	100	
Sri Lanka	94			95.1	97.4		87.3	100	→
St. Kitts and Nevis		90 <sup>N-O</sup>						96 <sup>D-P</sup>	
St. Lucia	95 <sup>F</sup>	97	→				95.3	99	→
Switzerland		99					83.7	99 <sup>D-P</sup>	→
Syrian Arab Republic	94	92		79.9	90.0	→	97.8	98	
Tajikistan				99.8	99.8		76.7	98	→
Thailand		94 <sup>M-N</sup>		98.1	99.2		75.9	86	→
Tonga	84	83						100	
Tunisia	87	95	→	84.1	95.7	→	93.5	97	→
Turkey	98			92.7	97.6	→	89.4	88	
Uruguay	94	89	←	98.7	99.2		91.9	90	
Vanuatu		95					70.7	93	→
Venezuela	86	96	→	96.0	98.6		88.1	92	→
<b>Countries above average</b>									
Armenia				99.5	99.8			85	
Bolivia		78		92.6	97.0	→	90.7	94	→
Botswana	97	89	←	83.3	90.4	→	94.1	81	←
Colombia	62	61		94.9	97.6		68.1	87	→
Dominica		85						91 <sup>D-P</sup>	
Dominican Republic		73		87.5	92.5	→		97	
Egypt		99		61.3	73.5	→	85.9	90	→
El Salvador	58 <sup>F</sup>	67	→	83.8	90.0	→	73.0 <sup>D</sup>	89	→
Moldova				99.8	99.8		88.8	78	←
Morocco		84		55.3	72.8	→	56.8	88	→
Namibia	63 <sup>F</sup>	94	→	87.4	93.2	→	86.3	78	←
Niue		76 <sup>M-N</sup>						97	
Paraguay	70	77	→	95.6	97.6		92.8	92	
Philippines	75 <sup>C</sup>	79	→	97.3	99.2		96.8	93	←
Qatar	64			90.3	96.1	→	89.6	94	→
Saudi Arabia	83	94	→	85.4	94.9	→	62.1	59	←
South Africa		65 <sup>N-O</sup>		88.5	92.5	→	89.4	90	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines		85 <sup>N-O</sup>						92	
Togo	50	84	→	63.5	80.4	→	74.9	92	→
<p>  <b>Significant progress</b>   <b>Slight progress</b>  <b>  </b> <b>Stagnant</b>   <b>Slight regression</b>   <b>Significant regression</b> </p> <p> <b>Notes:</b> Data source year: <b>A:</b> 1986; <b>B:</b> 1987; <b>C:</b> 1988; <b>D:</b> 1989; <b>E:</b> 1990; <b>F:</b> 1991; <b>G:</b> 1992; <b>H:</b> 1993; <b>I:</b> 1994; <b>J:</b> 1995; <b>K:</b> 1996; <b>L:</b> 1997; <b>M:</b> 1998; <b>N:</b> 1999; <b>O:</b> 2000; <b>P:</b> 2001; <b>Q:</b> 2002. </p>									



	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE			LITERACY (15-24 YEARS OLD)			PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATIO (NET)		
	1990 (%)	2000/2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2005 (%)	Progress or regression	1990/1991 (%)	2001/2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Trinidad and Tobago	96	77	←	99.6	99.8		91.0	94	→
Ukraine	59			99.8	99.9		80.2	82	
United Arab Emirates	80	97	→	84.7	92.6	→	92.4	81	←
Viet Nam		89		94.1	96.0		90.5	94	→
Zimbabwe	94			93.9	98.2	→	89.2	83	←
<b>Countries below average</b>									
Bangladesh		65		42.0	51.5	→	71.1	87	→
Benin	55	84 <sup>N-O</sup>	→	40.4	59.0	→	47.1	71 <sup>N-O</sup>	→
Cambodia	49 <sup>H</sup>	70	→	73.5	81.9	→	98.0 <sup>K</sup>	86	←
Cameroon	66 <sup>D</sup>	81 <sup>M-N</sup>	→	81.1	92.8	→	73.4		
Djibouti	87	88		73.2	87.9	→	33.3	34	
Equatorial Guinea		33 <sup>O-P</sup>		92.7	98.1	→		85	
Ghana		66 <sup>N-O</sup>		81.8	93.8	→	53.1	60	→
Guinea	59	84 <sup>N-O</sup>	→				27.0 <sup>C</sup>	61	→
Honduras				79.7	87.3	→	89.0 <sup>F</sup>	87	
Iraq	72 <sup>B</sup>	66 <sup>M-N</sup>	←	41.0	46.5	→	100.0	91 <sup>N-O</sup>	←
Kenya				89.8	96.7	→	74.1	70	←
Kuwait				87.5	94.0	→	49.0	85	→
Lesotho	71	67	←	87.2	92.0	→	75.8	84	→
Liberia				57.2	74.0	→		70 <sup>N-O</sup>	
Myanmar		60		88.2	92.0	→	99.5	82	←
São Tomé and Príncipe		61						97	
Sudan	94	84 <sup>M-N</sup>	←	65.0	81.9	→	43.6	46 <sup>N-O</sup>	→
Swaziland	76	74		85.1	92.5	→	89.2	77	←
Tanzania	79	78		83.1	93.1	→	49.4	54	→
Yemen		87 <sup>N-O</sup>		50.0	72.4	→		67 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Zambia		77		81.2	90.6	→		66	
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>									
Burkina Faso	70	64	←	24.9	40.3	→	25.7	35	→
Burundi	74 <sup>F</sup>	64	←	51.6	69.4	→	53.1	53	
Chad	53	45	←	48.0	74.4	→	42.0	58	→
Comoros	46 <sup>F</sup>			56.7	59.5		56.8	55 <sup>N-O</sup>	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	55			68.9	86.4	→	54.8	35 <sup>M-N</sup>	←
Côte d'Ivoire	73	69 <sup>M-N</sup>	←	52.6	66.3	→	44.5	63	→
Eritrea	83 <sup>G</sup>			60.9	74.5	→	16.9	43	→
Ethiopia	58 <sup>G</sup>	61	→	43.0	61.0	→	24.4	46	→
Gambia	87 <sup>F</sup>	70 <sup>M-N</sup>	←	42.2	64.4	→	52.0 <sup>D</sup>	73	→
Guatemala	50 <sup>J</sup>	56 <sup>O-P</sup>	→	73.4	81.6	→		85	
Guinea-Bissau		38 <sup>M-N</sup>		44.1	65.0	→	45.0 <sup>B</sup>	45 <sup>N-O</sup>	
India	59 <sup>H</sup>	59 <sup>N-O</sup>		64.3	76.3	→		83 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Lao PDR	53 <sup>F</sup>	62	→	70.1	81.4	→	62.6	83	→
Madagascar	22	34	→	72.2	83.4	→	64.8	69	→
Malawi	64	54	←	63.2	74.5	→	49.0	81	→
Mali	72	84	→	27.6	40.8	→	22.3	38 <sup>M-N</sup>	→
Mauritania	75	55	←	45.8	50.7	→	34.9	67	→
Mozambique	33	52	→	48.8	66.3	→	48.3	60	→
Nepal		78		46.6	66.0	→	87.8	70 <sup>O-P</sup>	←
Nicaragua	46	54	→	68.2	73.2	→	72.2	82	→
Niger	62	71	→	17.0	26.7	→	23.9	34	→
Pakistan				47.4	61.3	→	35.4	67 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Papua New Guinea	59	51	←	68.6	78.8	→	68.5	77	→
Rwanda	60	40	←	72.7	87.2	→	66.9	84	→
Senegal	85	68	←	40.1	56.2	→	48.2	58	→
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>									
Afghanistan							26.8		
Angola							55.6	30 <sup>N-O</sup>	←
Australia							99.2	96	←
Austria							87.7	91 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Azerbaijan								80	

 **Significant progress**  
 **Slight progress**  
 **Stagnant**  
 **Slight regression**  
 **Significant regression**

**Notes:** Data source year: **A:** 1986; **B:** 1987; **C:** 1988; **D:** 1989; **E:** 1990; **F:** 1991; **G:** 1992; **H:** 1993; **I:** 1994; **J:** 1995; **K:** 1996; **L:** 1997; **M:** 1998; **N:** 1999; **O:** 2000; **P:** 2001; **Q:** 2002.

	CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE			LITERACY (15-24 YEARS OLD)			PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATIO (NET)		
	1990 (%)	2000/2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2005 (%)	Progress or regression	1990/1991 (%)	2001/2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Belgium	81 <sup>A</sup>						96.2	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Bhutan	82 <sup>H</sup>	91	→				13.9		
British Virgin Islands								94	
Canada							97.7	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Central African Republic	24			52.1	74.0	→	52.5		
Congo, Rep.	62			92.5	98.5	→	90.1		
Cook Islands		51 <sup>M-N</sup>							
French Polynesia							100.0 <sup>D</sup>		
Gabon	66 <sup>B</sup>							78 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Georgia							97.1	91	←
Germany							84.3	83	
Grenada								84 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Haiti	47 <sup>D</sup>			54.8	68.8	→	22.1		
Japan	100						99.7	100	
Kiribati	98								
Kyrgyzstan							92.3	90	←
Libya				91.0	97.7	→	96.3		
Macedonia, FYR	95 <sup>G</sup>						94.4	93 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Marshall Islands								96 <sup>N-O</sup>	
Nauru								81 <sup>M-N</sup>	
New Caledonia	95 <sup>D</sup>						97.0 <sup>E</sup>		
New Zealand	90						100.0	98	
Nigeria				73.6	91.1	→		100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Norway	100						100.0	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Portugal				99.5	99.8		100.0		
Puerto Rico				96.1	98.0				
Russian Federation				99.8	99.8		98.6		
San Marino	100								
Serbia and Montenegro								75 <sup>O-P</sup>	
Singapore				99.0	99.8		96.4		
Slovakia								87	
Solomon Islands	85						83.3		
Suriname	100 <sup>B</sup>						78.4	97	→
Sweden	100						99.8	100	
Turks and Caicos Islands								88	
Tuvalu	96 <sup>H</sup>							98 <sup>M-N</sup>	
Uganda				70.1	82.3	→			
United Kingdom							97.0	100 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
United States of America							95.8	93	←
Uzbekistan				99.6	99.7		78.0		
West Bank and Gaza	100 <sup>I</sup>							95	

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CERD:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Sources:**  
**Percentage of children reaching 5th grade:** UNESCO Website Database ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)); World Development Indicators 2004 website ([www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/](http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/)).  
**Literacy (15-24 years):** UNESCO Website Database ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)); World Development Indicators 2004 website ([www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/](http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/)).  
**Primary enrolment ratio (net):** UNESCO Website Database ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)).

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

**Notes:** Data source year: **A:** 1986; **B:** 1987; **C:** 1988; **D:** 1989; **E:** 1990; **F:** 1991; **G:** 1992; **H:** 1993; **I:** 1994; **J:** 1995; **K:** 1996; **L:** 1997; **M:** 1998; **N:** 1999; **O:** 2000; **P:** 2001; **Q:** 2002.

## HEALTH: The governments of the world agreed on...

"(We) recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health... The provision for the reduction of the stillbirth-rate and of infant mortality and for the healthy development of the child... The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases..."

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 12, 1966.

"...take specific measures for closing the gender gaps in morbidity and mortality where girls are disadvantaged, while achieving internationally approved goals for the reduction of infant and child mortality."

World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action, Paragraph 106, 1995.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to health and health services is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 25      CEDAW - Art. 11 & 14  
 CERD - Art. 5      CRC - Art. 24  
 CESC - Art. 12

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Health is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goals 4 & 6  
 World Summit for Social Development - Commitments 8 & 10  
 Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	MALARIA (cases per 100,000 people)			TUBERCULOSIS (cases per 100,000 people)			PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (15-49 years old)			INFANT MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)			UNDER-5 MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)		
	1997	2001	Progress or regression	1994	2001	Progress or regression	2001 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>															
Albania				22	19 <sup>J</sup>	→				37	18	→	45	21	→
Algeria	1	1		49	62	←	<0.1	0.1		42	35	→	69	41	→
Andorra				37	7 <sup>J</sup>	→					6			7	
Antigua and Barbuda				5 <sup>E</sup>	6 <sup>J</sup>	←					11			12	
Armenia	24	2		20	50	←	0.1	0.1		50	30	→	60	33	→
Australia				6	3	→	0.1	0.1		8	6		10	6	→
Austria				16	11 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.2	0.3		8	4	→	9	5	→
Bahamas				28	14 <sup>J</sup>	→	3	3		24	11	→	29	14	→
Bahrain				8 <sup>D</sup>	36	←	0.1	0.2		15	12	→	19	15	→
Barbados				1 <sup>D</sup>	2 <sup>J</sup>		1.5	1.5		14	11	→	16	13	→
Belarus				42	51	←				18	13	→	21	17	→
Belgium				15	7	→	0.2	0.2		8	4	→	9	5	→
Bosnia and Herzegovina				45	42	→		<0.1		18	14	→	22	17	→
Brunei Darussalam				52 <sup>F</sup>	66 <sup>J</sup>	←	<0.1	<0.1		10	5	→	11	6	→
Bulgaria				63	39	→		<0.1		15	14		16	15	
Canada				7	5 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.3	0.3		7	5		9	6	→
Chile				30	14	→	0.3	0.3		16	8	→	19	9	→
China	2	2		30	47	←	0.1	0.1		38	30	→	49	37	→
Colombia	452	482		24	26 <sup>J</sup>	←	0.5	0.7		29	18	→	36	21	→
Cook Islands				21	0	→					18		32	21	→
Costa Rica	126	33	→	9	13	←	0.6	0.6		15	8	→	17	10	→
Croatia				48	30	→		<0.1		11	6	→	13	7	→
Cuba				15	7	→	0.1	0.1		11	6	→	13	8	→
Cyprus				5	4					11	4	→	12	5	→
Czech Republic				19	11	→	<0.1	0.1		11	4	→	11	4	→
Denmark				10	8 <sup>J</sup>		0.2	0.2		8	3	→	9	4	→
Dominica				17	3 <sup>J</sup>	→				19	12	→	23	14	→
Egypt				6	16	←	<0.1	<0.1		76	33	→	104	39	→
El Salvador		6		70	21	→	0.6	0.7		46	32	→	60	36	→
Estonia				43	42		0.7	1.1	←	12	8	→	17	9	→
Fiji				37	21	→	0.1	0.1		25	16	→	31	20	→
Finland				11	6	→	0.1	0.1		6	4		7	5	
France				16	7	→	0.4	0.4		7	4	→	9	5	→
Germany				16	8 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.1	0.1		7	4	→	9	5	→
Greece				7 <sup>F</sup>	5 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.2	0.2		10	4	→	11	5	→
Grenada				3	2					30	18	→	37	23	→
Guatemala	305	307		26	21	→	1.1	1.1		60	35	→	82	47	→
Hungary				41	25	→		0.1		15	7	→	16	8	→
Iceland				7	2	→	0.2	0.2		6	3	→	5	4	
Iran, Islamic Rep.	60	32		21	16	→	0.1	0.1		54	33	→	72	39	→
Ireland				15	7	→	0.1	0.1		8	6		9	6	→
Israel				8	8			0.1		10	5	→	12	6	→

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression






Notes: Children immunization status is included among the indicators used to build the ranking.  
 Data source year: A: 1989; B: 1992; C: 1994; D: 1995; E: 1996; F: 1997; G: 1998; H: 1999;  
 I: 2000; J: 2002.

	MALARIA (cases per 100,000 people)			TUBERCULOSIS (cases per 100,000 people)			PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (15-49 years old)			INFANT MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)			UNDER-5 MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)		
	1997	2001	Progress or regression	1994	2001	Progress or regression	2001 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression
Italy				10	7 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.5	0.5		8	4	→	10	4	→
Japan				36	25	→	<0.1	<0.1		5	3		6	4	
Jordan				11	6	→	<0.1	<0.1		35	23	→	43	28	→
Korea, Rep.	4	5		86	71	→	<0.1	<0.1		8	5	→	9	5	→
Kuwait				14	29 <sup>G</sup>	←				14	8	→	16	9	→
Latvia				44	73	←	0.5	0.6		14	10	→	20	12	→
Lebanon				31	10	→	0.1	0.1		32	27	→	37	31	→
Libya				30 <sup>D</sup>	35	←		0.3		34	13	→	42	16	→
Lithuania				57	74	←	0.1	0.1		10	8		13	11	
Luxembourg				8	12	←	0.2	0.2		7	5		9	5	→
Macedonia, FYR				37	32	→	<0.1	<0.1		32	10	→	41	11	→
Malaysia	127	56	→	60	64	←	0.4	0.4		16	7	→	21	7	→
Malta				7	2	→	0.1	0.2		9	5	→	14	6	→
Mauritius	6	1 <sup>H</sup>		14	11	→				21	16	→	25	18	→
Mexico	5	5		18	17		0.3	0.3		37	23	→	46	28	→
Moldova				60	0	→		0.2		30	26	→	37	32	→
Monaco				3	0 <sup>J</sup>	→					4			4	
Nauru				38	23	→					25			30	
Netherlands				12	8 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.2	0.2		7	5		8	5	→
New Zealand				10	10		0.1	0.1		8	5	→	11	6	→
Nicaragua	915	201	→	64	42	→	0.2	0.2		52	30	→	68	38	→
Norway				6	6		0.1	0.1		7	3	→	9	4	→
Oman	45	24		15	9	→	0.1	0.1		25	10	→	30	12	→
Paraguay	11	48		39	37	→	0.4	0.5		30	25	→	37	29	→
Poland				43	25	→		0.1		19	6	→	19	7	→
Portugal				57	38	→	0.4	0.4		11	4	→	15	5	→
Qatar				59 <sup>D</sup>	45	→				19	11	→	25	15	→
Samoa				28	15	→				33	19	→	42	24	→
San Marino				8	4	→					4		10	5	→
Saudi Arabia	106	15	→	15	14					34	22	→	44	26	→
Serbia and Montenegro				34	38	←	0.2	0.2			12		30	14	→
Seychelles				11 <sup>D</sup>	36 <sup>J</sup>	←				17	11	→	21	15	→
Singapore				50	37	→	0.2	0.2		7	3	→	8	3	→
Slovakia				33	17	→		<0.1		12	7	→	15	8	→
Slovenia				27	14	→	<0.1	<0.1		8	4	→	9	4	→
Spain				22 <sup>D</sup>	18 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.6	0.7		8	4	→	9	4	→
Sri Lanka	1196	348	→	34	47	←	<0.1	<0.1		19	13	→	23	15	→
St. Kitts and Nevis				5	2	→				30	19	→	36	22	→
St. Lucia				17	9	→				19	16	→	24	18	→
St. Vincent and Grenadines				12 <sup>D</sup>	12					21	23		26	27	
Sweden				6	4	→	0.1	0.1		6	3	→	6	3	→
Switzerland				13	8 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.4	0.4		7	4	→	8	5	→
Syrian Arab Republic	1	0		37	27	→		<0.1		37	16	→	44	18	→
Tonga				24	15	→				25	15	→	27	19	→
Tunisia				27	20	→	<0.1	<0.1		37	19	→	52	24	→
Turkey	56	16		37 <sup>D</sup>	26 <sup>J</sup>	→				61	33	→	78	39	→
Ukraine				40	0	→	1.2	1.4		18	15	→	22	20	
United Arab Emirates	4			19	4	→				12	7	→	14	8	→
United Kingdom				11	12 <sup>J</sup>					8	5	→	10	6	→
United States of America				9	5	→	0.6	0.6		9	7		10	8	
Uruguay				21	19	→	0.3	0.3		20	12	→	24	14	→
Venezuela	98	81		23	26	←	0.6	0.7		23	18	→	27	21	→
<b>Countries above average</b>															
Argentina	2	1		40	28	→	0.7	0.7		25	17	→	28	20	→
Azerbaijan	130	13	→	37	46	←		<0.1		84	75	→	105	91	→
Bangladesh	56	40		40	60	←				96	46	→	144	69	→
Belize	1790	475	→	30	54 <sup>J</sup>	←	2.1	2.4		39	33	→	49	39	→
Bhutan	464	279	→	64	45	→				75 <sup>B</sup>	70	→	166	85	→
Bolivia	662	185	→	130	112	→	0.1	0.1		87	53	→	120	66	→
Brazil	240	225		48	45	→	0.6	0.7		50	33	→	60	35	→
Cape Verde	5	33 <sup>I</sup>		80 <sup>D</sup>	68	→				45	26	→	60	35	→
Comoros	2422	1930 <sup>I</sup>	→	19	17 <sup>I</sup>	→				88	54	→	120	73	→

**Significant progress**  
**Slight progress**  
**Stagnant**  
**Slight regression**  
**Significant regression**

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Data source year: A: 1989; B: 1992; C: 1994; D: 1995; E: 1996; F: 1997; G: 1998; H: 1999; I: 2000; J: 2002.

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	1997	2001	Progress or regression	1994	2001	Progress or regression	2001 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression
Dominican Republic	10	12	↔	57	54	→	1.8	1.7	↔	53	29	→	65	35	→
Ecuador	137	846	←	86	45	→	0.3	0.3	↔	43	24	→	57	27	→
Georgia		8		30 <sup>D</sup>	82	←	<0.1	0.1	↔	24	41	←	29	45	←
Honduras	1101	365	→	79	45	→	1.6	1.8	↔	47	32	→	59	41	→
India	275	192	→	122	98	→	0.8	0.9	↔	80	63	→	123	87	→
Indonesia	79	93	↔	26	81	←	0.1	0.1	↔	60	31	→	91	41	→
Iraq	66	5	→	101	46	→		<0.1		40	102	←	50	125	←
Jamaica				4	4 <sup>J</sup>	↔	0.8	1.2	↔	17	17	↔	20	20	↔
Korea, Dem. Rep.		516		51 <sup>F</sup>	178 <sup>J</sup>	←				26	42	←	55	55	↔
Kyrgyzstan		1		60	0	→	<0.1	0.1	↔	68	59	→	83	68	→
Lao PDR	1076	498	→	25	49	←	<0.1	0.1	↔	120	82	→	163	91	→
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.				165	91	→				26	19	→	31	23	→
Morocco	1	0	↔	114	88	→		0.1		66	36	→	85	39	→
Myanmar	256	252	↔	36	153	←	1	1.2	↔	91	76	→	130	107	→
Nepal	29	29	↔	78	123	←	0.4	0.5	↔	100	61	→	145	82	→
Pakistan	54	55	↔	11 <sup>D</sup>	46	←	0.1	0.1	↔	96	81	→	130	103	→
Palau				245	44	→				23	23	↔	34	28	→
Panama	19	32	↔	32	51	←	0.7	0.9	↔	27	18	→	34	24	→
Peru	754	305	→	210	115	→	0.4	0.5	↔	58	26	→	80	34	→
Philippines	59	45	↔	269	168	→	<0.1	<0.1	↔	45	27	→	66	36	→
Romania				94	127	←		<0.1		27	18	→	32	20	→
Russian Federation				48	87	←	0.7	1.1	←	17	16	↔	21	21	↔
Solomon Islands	16854	16512	→	91	61	→				29	19	→	36	22	→
Suriname	2748	4075	←	13	23	←	1.3	1.7	↔	35	30	→	48	39	→
Tajikistan	507	186	→	16	65 <sup>J</sup>	←		<0.1		98	92	→	78	118	←
Thailand	163	100	→	83	86	←	1.7	1.5	↔	34	23	→	40	26	→
Trinidad and Tobago				10	11	↔	3	3.2	↔	21	17	→	24	20	→
Turkmenistan		0		46 <sup>D</sup>	35	→		<0.1		80	79	↔	97	102	←
Uzbekistan		0		67	80 <sup>J</sup>	←	<0.1	0.1	↔	53	57	←	62	69	←
Vanuatu	3442	3787	←	91	49	→				52	31	→	70	38	→
Viet Nam	86	86	↔	72	114	←	0.3	0.4	↔	36	19	→	51	23	→
Yemen	8560	7600 <sup>I</sup>	→	97 <sup>D</sup>	52	→		0.1		98	82	→	142	113	→
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>															
Afghanistan		1621		6 <sup>F</sup>	58	←				167	165	↔	260	257	→
Benin	11918	11545 <sup>G</sup>	→	40	44	←	1.9	1.9	↔	111	91	→	185	154	→
Botswana		2836		342	552	←	38	37.3	→	45	82	←	58	112	←
Burkina Faso		619 <sup>I</sup>		9	20	←	4.2	4.2	↔	118	107	→	210	207	→
Cambodia	1096	399	→	137	199	←	2.7	2.6	↔	80	97	←	115	140	←
Cameroon	4613	2900 <sup>B</sup>	→	57	100	←	7	6.9	↔	85	95	←	139	166	←
Chad	4843	4683 <sup>I</sup>	→	51	61 <sup>J</sup>	←	4.9	4.8	↔	118	117	↔	203	200	→
Congo, Dem. Rep.		1414 <sup>I</sup>		89	160	←	4.2	4.2	↔	128	129	↔	205	205	↔
Congo, Rep.	350	5880 <sup>I</sup>	←	119	209	←	5.3	4.9	↔	83	81	↔	110	108	↔
Côte d'Ivoire	6990	2449	→	100	107	←	6.7	7	↔	100	117	←	155	192	←
Djibouti	700	536 <sup>I</sup>	→	618	460	→	2.8	2.9	↔	119	97	→	175	138	→
Eritrea		5648		491	70 <sup>J</sup>	→	2.8	2.7	↔	92	45	→	147	85	→
Ethiopia		621		185	166	→	4.1	4.4	↔	128	112	→	204	169	→
Gabon	3152	2148 <sup>B</sup>	→	99	164	←	6.9	8.1	←	60	60	↔	92	91	↔
Gambia	27369	10096 <sup>H</sup>	→	92 <sup>D</sup>	136	←	1.2	1.2	↔	103	90	→	154	123	→
Ghana	11941	17143	←	101	57	→	3.1	3.1	↔	74	59	→	126	95	→
Guyana	3806	3554	→	36	82	←	2.5	2.5	↔	65	52	→	90	69	→
Haiti		119		83 <sup>D</sup>	168	←	5.5	5.6	↔	102	76	→	150	118	→
Kazakhstan				63	175	←	0.1	0.2	↔	42	63	←	67	73	←
Kenya		545 <sup>I</sup>		86	286	←	8	6.7	→	63	79	←	97	123	←
Madagascar	2219 <sup>A</sup>			80	111	←	1.3	1.7	↔	103	78	→	168	126	→
Maldives	4			103	43	→				80	55	→	115	72	→
Mali	3688	741	→	32	35	←	1.9	1.9	↔	152	122	→	250	220	→
Marshall Islands				122 <sup>E</sup>	113	→				63	53	→	92	61	→
Mauritania		9724 <sup>I</sup>		169 <sup>D</sup>	116 <sup>I</sup>	→	0.5	0.6	↔	120	120	↔	183	183	↔
Mongolia				73	151	←	<0.1	<0.1	↔	77	56	→	104	68	→
Namibia	26217	1502 <sup>I</sup>	→	97 <sup>D</sup>	593	←	21.3	21.3	↔	65	48	→	84	65	→
Niger	10026	1693 <sup>B</sup>	→	43	59	←	1.1	1.2	↔	191	154	→	320	262	→
Nigeria	593	30 <sup>I</sup>	→	9	36	←	5.5	5.4	↔	114	98	→	190	198	←

 **Significant progress**  
 **Slight progress**  
 **Stagnant**  
 **Slight regression**  
 **Significant regression**

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 Data source year: A: 1989; B: 1992; C: 1994; D: 1995; E: 1996; F: 1997; G: 1998; H: 1999;  
 I: 2000; J: 2002.



	MALARIA (cases per 100,000 people)			TUBERCULOSIS (cases per 100,000 people)			PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (15-49 years old)			INFANT MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)			UNDER-5 MORTALITY (per 1,000 live births)		
	1997	2001	Progress or regression	1994	2001	Progress or regression	2001 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression	1990	2003	Progress or regression
Papua New Guinea	847	1793	←	128	93	→	0.4	0.6		79	69	→	101	93	→
Rwanda	20310	6510 <sup>I</sup>	→	61 <sup>D</sup>	73 <sup>J</sup>	←	5.1	5.1		107	118	←	178	203	←
Sao Tomé and Príncipe		31387 <sup>I</sup>		33	60 <sup>J</sup>	←				69	75	←	118	118	
Senegal		11925 <sup>I</sup>		85	93	←	0.8	0.8		90	78	→	148	137	→
Somalia		118 <sup>I</sup>		28	94	←				133	133		225	225	
South Africa	75	61		230	505	←	20.9	21.5	←	45	53	←	60	66	←
Sudan	5283	12530	←	85	75	→	1.9	2.3		75	63	→	120	93	→
Tanzania	3602	1207 <sup>H</sup>	→	116	167	←	9	8.8		102	104		163	165	
Togo		9273		30	36	←	4.3	4.1		88	78	→	152	140	→
Tuvalu				203	283	←					37		56	51	→
Uganda		46 <sup>I</sup>		138	162	←	5.1	4.1	→	100	81	→	160	140	→
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>															
Angola		6594		65	265	←	3.7	3.9		166	154	→	260	260	
Burundi		43505		64	100	←	6.2	6		114	114		190	190	
Central African Republic	2207 <sup>C</sup>			100 <sup>D</sup>	127 <sup>J</sup>	←	13.5	13.5		115	115		180	180	
Equatorial Guinea	2744 <sup>D</sup>			92	96 <sup>G</sup>	←				122	97	→	206	146	→
Guinea	10951	75386 <sup>I</sup>	←	46	74 <sup>J</sup>	←	2.8	3.2	←	145	104	→	240	160	→
Guinea-Bissau		2421 <sup>H</sup>		157	107	→				153	126	→	253	204	→
Kiribati				332	324	→				65	49	→	88	66	→
Lesotho				237	562 <sup>J</sup>	←	29.6	28.9	→	102	63	→	120	84	→
Liberia		26699 <sup>G</sup>		88	68 <sup>G</sup>	→	5.1	5.9	←	157	157		235	235	
Malawi		20080		197	213	←	14.3	14.2		146	112	→	241	178	→
Mozambique		19842		109	152	←	12.1	12.2		143	109	→	235	158	→
Sierra Leone		8943 <sup>H</sup>		63	106	←				185	166	→	302	284	→
Swaziland		469		245 <sup>D</sup>	631 <sup>J</sup>	←	38.2	38.8	←	77	105	←	110	153	←
Timor-Leste					355						87		160	124	→
Zambia	37458	18877	→	392	499	←	16.7	16.5		108	102	→	189	182	→
Zimbabwe		5410 <sup>I</sup>		213	413	←	24.9	24.6		53	78	←	80	126	←
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>															
Bermuda				7 <sup>D</sup>	0 <sup>J</sup>	→									
Cayman Islands				6 <sup>D</sup>	0	→									
Channel Islands										7					
French Polynesia				42	20	→				18					
Greenland				10	8 <sup>J</sup>										
Guam				66	14	→				9					
Hong Kong (China)							0.1	0.1		6					
Liechtenstein											10			11	
Macao (China)										10					
Netherlands Antilles					3 <sup>J</sup>										
New Caledonia				70	16	→				13					
Niue				92	0	→									
Northern Mariana Islands.				83	57	→									
Puerto Rico				8	3	→				14					
Turks and Caicos Islands				105 <sup>H</sup>	15 <sup>J</sup>	→									
Virgin Islands (USA)				9	8 <sup>E</sup>	→				20					
West Bank and Gaza				3 <sup>D</sup>						42 <sup>B</sup>	22	→	40	24	→

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CERD:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Sources:**  
**Malaria:** Human Development Report 2000, UNDP for 1997 data and Communicable Disease Global Atlas Database, WHO ([www.who.int/GlobalAtlas](http://www.who.int/GlobalAtlas)) for 2001 data.  
**Tuberculosis:** Communicable Disease Global Atlas Database, WHO ([www.who.int/GlobalAtlas](http://www.who.int/GlobalAtlas)).  
**People living with HIV/AIDS:** 2004 Report on the global AIDS epidemic, UNAIDS.  
**Infant mortality:** World Development Indicators 2004 website ([www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/](http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/)); UNICEF End Decade Website Database ([www.childinfo.org](http://www.childinfo.org)) and The State of the World's Children 2005, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)).  
**Under-5 mortality:** The State of the World's Children 2005, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)).

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

**Notes:** Children immunization status is included among the indicators used to build the ranking.  
Data source year: A: 1989; B: 1992; C: 1994; D: 1995; E: 1996; F: 1997; G: 1998; H: 1999; I: 2000; J: 2002.

## CHILDREN'S IMMUNIZATION: The governments of the world agreed on...

"States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health."

Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 24, 1989.

"Each day, 40,000 children die from malnutrition and disease, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), from the lack of clean water and inadequate sanitation and from the effects of the drug problem... These are challenges that we, as political leaders, must meet."

World Summit for Children, 1990.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to health and health services for children is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 25    CESC - Art. 12  
CERD - Art. 5    CRC - Art. 24 & 25

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Children's health is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goals 4 & 6  
World Summit for Social Development - Commitments 8 & 10  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	*DPT IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			POLIO IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			MEASLES IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			TUBERCULOSIS IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN		
	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>												
Albania	94	97	→	97	97		96	93	←	81	95	→
Andorra		99			99			96				
Antigua and Barbuda	100	99			99		89	99	→			
Argentina	87	88		84	91	→	93	97	→	100	99	
Azerbaijan	84	97	→	94	98	→	82	98	→	50	99	→
Bahrain	95	97			97		87	99	→			
Belarus	85	86		93	99	→	96	99	→	93	99	→
Belize	91	96	→		95		86	96	→		99	
Bhutan	84	95	→	84	96	→	79	88	→	96	93	←
Botswana	56	97	→	78	97	→	55	90	→	92	99	→
Brazil	66	96	→	68	99	→	78	99	→	92	99	→
Brunei Darussalam	100	99			99			99			99	
Bulgaria	99	96	←	97	96		98	96		98	98	
Canada		91			88			95				
Chile	97	99			99		81	99	→		94	
Cook Islands		96			95			99			99	
Croatia		94		85	95	→		95		92	98	→
Cuba	92	71	←		98		94	99	→		99	
Cyprus	93	98	→		98		76	86	→			
Czech Republic		97		98	97			99		98	98	
Denmark	95	96		95	96		84	96	→			
Dominica	69	99	→		99		96	99	→		99	
Ecuador	75	89	→	78	99	→	67	99	→	100	99	
Egypt	87	98	→	91	98	→	87	98	→	95	98	→
Estonia	76	94	→	87	95	→	82	95	→	99	99	
Fiji	82	94	→		99		72	91	→		99	
Finland	90	98	→	100	96	←	97	97		99	98	
Grenada	81	97	→		98		85	99	→			
Hungary	99	99		99	99		99	99		100	99	
Iceland	99	97			97		99	93	←			
Iran, Islamic Rep.	91	99	→		99		85	99	→		99	
Israel	91	97	→		93		91	95	→			
Italy	83	96	→		97		43	83	→			
Japan	87	97	→	94	97	→	66	99	→	93		
Kazakhstan	80	99	→		99		95	99	→		99	
Kiribati	97	99			96		75	88	→		99	
Kuwait	94	99	→	98	99		98	97				
Kyrgyzstan	99	98		84	98	→	99	99		97	99	

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

Note: \*DPT: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus

	*DPT IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			POLIO IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			MEASLES IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			TUBERCULOSIS IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN		
	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression
Latvia	85	98	→	72	98	→	97	99		89	99	→
Lebanon	82	92	→		92		39	96	→			
Lithuania	76	94	→	88	91	→	89	98	→	96	99	→
Luxembourg	90	98	→		98		80	91	→			
Macedonia, FYR		96		91	96	→		96		96	95	
Malaysia	89	96	→		97		70	92	→		99	
Maldives	94	98	→		98		96	96			98	
Mexico	66	91	→	92	92		78	96	→	98	99	
Moldova		98			98			96			98	
Mongolia	69	98	→	77	98	→	92	98	→	90	98	→
Netherlands	97	98			98		94	96				
Niue		95			95			86			99	
Oman	98	99		97	99		98	98		96	98	
Palau	100	99			99		98	99				
Poland	96	99	→		98		95	97			94	
Portugal	89	99	→	92	96	→	85	96	→	92	81	←
Romania	96	97			97		92	97	→		99	
Russian Federation	60	98	→	82	97	→	81	96	→	87	97	→
Rwanda	57	96	→	23	96	→	55	90	→	32	88	→
San Marino		96			96			91				
Saudi Arabia	92	95	→		95		88	96	→		94	
Seychelles	99	99			99		86	99	→		99	
Slovakia	99	99			98		99	99			98	
Spain	93	98	→		98		97	97				
Sri Lanka	86	99	→	88	98	→	80	99	→	86	99	→
St. Kitts and Nevis	100	99			99		100	98			99	
Swaziland	89	95	→		95		86	94	→		97	
Switzerland	90	95	→		95		90	82	←			
Syrian Arab Republic	90	99	→		99		87	98	→		99	
Tanzania	78	95	→		97		79	97	→		91	
Thailand	85	96	→	93	97	→	70	94	→	98	99	
Tonga	94	98	→		98		86	99	→		99	
Tunisia	91	95	→	97	95		88	90		80	93	→
Turkmenistan	79	98	→	92	99	→	80	97	→	94	99	→
Tuvalu		93			93			95			99	
Ukraine	79	97	→	91	99	→	89	99	→	89	98	→
United States of America		96		79	91	→		93				
Uruguay	97	91	←	88	91	→	97	95		99	99	
Uzbekistan	79	98	→	51	99	→	85	99	→	89	98	→
Viet Nam	85	99	→	94	96		85	93	→	95	98	→
West Bank and Gaza		98			98			99			99	
<b>Countries above average</b>												
Algeria	58	87	→	72	87	→	53	84	→	92	98	→
Armenia	81	94	→	92	96	→	95	94		83	92	→
Australia	95	92	←		92		86	93	→			
Bahamas	87	92	→		93		86	90	→			
Bangladesh	69	85	→	94	85	←	82	77	←	95	95	
Barbados	91	86	←		90		87	90	→			
Belgium	94	90	←	100	95	←	85	75	←			
Benin	78	88	→	81	88	→	73	83	→	90	99	→
Bosnia and Herzegovina		87		45	86	→		84		24	94	→
China	97	90	←	94	91	←	98	84	←	94	93	
Colombia	87	91	→	95	91	←	82	92	→	99	96	←
Costa Rica	95	88	←	88	88		90	89		97	87	←
El Salvador	80	88	→	92	87	←	98	99		83	90	→
France	95	97		92	97	→	71	86	→	78	85	→
Gambia	92	90		92	90		86	90	→	98	99	
Germany	80	89	→	90	94	→	50	92	→			
<p>→ Significant progress  → Slight progress     Stagnant  ← Slight regression  ← Significant regression</p> <p>Note: *DPT: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus</p>												

	*DPT IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			POLIO IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			MEASLES IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			TUBERCULOSIS IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN		
	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression
Greece	54	88	→	95	87	←	76	88	→	50	88	→
Guyana	82	90	→		91		77	89	→		95	
Honduras	84	92	→	95	92	←	90	95	→	95	91	←
Ireland	65	85	→		86		78	78			90	
Jordan	92	97	→	96	97		87	96	→		67	
Korea, Dem. Rep.	98	68	←		99		98	95	←		88	
Korea, Rep.	74	97	→	74	94	→	93	96	→	72	87	→
Libya	62	93	→		93		59	91	→		99	
Malta	63	94	→		94		80	90	→			
Mauritius	85	92	→	89	93	→	76	94	→	87	92	→
Morocco	81	91	→	87	91	→	79	90	→	93	92	
New Zealand	90	90		68	82	→	90	85	←	20		
Nicaragua	66	86	→	84	86		82	93	→	89	94	→
Norway	86	90	→		90		87	84	←			
Peru	72	89	→	87	89		64	95	→	91	94	→
Qatar	82	92	→		93		79	93	→		99	
Samoa	90	94	→		95		89	99	→		73	
São Tomé and Príncipe	92	94			94		71	87	→		99	
Serbia and Montenegro		89			89			87			94	
Singapore	85	92	→	92	92		84	88	→	98	97	
Slovenia		92			93			94			98	
South Africa	74	94	→		94		79	83	→		97	
St. Lucia	91	90			91		83	90	→		95	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines		99			99			94			87	
Sweden	99	98			99		95	94			16	
Tajikistan	94	82	←	74	84	→	91	89		69	99	→
Trinidad and Tobago	89	91		85	91	→	79	88	→			
United Arab Emirates	89	94	→		94		78	94	→		98	
United Kingdom	85	91	→		91		89	80	←			
<b>Countries below average</b>												
Austria	90	84	←		84		60	79	→			
Bolivia	41	81	→	86	79	←	53	64	→	91	94	→
Burkina Faso		84			83			76		63	83	→
Burundi	86	74	←	50	69	→	75	75		62	84	→
Cape Verde	88	78	←		79		79	68	←		78	
Eritrea		83		36	83	→		84		46	91	→
Gabon	78	38	←	66	31	←	76	55	←	97	89	←
Georgia	69	76	→	69	75	→	81	73	←	67	87	→
Ghana	50	80	→	48	80	→	52	80	→	61	92	→
Guatemala	66	83	→	73	83	→	68	75	→	70	97	→
India	92	70	←	91	70	←	87	67	←	96	81	←
Indonesia	87	70	←	93	70	←	86	72	←	100	82	←
Iraq	83	81		50	84	→	83	90	→		93	
Jamaica	86	81	←	93	80	←	69	78	→	100	88	←
Kenya	42	73	→	84	67	←	41	72	→	92	87	←
Lesotho	77	79		59	78	→	87	70	←	59	83	→
Malawi	87	84	←	98	85	←	81	77	←	99	91	←
Marshall Islands	92	68	←		80		52	90	→		93	
Mauritania	33	76	→		75		38	71	→		84	
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	85	92	→		88		81	91	→		64	
Mozambique	46	72	→	55	70	→	59	77	→	78	87	→
Myanmar	69	77	→	77	76		68	75	→	83	79	←
Namibia	38	82	→	79	82	→	77	70	←	100	92	←
Nepal	80	78		62	76	→	68	75	→	61	91	→
Panama	86	86		83	83		99	83	←	95	87	←
Paraguay	79	77		83	77	←	70	91	→	97	70	←
Philippines	88	79	←	88	80	←	85	80	←	89	91	
Solomon Islands	77	71	←		68		70	78	→		76	

Significant progress  
 Slight progress  
 Stagnant  
 Slight regression  
 Significant regression

Note: \*DPT: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus

	*DPT IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			POLIO IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			MEASLES IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN			TUBERCULOSIS IMMUNIZED 1-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN		
	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression	1992 (%)	2003 (%)	Progress or regression
Suriname	83	74	←		74		65	71	→			
Turkey	74	68	←	81	69	←	67	75	→	72	89	→
Uganda	77	81	→	79	82	→	74	82	→	100	96	←
Venezuela	61	68	→	73	86	→	61	82	→	95	91	←
Zambia	71	80	→	88	80	←	68	84	→	100	94	←
Zimbabwe	78	80			80		76	80	→		92	
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>												
Afghanistan	25	54	→	18	54	→	20	50	→	44	56	→
Angola	24	46	→	28	45	→	38	62	→	48	62	→
Cambodia	38	69	→	54	69	→	34	65	→	78	76	
Cameron	36	73	→	31	72	→	36	61	→	46	82	→
Central African Republic	61	40	←	29	40	→	67	35	←	82	70	←
Chad	20	47	→	18	48	→	23	61	→	43	72	→
Comoros	94	75	←		75		87	63	←		75	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	36	49	→		55		37	54	→		68	
Congo, Rep.	77	50	←	79	50	←	77	50	←	94	60	←
Côte d'Ivoire	42	54	→		54		40	56	→		66	
Djibouti	85	68	←		68		85	66	←		63	
Dominican Republic	69	65	←	98	60	←	96	79	←	64	90	→
Equatorial Guinea	14	33	→		39		18	51	→		73	
Ethiopia	49	56	→	36	57	→	38	52	→	50	76	→
Gabon	78	38	←	66	31	←	76	55	←	97	89	←
Guinea	20	45	→	70	43	←	25	52	→	75	78	→
Guinea-Bissau	61	77	→	68	75	→	53	61	→	95	84	←
Haiti	41	43		40	43	→	31	53	→	42	71	→
Lao PDR	18	50	→		52		32	42	→		65	
Liberia		38			39			53			43	
Mali	42	69	→	39	65	→	43	68	→	67	63	←
Madagascar	71	55	←	64	58	←	57	55		81	72	←
Nauru		80			59			40			95	
Niger	22	52	→	20	51	→	25	64	→	32	64	→
Nigeria	56	25	←	35	39	→	48	35	←	46	48	
Papua New Guinea	67	54	←	66	41	←	66	49	←	91	60	←
Pakistan	83	67	←	66	69	→	76	61	←	78	82	→
Senegal	66	73	→	55	73	→	57	60	→	71	77	→
Sierra Leone	83	70	←	43	60	→	75	73		60	87	→
Somalia	18	40	→	23	40	→	30	40	→	48	65	→
Sudan	62	50	←	70	50	←	57	57		78	53	←
Timor-Leste		70			70			60			80	
Togo	77	64	←	71	63	←	65	58	←	73	84	→
Vanuatu	76	49	←		53		66	48	←		63	
Yemen	89	66	←		66		74	66	←		67	
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>												
Bermuda	62						63					
Cayman Islands	95						82					
Hong Kong (China)	84						80					
Macao (China)	83						57					
Monaco	100						100					
Northern Mariana Islands	12											

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CERD:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Sources:**  
 The State of the World's Children 1996, UNICEF, for 1992 data, and The State of the World's Children 2005, UNICEF ([www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)), for 2003 data.

→ **Significant progress**  
 → **Slight progress**  
 || **Stagnant**  
 ← **Slight regression**  
 ← **Significant regression**

**Note:** \*DPT: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus



## ENVIRONMENT: The governments of the world agreed on...

"... (We) recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for him(her)self and his(her) family, including adequate food, clothing and housing..."

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 11, 1966.

"We resolve... to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people... who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water... By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers as proposed in the 'Cities Without Slums' initiative."

Millennium Declaration, Paragraph 19, 2000.

### HUMAN RIGHTS:

The right to an adequate environment is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 25 CEDAW - Art. 14  
CESCR - Art. 11

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Environment is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goal 7  
World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 12  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO SANITATION			POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES				POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO SANITATION			POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES								
	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	Progress or regression		1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	Progress or regression						
<b>Countries in better situation</b>													Netherlands	100	100	==	100	100	==
Albania		89		97	97	==	Niue	100	100	==	100	100	==						
Algeria	88	92	→	95	87	←	Northern Mariana Islands	84	94	→	98	98	==						
Andorra	100	100	==	100	100	==	Norway				100	100	==						
Antigua and Barbuda		95			91		Qatar	100	100	==	100	100	==						
Aruba				100	100	==	Russian Federation	87	87	==	94	96	==						
Australia	100	100	==	100	100	==	Samoa	98	100	==	91	88	←						
Austria	100	100	==	100	100	==	Slovakia	100	100	==	100	100	==						
Bahamas	100	100	==		97		St. Kitts and Nevis	96	96	==	99	99	==						
Barbados	100	99	==	100	100	==	St. Lucia		89		98	98	==						
Belarus				100	100	==	Suriname		93			92							
Bosnia and Herzegovina		93		98	98	==	Sweden	100	100	==	100	100	==						
British Virgin Islands	100	100	==	98	98	==	Switzerland	100	100	==	100	100	==						
Bulgaria	100	100	==	100	100	==	Thailand	80	99	→	81	85	→						
Canada	100	100	==	100	100	==	Tonga	97	97	==	100	100	==						
Chile	85	92	→	90	95	→	Trinidad and Tobago	100	100	==	92	91	==						
Cook Islands	95	100	→	94	95	==	Turks and Caicos Islands		96		100	100	==						
Costa Rica		92			97		Ukraine	99	99	==		98							
Cuba	98	98	==		91		United Arab Emirates	100	100	==									
Cyprus	100	100	==	100	100	==	United States of America	100	100	==	100	100	==						
Denmark				100	100	==	Uruguay		94			98							
Dominica		83			97		West Bank and Gaza		76			94							
Egypt	54	68	→	94	98	→	<b>Countries above average</b>												
Fiji	98	98	==				Armenia		84			92							
Finland	100	100	==	100	100	==	Botswana	38	41	→	93	95	==						
French Polynesia	98	98	==	100	100	==	Brazil	70	75	→	83	89	→						
Germany				100	100	==	Colombia	82	86	→	92	92	==						
Grenada	97	97	==		95		Ecuador	56	72	→	69	86	→						
Guam	99	99	==	100	100	==	Guadeloupe		64			98							
Hungary		95		99	99	==	Guatemala	50	61	→	77	95	→						
Iceland				100	100	==	Guyana		70			83							
Israel				100	100	==	Honduras	49	68	→	83	90	→						
Japan	100	100	==	100	100	==	Iran, Islamic Rep.	83	84	==	91	93	==						
Jordan		93		98	91	←	Iraq	81	80	==	83	81	==						
Lebanon		98		100	100	==	Jamaica	75	80	→	92	93	==						
Luxembourg				100	100	==	Kazakhstan	72	72	==	86	86	==						
Malaysia	96				95		Korea, Dem. Rep.		59		100	100	==						
Malta				100	100	==	Korea, Rep.					92							
Mauritius	99	99	==	100	100	==	Libya	97	97	==	71	72	==						

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 == Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

	POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO SANITATION			POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES				POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO SANITATION			POPULATION WITH ACCESS TO IMPROVED WATER SOURCES			
	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	Progress or regression		1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2000 (%)	Progress or regression	
Marshall Islands	75	82	→	96	85	←	Senegal	35	52	→	66	72	→	
Mexico	66	77	→	80	91	→	Syrian Arab Republic	76	77		79	79		
Moldova		68			92		Tanzania	47	46		38	73	→	
Nicaragua	47	66	→	69	81	→	Turkmenistan		62			71		
Palau	66	83	→	80	84	→	Uzbekistan	58	57		89	89		
Panama		72			91		Viet Nam	22	41	→	72	73		
Paraguay	58	78	→	62	83	→	Zimbabwe	49	57	→	77	83	→	
Philippines	54	73	→	87	85		<b>Countries in worse situation</b>							
Serbia and Montenegro	87	87		93	93		Afghanistan		8			13		
Seychelles					87		Angola	30	30		32	50	→	
South Africa	63	67	→	83	87	→	Benin	11	32	→	60	68	→	
Sri Lanka	70	91	→	68	78	→	Burkina Faso	13	12		39	51	→	
Tunisia	75	80	→	77	82	→	Burundi	44	36	←	69	79	→	
Turkey	84	83		81	93	→	Cambodia		16			34		
Tuvalu	78	88	→	91	93		Central African Republic	23	27	→	48	75	→	
Venezuela		68			83		Chad	6	8		20	34	→	
<b>Countries below average</b>							Congo, Dem. Rep.	18	29	→	43	46	→	
Azerbaijan		55		66	77	→	Congo, Rep.		9			46		
Bangladesh	23	48	→	71	75	→	Equatorial Guinea		53			44		
Belize		47			91		Eritrea	8	9		40	57	→	
Bhutan		70			62		Ethiopia	4	6		25	22	←	
Bolivia	33	45	→	72	85	→	Guinea	17	13	←	42	51	→	
Cameroon	21	48	→	50	63	→	Guinea-Bissau		34			59		
Cape Verde		42			80		Haiti	15	34	→	53	71	→	
China	23	44	→	70	77	→	Kiribati	25	39	→	48	64	→	
Comoros	23	23		89	94	→	Lao PDR		24			43		
Côte d'Ivoire	31	40	→	69	84	→	Lesotho	37	37			76		
Djibouti	48	50		78	80		Liberia	38	26	←	56	62	→	
Dominican Republic	48	57	→	86	93	→	Madagascar	12	33	→	40	45	→	
El Salvador	51	63	→	67	82	→	Mali	36	45	→	34	48	→	
Gabon		36			87		Mauritania	28	42	→	41	56	→	
Gambia		53			82		Mozambique		27			42		
Georgia		83			76		Namibia	24	30	→	58	80	→	
Ghana	43	58	→	54	79	→	Niger	7	12	→	40	46	→	
India	12	30	→	68	86	→	Nigeria	39	38		49	60	→	
Indonesia	46	52	→	71	78	→	Papua New Guinea	45	45		39	39		
Kenya	42	48	→	45	62	→	Romania		51			57		
Kyrgyzstan		60			76		São Tomé and Príncipe		24			79		
Malawi	36	46	→	41	67	→	Sierra Leone		39			57		
Maldives		58			99	←	Solomon Islands		31			70		
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	30	28		87	94	→	Somalia		25			29		
Mongolia		59		62	62		Sudan	33	34		64	69	→	
Morocco	57	61	→	75	80	→	Swaziland		52			52		
Myanmar	21	73	→	48	80	→	Tajikistan		53			58		
Nepal	12	27	→	69	84	→	Timor-Leste		33			52		
Oman	83	89	→	77	79		Togo	37	34	←	49	51		
Pakistan	38	54	→	83	90	→	Uganda	43	41		44	56	→	
Peru	52	62	→	74	81	→	Vanuatu		50			60	60	
Rwanda	37	41	→	58	73	→	Yemen	21	30	→	69	69		
							Zambia	41	45	→	50	55	→	

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
 CESC: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
 CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Sources:  
 Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply & Sanitation, UNICEF and WHO. ([www.wssinfo.org/](http://www.wssinfo.org/)).

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

## GENDER EQUITY: The governments of the world agreed on...

### Gender and education

"Discrimination against women, denying or limiting as it does their equality of rights with men, is fundamentally unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity."

Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Article 1, 1967.

"We are convinced that... women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace."

Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action, Paragraph 13, 1995.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to non discrimination on the basis of sex is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 2 & 26 CEDAW - Art. 7, 10 & 11  
CESCR - Art. 3 & 7 CRC - Art. 29

#### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Gender equity is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goal 3  
World Summit for Social Development  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	LITERACY RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET SECONDARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			GROSS TERTIARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)		
	1995*	2005	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	1995*	2001/2002	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>												
Albania	0.96	0.98	↔	1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.03 <sup>I</sup>	1.03 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.29	1.73 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Argentina	1.00	1.00	↔	1.00 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.07 <sup>I</sup>	1.05 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.37	1.49 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Armenia	1.00	1.00	↔	1.02 <sup>K</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.06 <sup>K</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.07	1.16 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Aruba				1.01 <sup>I</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.07 <sup>I</sup>	1.08 <sup>M</sup>	↔		1.48 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Australia				1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.05	1.24 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Austria				1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.00	1.15 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Azerbaijan				1.02 <sup>I</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.01 <sup>I</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.02	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Bahamas	1.02	1.02	↔	1.02 <sup>C</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.01 <sup>C</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	2.19		
Bahrain	1.00	1.01	↔	1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.06 <sup>F</sup>	1.12 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.57	1.87 <sup>I-J</sup>	↔
Barbados	1.00	1.00	↔	0.99 <sup>B</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.05 <sup>I</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.50	2.60 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Belarus	1.00	1.00	↔	0.96 <sup>F</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.98 <sup>I</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.18	1.36 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Belgium				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.00 <sup>E</sup>			1.03	1.17 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Belize	1.01	1.01	↔	0.99 <sup>E</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.08 <sup>C</sup>	1.09 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.57		
Botswana	1.10	1.08	↔	1.05 <sup>F</sup>	1.05 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.21 <sup>F</sup>	1.16 <sup>L</sup>	↔	0.91	0.80 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Brazil	1.03	1.03	↔	0.93 <sup>J</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.08 <sup>J</sup>	1.07 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.19	1.31 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
British Virgin Islands					0.98 <sup>M</sup>			1.08 <sup>M</sup>			2.35 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Brunei Darussalam	1.01	1.00	↔	1.01 <sup>E</sup>			1.09 <sup>D</sup>			1.45	1.70 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Bulgaria	1.00	1.00	↔	0.97 <sup>F</sup>	0.98 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.01 <sup>E</sup>	0.98 <sup>L</sup>	←	1.70	1.35 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Canada				0.98 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.18	1.33 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Chile	1.00	1.00	↔	0.98 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.09 <sup>F</sup>	1.04 <sup>L</sup>	↔	0.86	0.92 <sup>O</sup>	→
China	0.97	0.98	↔	1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>	↔				0.54		
Colombia	1.01	1.01	↔	1.00 <sup>J</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.15 <sup>F</sup>	1.10 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.04	1.09 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Costa Rica	1.01	1.01	↔	1.01 <sup>H</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.13 <sup>H</sup>	1.10 <sup>M</sup>	↔	0.83	1.16 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Croatia	1.00	1.00	↔	0.99 <sup>E</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.08 <sup>E</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.00	1.15 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Cuba	1.00	1.00	↔	1.00 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.14 <sup>D</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.54	1.25 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Cyprus	1.00	1.00	↔	1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.03 <sup>E</sup>	1.02 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.52	1.32 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Czech Republic				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	↔	0.92	1.09 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Denmark				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>K</sup>	↔	1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.03 <sup>K</sup>	↔	1.22	1.36 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Dominica					0.97 <sup>L</sup>			1.06 <sup>L</sup>				
Dominican Republic	1.02	1.02	↔	1.02 <sup>G</sup>	0.96 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.47 <sup>E</sup>	1.34 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.31		
Ecuador	0.99	1.00	↔	1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.51 <sup>H</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	0.65		
El Salvador	0.98	0.99	↔	1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.13 <sup>F</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	↔	1.02	1.20 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔
Estonia	1.00	1.00	↔	0.98 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.07 <sup>F</sup>	1.07 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.17	1.57 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Fiji	1.00	1.00	↔	1.00 <sup>C</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔		1.08 <sup>M</sup>		0.63		
Finland				1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.16	1.22 <sup>O</sup>	↔
France				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.02 <sup>L</sup>	↔	1.27	1.23 <sup>O</sup>	↔
Georgia				1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	↔	0.98 <sup>F</sup>	1.03 <sup>J</sup>	→	1.17	1.03 <sup>L-M</sup>	↔

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
↔ Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

Notes: \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1997; I: 1998; J: 1999; K: 2000; L: 2001; M: 2002; N: 1999/2000; O: 2000/2001.

	LITERACY RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET SECONDARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			GROSS TERTIARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)		
	1995*	2005	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	1995*	2001/2002	Progress or regression
Germany				1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		0.85	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Greece	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>		1.04 <sup>F</sup>	1.02 <sup>L</sup>		0.99	1.10 <sup>O</sup>	
Guyana	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	0.97 <sup>K</sup>	←	1.07 <sup>C</sup>	1.10 <sup>K</sup>		0.89		
Honduras	1.03	1.04		1.02 <sup>D</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>					0.80	1.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Hong Kong (China)	1.00	1.01		1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.07 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		0.86	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Hungary	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.19	1.28 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Iceland				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.06 <sup>L</sup>		1.49	1.74 <sup>O</sup>	
Iran, Islamic Rep.	0.92	0.97	→	0.96 <sup>G</sup>	0.98 <sup>L</sup>	→				0.60	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Ireland				1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>		1.05 <sup>F</sup>	1.08 <sup>L</sup>		1.07	1.26 <sup>O</sup>	
Israel	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.12	1.37 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Italy	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.01 <sup>J</sup>		1.17	1.33 <sup>O</sup>	
Jamaica	1.08	1.07		0.98 <sup>C</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.06 <sup>C</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>		0.75	2.18 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Japan				1.00 <sup>E</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.01 <sup>D</sup>	1.01 <sup>K</sup>		0.82	0.85 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Jordan	0.99	1.00		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.08 <sup>F</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>		0.96	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Kazakhstan	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>K</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		0.98 <sup>K</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>		1.28	1.23 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Kenya	0.96	0.99	→	1.01 <sup>J</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>		0.98 <sup>J</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.39	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Korea, Rep.	1.00	1.00		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		0.57	0.58 <sup>N</sup>	
Kuwait	1.01	1.02		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.05 <sup>M</sup>		1.61	2.67 <sup>I-J</sup>	
Latvia	1.00	1.00		0.96 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>	→	1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>		1.36	1.63 <sup>O</sup>	
Lebanon	0.94	0.97	→	0.98 <sup>H</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.15 <sup>H</sup>			0.98	1.14 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Lesotho	1.22	1.16		1.17 <sup>F</sup>	1.09 <sup>M</sup>		2.04 <sup>E</sup>	1.59 <sup>M</sup>		1.24	1.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Libya	0.89	0.96	→							0.97	1.09 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Lithuania	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>H</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>		1.04 <sup>E</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>		1.52	1.53 <sup>O</sup>	
Luxembourg				1.03 <sup>J</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.08 <sup>F</sup>	1.09 <sup>L</sup>		0.53	1.11 <sup>O</sup>	→
Macedonia, FYR				0.98 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.99 <sup>F</sup>	0.96 <sup>L</sup>	←	1.24	1.33 <sup>O</sup>	
Madagascar	0.89	0.94	→	1.04 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.09 <sup>J</sup>	1.09 <sup>J</sup>		0.83	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Malaysia	1.00	1.00		1.01 <sup>E</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.11 <sup>I</sup>	1.11 <sup>M</sup>		0.70	1.08 <sup>O</sup>	→
Maldives	1.00	1.00		1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.11 <sup>I</sup>	1.14 <sup>K</sup>				
Malta	1.03	1.02		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		0.98 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>	→	1.05	1.27 <sup>O</sup>	
Mauritius	1.00	1.02		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.10 <sup>H</sup>	1.07 <sup>M</sup>		1.01	1.30 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Mexico	0.99	0.99		1.01 <sup>G</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.00 <sup>I</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>		0.90	0.95 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Moldova	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>K</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.03 <sup>K</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>		1.26	1.32 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Mongolia	1.01	1.01		1.04 <sup>F</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>		1.34 <sup>F</sup>	1.20 <sup>M</sup>		2.35	1.76 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Myanmar	0.98	1.00	→	0.98 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.98 <sup>I</sup>	0.94 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.61	1.88 <sup>O</sup>	
Namibia	1.04	1.04		1.08 <sup>H</sup>	1.07 <sup>M</sup>		1.34 <sup>H</sup>	1.38 <sup>M</sup>		1.57	0.88 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Netherlands				0.99 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		0.93	1.08 <sup>O</sup>	→
Netherlands Antilles	1.00	1.00		1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.06 <sup>M</sup>		1.18 <sup>I</sup>	1.06 <sup>M</sup>			1.55 <sup>L-M</sup>	
New Zealand				1.01 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.02 <sup>L</sup>		1.26	1.53 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Nicaragua	1.02	1.02		1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.18 <sup>H</sup>	1.18 <sup>M</sup>		1.04		
Norway				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.29	1.52 <sup>O</sup>	
Oman	0.91	0.99	→	0.97 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.99 <sup>H</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		0.90	1.67 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Panama	0.99	0.99		1.00 <sup>A</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.11 <sup>A</sup>	1.08 <sup>M</sup>		1.49	1.68 <sup>N</sup>	
Paraguay	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>E</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.06 <sup>E</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>		1.10	1.38 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Philippines	1.00	1.00		1.01 <sup>K</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>		1.09 <sup>I</sup>	1.22 <sup>M</sup>		1.30	1.30 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Poland	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>G</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.09 <sup>E</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>		1.46	1.44 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Portugal	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>			1.10 <sup>E</sup>	1.09 <sup>L</sup>		1.33	1.35 <sup>O</sup>	
Qatar	1.05	1.04		0.97 <sup>D</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.04 <sup>D</sup>	1.05 <sup>M</sup>		2.91	2.62 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Romania	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>		1.02 <sup>F</sup>	1.03 <sup>L</sup>		0.98	1.20 <sup>O</sup>	→
Russian Federation	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>D</sup>						1.25	1.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Samoa	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.11 <sup>I</sup>	1.12 <sup>M</sup>		0.96	0.86 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Serbia and Montenegro					1.00 <sup>L</sup>					1.22	1.18 <sup>O</sup>	
Seychelles					0.99 <sup>M</sup>			1.05 <sup>M</sup>				
Slovakia				1.01 <sup>K</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>		1.01 <sup>K</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.02	1.13 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Slovenia	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>			1.02 <sup>L</sup>		1.33	1.35 <sup>O</sup>	
South Africa	1.00	1.00		1.04 <sup>H</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.19 <sup>E</sup>	1.10 <sup>L</sup>		1.06	1.14 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Spain	1.00	1.00		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		1.03 <sup>I</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>		1.17	1.19 <sup>L-M</sup>	

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

Notes: \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  
 Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1997; I: 1998; J: 1999;  
 K: 2000; L: 2001; M: 2002; N: 1999/2000; O: 2000/2001.

	LITERACY RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET SECONDARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			GROSS TERTIARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)		
	1995*	2005	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	1995*	2001/2002	Progress or regression
Sri Lanka	0.99	1.00		1.00 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>					0.71		
St. Kitts and Nevis					1.10 <sup>L</sup>			1.20 <sup>L</sup>				
St. Lucia				1.00 <sup>I</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.30 <sup>I</sup>	1.30 <sup>M</sup>			0.89 <sup>I-J</sup>	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines					1.00 <sup>M</sup>			1.21 <sup>M</sup>				
Suriname				0.96 <sup>K</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.13 <sup>K</sup>	1.44 <sup>M</sup>			1.67 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Swaziland	1.02	1.02		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.19 <sup>F</sup>	1.21 <sup>M</sup>		0.83	1.25 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Sweden				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.29	1.55 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Tanzania	0.91	0.97	→	1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		0.94 <sup>J</sup>			0.19		
Thailand	0.99	0.99		0.97 <sup>K</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	→				1.14	1.09 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Tonga				1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.11 <sup>I</sup>	1.13 <sup>L</sup>			1.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Trinidad and Tobago	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.04 <sup>C</sup>	1.07 <sup>L</sup>		0.75	1.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Tunisia	0.88	0.94	→	0.95 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.01 <sup>H</sup>	1.03 <sup>M</sup>		0.80	0.95 <sup>O</sup>	→
Turks and Caicos Islands					1.00 <sup>M</sup>			1.05 <sup>M</sup>				
Ukraine	1.00	1.00		0.99 <sup>I</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>			1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.31	1.17 <sup>L-M</sup>	
United Arab Emirates	1.08	1.07		0.98 <sup>F</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>		1.12 <sup>E</sup>	1.06 <sup>M</sup>		3.81		
United Kingdom				1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		1.03 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>L</sup>		1.10	1.19 <sup>O</sup>	
United States of America				1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.00 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		1.30	1.34 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Uruguay	1.01	1.01		1.01 <sup>F</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.11 <sup>K</sup>	1.12 <sup>M</sup>		1.31	1.78 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Vanuatu				1.01 <sup>I</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>		0.80 <sup>B</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	→			
Venezuela	1.01	1.01		1.02 <sup>G</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		1.53 <sup>G</sup>	1.17 <sup>M</sup>		0.90	1.35 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
West Bank and Gaza					1.00 <sup>M</sup>			1.06 <sup>M</sup>			0.88 <sup>I-J</sup>	
<b>Countries above average</b>												
Algeria	0.85	0.93	→	0.92 <sup>F</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.89 <sup>F</sup>	1.07 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.70		
Angola				1.09 <sup>H</sup>	0.88 <sup>K</sup>	←				0.55	1.00 <sup>N</sup>	→
Bangladesh	0.68	0.73	→	0.88 <sup>A</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.51 <sup>A</sup>	1.10 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.19	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Bolivia	0.94	0.97	→	0.92 <sup>A</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.85 <sup>A</sup>	0.99 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.68	0.55 <sup>I-J</sup>	←
Cape Verde	0.90	0.95	→	1.01 <sup>I</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>		0.98 <sup>D</sup>	1.04 <sup>M</sup>	→		0.75 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Indonesia	0.98	0.99		0.97 <sup>F</sup>	0.99 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.86 <sup>E</sup>	0.96 <sup>K</sup>	→	0.55	0.88 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Kyrgyzstan				0.96 <sup>F</sup>	0.96 <sup>M</sup>					1.11	1.14 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Macao (China)	0.97	0.99		1.00 <sup>B</sup>	0.98 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.13 <sup>B</sup>	1.10 <sup>M</sup>		0.91	0.51 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Malawi	0.71	0.79	→	1.02 <sup>E</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		0.79 <sup>J</sup>	0.81 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.43		
Palau				0.97 <sup>I</sup>	0.93 <sup>L</sup>	←					2.08 <sup>O</sup>	
Peru	0.96	0.98		0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>		0.97 <sup>F</sup>	0.97 <sup>L</sup>		0.95	0.97 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Rwanda	0.92	0.98	→	0.99 <sup>B</sup>	1.02 <sup>M</sup>		0.76 <sup>A</sup>			2.70	0.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
São Tomé and Príncipe					0.94 <sup>M</sup>						1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Saudi Arabia	0.92	0.98	→	0.91 <sup>F</sup>	0.93 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.76 <sup>F</sup>	0.93 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.94	1.44 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Switzerland				0.99 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>L</sup>		0.93 <sup>F</sup>	0.94 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.64	0.75 <sup>I-J</sup>	→
Viet Nam	1.00	1.01			0.94 <sup>L</sup>					0.62	0.82 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Zambia	0.91	0.96	→	0.98 <sup>F</sup>	1.00 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.72 <sup>E</sup>	0.82 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.40	0.67 <sup>O</sup>	→
Zimbabwe	0.96	0.98		1.01 <sup>J</sup>	1.01 <sup>M</sup>		0.91 <sup>J</sup>	0.90 <sup>M</sup>		0.42	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
<b>Countries below average</b>												
Burundi	0.86	1.01	→	0.88 <sup>G</sup>	0.81 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.66 <sup>C</sup>	0.78 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.38	0.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Cameroon	0.93	0.98	→							0.19	0.57 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Comoros	0.78	0.80		0.81 <sup>D</sup>	0.85 <sup>K</sup>	→				0.41	1.00 <sup>N</sup>	→
Congo, Dem. Rep.	0.79	0.89	→	0.70 <sup>E</sup>	0.97 <sup>J</sup>	→	0.61 <sup>E</sup>			0.17		
Congo, Rep.	0.98	0.99								0.23	0.17 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Djibouti	0.84	0.93	→	0.75 <sup>F</sup>	0.79 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.68 <sup>G</sup>	0.62 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.86	1.00 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Egypt	0.77	0.86	→	0.89 <sup>G</sup>	0.96 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.90 <sup>G</sup>	0.95 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.66		
Equatorial Guinea	0.95	0.98	→	0.79 <sup>I</sup>	0.86 <sup>M</sup>	→		0.58 <sup>K</sup>			0.50 <sup>N</sup>	
Gabon					0.99 <sup>L</sup>						0.56 <sup>I-J</sup>	
Gambia	0.71	0.80	→	0.79 <sup>F</sup>	0.92 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.54 <sup>C</sup>	0.75 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.55		
Ghana	0.91	0.97	→	0.93 <sup>I</sup>	0.97 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.80 <sup>I</sup>	0.88 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.28	0.40 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Guatemala	0.84	0.86	→	0.92 <sup>H</sup>	0.95 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.96 <sup>I</sup>	0.97 <sup>M</sup>		0.31		
Lao PDR	0.80	0.87	→	0.89 <sup>F</sup>	0.92 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.76 <sup>G</sup>	0.80 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.44	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Morocco	0.69	0.83	→	0.77 <sup>F</sup>	0.92 <sup>M</sup>	→		0.82 <sup>K</sup>		0.73	0.82 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
<p>→ Significant progress  → Slight progress     Stagnant  ← Slight regression  ← Significant regression</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> * Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1997; I: 1998; J: 1999;  K: 2000; L: 2001; M: 2002; N: 1999/2000; O: 2000/2001.</p>												



	LITERACY RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET PRIMARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			NET SECONDARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)			GROSS TERTIARY ENROLMENT RATIO GAP (WOMEN/MEN)		
	1995*	2005	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	Initial data*	2001/2002	Progress or regression	1995*	2001/2002	Progress or regression
Niue					0.94 <sup>M</sup>			0.98 <sup>M</sup>				
Sudan	0.80	0.91	→	0.84 <sup>I</sup>	0.84 <sup>K</sup>					0.87	0.86 <sup>I-J</sup>	←
Syrian Arab Republic	0.78	0.86	→	0.92 <sup>F</sup>	0.95 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.88 <sup>F</sup>	0.90 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.72		
Tajikistan	1.00	1.00		0.94 <sup>I</sup>	0.95 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.89 <sup>I</sup>	0.84 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.51	0.32 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Turkey	0.93	0.97	→	0.96 <sup>E</sup>	0.93 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.70 <sup>E</sup>			0.61	0.72 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Uganda	0.80	0.88	→	0.90 <sup>H</sup>				0.87 <sup>L</sup>		0.48	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>												
Benin	0.47	0.55	→	0.58 <sup>F</sup>	0.69 <sup>K</sup>	→	0.46 <sup>I</sup>	0.48 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.22	0.17 <sup>N</sup>	←
Burkina Faso	0.45	0.58	→	0.65 <sup>E</sup>	0.71 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.55 <sup>D</sup>	0.60 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.32	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Cambodia	0.84	0.91	→	0.86 <sup>H</sup>	0.93 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.55 <sup>H</sup>	0.58 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.19	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Central African Republic	0.69	0.85	→	0.66 <sup>A</sup>						0.16	0.33 <sup>N</sup>	→
Chad	0.73	0.88	→	0.56 <sup>G</sup>	0.67 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.30 <sup>H</sup>	0.36 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.15		
Côte d'Ivoire	0.68	0.79	→	0.75 <sup>F</sup>	0.74 <sup>M</sup>					0.32	0.40 <sup>I-J</sup>	→
Eritrea	0.72	0.79	→	0.91 <sup>F</sup>	0.85 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.88 <sup>F</sup>	0.75 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.13		
Ethiopia	0.73	0.86	→	0.62 <sup>F</sup>	0.79 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.71 <sup>I</sup>	0.58 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.25	0.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Guinea				0.65 <sup>H</sup>	0.78 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.41 <sup>H</sup>	0.41 <sup>J</sup>		0.10		
Guinea-Bissau	0.51	0.69	→		0.72 <sup>K</sup>					0.05		
India	0.78	0.85	→		0.84 <sup>L</sup>					0.62	0.69 <sup>O</sup>	→
Iraq	0.47	0.51	→	0.88 <sup>F</sup>	0.85 <sup>K</sup>	←	0.67 <sup>C</sup>	0.65 <sup>K</sup>	←	0.64	0.56 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Liberia	0.57	0.68	→	0.86 <sup>I</sup>	0.77 <sup>K</sup>	←		0.57 <sup>K</sup>		0.33	0.79 <sup>N</sup>	→
Mali	0.49	0.57	→	0.66 <sup>F</sup>	0.73 <sup>J</sup>	→				0.20		
Mauritania	0.68	0.75	→	0.86 <sup>F</sup>	0.96 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.78 <sup>K</sup>	0.81 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.21	0.20 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Mozambique	0.55	0.68	→	0.76 <sup>F</sup>	0.89 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.67 <sup>F</sup>	0.69 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.34		
Nepal	0.48	0.63	→	0.79 <sup>I</sup>	0.88 <sup>L</sup>	→				0.33	0.25 <sup>L-M</sup>	←
Niger	0.40	0.46	→	0.61 <sup>G</sup>	0.68 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.56 <sup>G</sup>	0.57 <sup>M</sup>		0.18	0.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Pakistan	0.54	0.64	→	0.60 <sup>J</sup>	0.75 <sup>L</sup>	→				0.60		
Papua New Guinea	0.87	0.91	→	0.91 <sup>I</sup>	0.89 <sup>M</sup>	←	0.78 <sup>I</sup>	0.80 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.48	0.33 <sup>I-J</sup>	←
Senegal	0.65	0.75	→	0.80 <sup>F</sup>	0.89 <sup>M</sup>	→				0.31		
Togo	0.67	0.79	→	0.74 <sup>F</sup>	0.84 <sup>M</sup>	→	0.44 <sup>H</sup>	0.47 <sup>K</sup>	→	0.18	0.17 <sup>N</sup>	
Yemen	0.44	0.67	→	0.59 <sup>I</sup>	0.66 <sup>K</sup>	→		0.45 <sup>K</sup>		0.17	0.29 <sup>N</sup>	→
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>												
Afghanistan										0.46		
French Polynesia				1.01 <sup>E</sup>						1.02		
Grenada					0.90 <sup>L</sup>							
Haiti	0.99	1.02		1.05 <sup>A</sup>						0.49		
Marshall Islands					0.91 <sup>K</sup>							
Nauru					1.03 <sup>J</sup>							
New Caledonia				1.00 <sup>A</sup>			1.12 <sup>A</sup>			0.71		
Nigeria	0.89	0.97	→							0.38		
Puerto Rico	1.02	1.01								1.42		
Sierra Leone							0.82 <sup>J</sup>			0.19	0.33 <sup>L-M</sup>	→
Singapore	1.00	1.00								0.84		
Timor-Leste											1.50 <sup>L-M</sup>	
Turkmenistan										1.11		
Tuvalu					0.96 <sup>J</sup>							
Uzbekistan	1.00	1.00								1.12		
<p><b>UDHR:</b> Universal Declaration of Human Rights  <b>CESCR:</b> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  <b>CEDAW:</b> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  <b>CRC:</b> Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p><b>Sources:</b>  UNESCO Website Database, October 2004 (www.unesco.org); World Development Indicators 2004, World Bank and World Education Report, 1998 (UNESCO).</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> * Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1997; I: 1998; J: 1999; K: 2000; L: 2001; M: 2002; N: 1999/2000; O: 2000/2001.</p> <p>→ Significant progress  → Slight progress     Stagnant  ← Slight regression  ← Significant regression</p>												

## GENDER EQUITY: The governments of the world agreed on...

### Gender gap in economic activity and earned income

"Discrimination against women, denying or limiting as it does their equality of rights with men, is fundamentally unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity."

Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Article 1, 1967.

"We are convinced that... women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace."

Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action, Paragraph 13, 1995.

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The right to non discrimination on the basis of sex is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 2 & 26 CEDAW - Art. 7, 10 & 11  
CESCR - Art. 3 & 7 CRC - Art. 29

#### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Gender equity is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goal 3  
World Summit for Social Development  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	WOMEN WAGE EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (AS % OF TOTAL NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEES)			ESTIMATED EARNED INCOME RATIO (WOMEN/MEN)
	Initial data* (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1991/2001
<b>Countries in better situation</b>				
Armenia		45.5 <sup>H</sup>		0.69
Australia	46.8 <sup>F</sup>	48.9	→	0.71
Azerbaijan	42.7 <sup>F</sup>	48.4	→	0.57
Bahamas	49.4 <sup>F</sup>	48.5		0.65
Barbados	46.7 <sup>F</sup>	48.5	→	0.61
Belarus	56.2 <sup>F</sup>	55.8		0.65
Benin	51.5 <sup>A</sup>			0.69
Bermuda	50.4 <sup>F</sup>	49.4		
Bulgaria	53.0 <sup>F</sup>	51.3	←	0.66
Burundi	9.9 <sup>A</sup>			0.71
Cambodia	46.0 <sup>F</sup>	53.2	→	0.77
Canada	47.8 <sup>F</sup>	48.7		0.63
Colombia	44.9 <sup>F</sup>	49.2	→	0.53
Czech Republic	46.3 <sup>F</sup>	46.7		0.56
Denmark	46.5 <sup>F</sup>	49.0	→	0.72
Estonia	50.8 <sup>F</sup>	51.5		0.63
Finland	51.1 <sup>F</sup>	50.7		0.70
France	45.7 <sup>F</sup>	47.0		0.59
Ghana	56.6 <sup>A</sup>			0.75
Guinea	30.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.68
Hungary	45.9 <sup>F</sup>	46.7		0.59
Iceland	54.0 <sup>F</sup>	53.0		0.63
Israel	45.5 <sup>F</sup>	48.7	→	0.53
Jamaica	49.2 <sup>F</sup>	47.2	←	0.66
Kazakhstan	53.8 <sup>F</sup>	48.1	←	0.59
Kyrgyzstan	46.0 <sup>F</sup>	45.4		0.65
Lao PDR	42.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.65
Latvia	53.3 <sup>F</sup>	53.4		0.69
Lithuania	55.0 <sup>F</sup>	50.3	←	0.67
Macao (China)	45.3 <sup>F</sup>	50.1	→	
Moldova	52.8 <sup>F</sup>	53.7		0.65
Mongolia	48.0 <sup>F</sup>	47.4		0.67
Mozambique	15.2 <sup>A</sup>			0.66
Netherlands Antilles	43.9 <sup>F</sup>	48.3	→	
New Zealand	48.8 <sup>F</sup>	50.6	→	0.69






**Significant progress**  
**Slight progress**  
**||** **Stagnant**  
**Slight regression**  
**Significant regression**

**Notes:** \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1998; I: 2001.

	WOMEN WAGE EMPLOYMENT IN NON-AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (AS % OF TOTAL NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEES)			ESTIMATED EARNED INCOME RATIO (WOMEN/MEN)
	Initial data* (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1991/2001
Norway	47.6 <sup>F</sup>	48.9		0.74
Poland	47.3 <sup>F</sup>	47.5		0.62
Portugal	45.9 <sup>F</sup>	46.5		0.54
Russian Federation	49.7 <sup>F</sup>	49.6		0.64
Slovakia	49.1 <sup>F</sup>	52.0	→	0.65
Slovenia	48.0 <sup>F</sup>	47.9		0.62
Solomon Islands	33.3 <sup>A</sup>			0.69
Sweden	51.3 <sup>F</sup>	50.9		0.83
Tajikistan	44.0 <sup>F</sup>	50.4	→	0.62
Tanzania	33.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.71
Turkmenistan				0.63
Uganda	43.2 <sup>A</sup>			0.66
Ukraine	50.7 <sup>F</sup>	53.2	→	0.53
United Kingdom	50.2 <sup>F</sup>	50.4		0.60
United States of America	48.3 <sup>F</sup>	48.6		0.62
Uzbekistan	43.5 <sup>F</sup>	41.8	←	0.66
Viet Nam	52.9 <sup>A</sup>			0.69
<b>Countries above average</b>				
Albania	40.0 <sup>F</sup>	40.2		0.56
Andorra	43.9 <sup>F</sup>	45.5	→	
Angola	42.7 <sup>C</sup>			0.62
Brazil	44.1 <sup>F</sup>	46.6	→	0.42
Central African Republic	36.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.60
Chad	5.5 <sup>B</sup>			0.59
China	38.7 <sup>F</sup>	39.3		0.66
Comoros	16.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.56
Congo, Dem. Rep.	32.2 <sup>A</sup>			0.55
Congo, Rep.	32.5 <sup>A</sup>			0.56
Cook Islands	39.2 <sup>F</sup>	41.2	→	
Croatia	47.7 <sup>F</sup>	45.7	←	0.56
Gabon	43.2 <sup>A</sup>			0.59
Gambia	24.0 <sup>A</sup>			0.59
Georgia	45.1 <sup>F</sup>	46.5		0.40
Haiti	39.5 <sup>A</sup>			0.56
Hong Kong (China)	42.5 <sup>F</sup>	45.9	→	0.56
Ireland	44.4 <sup>F</sup>	47.6	→	0.40
Kenya	26.6 <sup>F</sup>	37.6	→	0.90
Macedonia, FYR	38.5 <sup>F</sup>	41.8	→	0.55
Madagascar	26.0 <sup>A</sup>			0.59
Maldives	31.6 <sup>F</sup>	39.6	→	
Mali	35.6 <sup>A</sup>			0.61
Mauritania	43.3 <sup>A</sup>			0.56
Namibia	43.6 <sup>F</sup>	50.0	→	0.51
Netherlands	41.7 <sup>F</sup>	45.0	→	0.53
Niger	8.6 <sup>B</sup>			0.57
Papua New Guinea	24.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.58
Philippines	40.0 <sup>F</sup>	40.7		0.59
Puerto Rico	43.9 <sup>F</sup>	40.1	←	
Romania	42.0 <sup>F</sup>	45.2	→	0.58
Rwanda	16.7 <sup>A</sup>			0.62
San Marino	39.9 <sup>F</sup>	41.7	→	
Senegal	28.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.55
Singapore	41.0 <sup>F</sup>	46.7	→	0.50
Sri Lanka	44.0 <sup>F</sup>	44.6		0.57
Switzerland	44.2 <sup>F</sup>	47.2	→	0.50

→ **Significant progress**  
→ **Slight progress**  
|| **Stagnant**  
← **Slight regression**  
← **Significant regression**

**Notes:** \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1998; I: 2001.

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	Initial data* (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1991/2001
Thailand	44.0 <sup>F</sup>	46.1	→	0.61
Zambia	36.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.55
<b>Countries below average</b>				
Argentina	39.9 <sup>F</sup>	45.9	→	0.37
Austria	42.0 <sup>F</sup>	44.1	→	0.36
Bangladesh	21.1 <sup>F</sup>	25.0	→	0.56
Belgium	42.0 <sup>F</sup>	45.2	→	0.50
Belize	38.8 <sup>F</sup>	41.0	→	0.24
Bolivia	35.9 <sup>F</sup>	37.3	→	0.45
Botswana	46.6 <sup>F</sup>	44.8	←	0.51
Burkina Faso	13.0 <sup>F</sup>	14.0		0.70
Cameroon	24.3 <sup>A</sup>			0.44
Cape Verde	50.0 <sup>A</sup>			0.46
Costa Rica	36.7 <sup>F</sup>	39.6	→	0.39
Cuba	37.6 <sup>F</sup>	37.7		
Cyprus	39.1 <sup>F</sup>	42.4	→	0.47
Ecuador	40.3 <sup>F</sup>	40.0		0.30
Equatorial Guinea	13.3 <sup>A</sup>			0.40
Eritrea	32.3 <sup>G</sup>			0.52
Ethiopia	39.9 <sup>B</sup>			0.51
Germany	43.0 <sup>F</sup>	45.9	→	0.52
Greece	37.6 <sup>F</sup>	40.5	→	0.43
Guinea-Bissau	10.5 <sup>A</sup>			0.49
Honduras	44.6 <sup>F</sup>	50.2	→	0.37
Indonesia	29.0 <sup>F</sup>	29.7		0.51
Italy	37.0 <sup>F</sup>	40.9	→	0.45
Japan	38.9 <sup>F</sup>	40.6	→	0.46
Korea, Rep.	38.0 <sup>F</sup>	39.7	→	0.46
Malawi	11.3 <sup>F</sup>	12.2		0.68
Malaysia	36.3 <sup>F</sup>	34.6	←	0.40
Morocco	26.1 <sup>F</sup>	25.8		0.40
Nepal	11.7 <sup>A</sup>			0.50
Nicaragua	49.0 <sup>A</sup>			0.44
Nigeria	36.4 <sup>A</sup>			0.43
Panama	42.7 <sup>F</sup>	43.5		0.50
Paraguay	40.7 <sup>F</sup>	40.5		0.33
Sierra Leone	32.1 <sup>A</sup>			0.41
South Africa	39.5 <sup>D</sup>			0.45
Spain	36.1 <sup>F</sup>	39.9	→	0.44
Suriname	35.4 <sup>F</sup>	33.2	←	
Togo	46.6 <sup>A</sup>			0.47
Trinidad and Tobago	39.2 <sup>F</sup>	40.8	→	0.45
Turkey	16.7 <sup>F</sup>	20.6	→	0.60
Uruguay	43.9 <sup>F</sup>	45.8	→	0.52
Venezuela	36.7 <sup>F</sup>	41.8	→	0.41
Zimbabwe	17.2 <sup>F</sup>	20.6	→	0.57
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>				
Algeria	12.6 <sup>G</sup>	14.2 <sup>I</sup>	→	0.31
Bahrain	9.9 <sup>F</sup>	12.5	→	0.34
Chile	36.2 <sup>F</sup>	36.5		0.38
Côte d'Ivoire	21.5 <sup>F</sup>	19.6	←	0.37
Dominican Republic	35.7 <sup>F</sup>	34.9		0.36
Egypt	18.9 <sup>F</sup>	20.3	→	0.38
El Salvador	30.7 <sup>F</sup>	31.1		0.36
<p>  <b>Significant progress</b>   <b>Slight progress</b>   <b>Stagnant</b>   <b>Slight regression</b>   <b>Significant regression</b> </p> <p><b>Notes:</b> * Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: A: 1990; B: 1991; C: 1992; D: 1993; E: 1994; F: 1995; G: 1996; H: 1998; I: 2001.</p>				

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	Initial data* (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1991/2001
Fiji	31.8 <sup>F</sup>	34.8	→	0.36
Guatemala	37.9 <sup>F</sup>	39.2		0.33
Guyana	44.8 <sup>A</sup>			0.39
India	14.4 <sup>F</sup>	17.5	→	0.38
Iran, Islamic Rep.	18.0 <sup>A</sup>			0.29
Jordan	22.6 <sup>F</sup>	21.9		0.31
Kuwait	25.6 <sup>F</sup>	19.7	←	0.34
Lebanon	29.3 <sup>A</sup>			0.31
Lesotho	40.4 <sup>A</sup>			0.38
Luxembourg	35.9 <sup>F</sup>	37.5	→	0.38
Malta	28.7 <sup>F</sup>	33.8	→	0.37
Mauritius	36.4 <sup>F</sup>	38.2	→	0.37
Mexico	35.9 <sup>F</sup>	37.1		0.38
Oman	20.9 <sup>F</sup>	25.2	→	0.22
Pakistan	7.5 <sup>F</sup>	8.2		0.33
Peru	32.0 <sup>F</sup>	35.0	→	0.27
Qatar	15.6 <sup>F</sup>	13.8	←	
Saudi Arabia	15.2 <sup>F</sup>	14.0		0.21
Sudan	18.8 <sup>F</sup>	14.7	←	0.32
Swaziland	33.2 <sup>F</sup>	29.3	←	0.31
Syrian Arab Republic	16.3 <sup>F</sup>	18.4	→	0.28
Tunisia	19.7 <sup>A</sup>			0.36
United Arab Emirates	12.6 <sup>F</sup>	12.7		
West Bank and Gaza	13.5 <sup>F</sup>	17.0	→	
Yemen	7.6 <sup>F</sup>	5.8	←	0.30
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>				
Afghanistan	4.7 <sup>A</sup>			
Bhutan	11.9 <sup>A</sup>			
Bosnia and Herzegovina	43.4 <sup>A</sup>			
British Virgin Islands	48.3 <sup>E</sup>			
Brunei Darussalam	39.5 <sup>A</sup>			
Cayman Islands	48.6 <sup>B</sup>			
Grenada	38.4 <sup>B</sup>			
Guadeloupe	55.0 <sup>A</sup>			
Guam	43.6 <sup>C</sup>			
Iraq	12.7 <sup>A</sup>			
Korea, Dem. Rep.	49.6 <sup>A</sup>			
Liberia	28.3 <sup>A</sup>			
Libya	18.9 <sup>A</sup>			
Myanmar	35.2 <sup>A</sup>			
Serbia and Montenegro	46.4 <sup>A</sup>			
Somalia	27.6 <sup>A</sup>			
Timor-Leste	27.9 <sup>A</sup>			
<p><b>UDHR:</b> Universal Declaration of Human Rights  <b>CESCR:</b> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  <b>CEDAW:</b> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  <b>CRC:</b> Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p><b>Sources:</b>  <b>Women wage employment in non-agricultural sector:</b> The UN Statistics Division Website (<a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/">unstats.un.org/unsd/</a>)  <b>Estimated earned income ratio (women/men):</b> Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> * Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date. Data source year: <b>A:</b> 1990; <b>B:</b> 1991; <b>C:</b> 1992; <b>D:</b> 1993; <b>E:</b> 1994; <b>F:</b> 1995; <b>G:</b> 1996; <b>H:</b> 1998; <b>I:</b> 2001.</p> <p>→ <b>Significant progress</b>  → <b>Slight progress</b>     <b>Stagnant</b>  ← <b>Slight regression</b>  ← <b>Significant regression</b></p>				

## GENDER EQUITY: The governments of the world agreed on...

### Women's empowerment

*"Discrimination against women, denying or limiting as it does their equality of rights with men, is fundamentally unjust and constitutes an offence against human dignity."*

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Article 1, 1967.

*"We are convinced that... women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace."*

**Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action,** Paragraph 13, 1995.

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The right to non discrimination on the basis of sex is enshrined in:

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#### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Gender equity is considered in:

**Millennium Development Goals** - Goal 3  
**World Summit for Social Development**  
Fourth World Conference on Women -  
**Beijing Platform for Action** - Critical Areas of Concern






	FEMALE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS	FEMALE LEGISLATORS, SENIOR OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS	WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL			SEATS IN PARLIAMENT HELD BY WOMEN		
	Latest available data (A) (%)	Latest available data (A) (%)	1995* (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1997 (%)	2004 (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>								
Australia	35	55	24	20	←	15.5	25.3	→
Austria	29	48	7	31	→	26.8	33.9	→
Bulgaria			9	19	→	13.3	26.2	→
Finland	28	52	16	44	→	33.5	37.5	→
Germany	34	49	7	36	→	26.2	32.2	→
Grenada			19	25	→	20.0	26.7	→
Hungary	35	62	8	36	→	11.4	9.8	←
Iceland	29	55	8	33	→	25.4	30.2	→
Lithuania	44	70	9	19	→	17.5		
Luxembourg			8	29	→	20.0	20.0	"
Moldova	40	64	4			4.8	12.9	→
New Zealand	38	52	17	44	→	29.2	28.3	"
Norway	28	49	44	42	←	39.4	36.4	←
Philippines	58	62	24			10.8	15.3	→
Russian Federation	37	64	2			10.2	9.8	"
Seychelles			21	23	→	27.3	29.4	→
South Africa			7	38	→	25.0	32.8	→
Sweden	31	50	33	55	→	40.4	45.3	→
Uganda			10	27	→	18.1	24.7	→
United States of America	46	55		32		11.7	14.3	→
<b>Countries above average</b>								
Bahamas	31	58	34	17	←	8.2	20.0	→
Barbados	40	55	23	14	←	10.7	13.3	→
Belgium	30	48	8	19	→	12.0	35.3	→
Bolivia	36	40	9			6.9	18.5	→
Botswana	35	52	11	27	→	8.5	17.0	→
Canada	34	54	19	24	→	18.0	21.1	→
Cape Verde			12	35	→	11.1	11.1	"
Colombia	38	50	25	47	→	11.7	12.0	"
Costa Rica	53	28	21	29	→	15.8	35.1	→
Croatia	26	51		16		7.9	17.8	→
Cuba			8	11	→	22.8	36.0	→
Czech Republic	26	52	1			15.0	17.0	→
Denmark	22	51	19	45	→	33.0	38.0	→
Dominican Republic	31	49	12			11.7	17.3	→
Estonia	37	68	10	14	→	12.9	18.8	→

→ **Significant progress**  
→ **Slight progress**  
" **Stagnant**  
← **Slight regression**  
← **Significant regression**

**Note:** \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.

**A:** Latest available data taken from ILO Laborsta Database (March, 2004) as published by Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.



	FEMALE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS	FEMALE LEGISLATORS, SENIOR OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS	WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL			SEATS IN PARLIAMENT HELD BY WOMEN		
	Latest available data (A) (%)	Latest available data (A) (%)	1995* (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1997 (%)	2004 (%)	Progress or regression
France			9	38	→	6.4	12.2	→
Gambia			7	31	→		13.2	
Georgia	28	64	3	10	→	6.8	9.4	→
Ireland	28	52	11	19	→	13.9	13.3	
Latvia	37	66	16	7	←	9.0	21.0	→
Mali			7	33	→	2.3	10.2	→
Namibia	30	55	7	16	→	18.1	26.4	→
Netherlands	26	48	20	31	→	31.3	36.7	→
Nicaragua			11	23	→	10.8	20.7	→
Panama	38	49	11	20	→	9.7	16.7	→
Peru	27	44	10	16	→	10.8	18.3	→
Poland	34	60	8	19	→	13.0	20.2	→
Portugal	29	51	18	10	←	13.0	19.1	→
Romania	31	56	3	20	→	7.0	10.7	→
Rwanda			10	13	→	17.1	48.8	→
Slovakia	31	61	13	19	→	14.7	19.3	→
Spain	31	46	10	18	→	24.6	36.0	→
Suriname	28	51	14			15.7	17.6	→
Switzerland	28	45	7	29	→	21.0	25.0	→
Trinidad and Tobago	40	51	14	9	←	11.1	19.4	→
Ukraine	38	64	1			3.8	5.3	→
United Kingdom	31	44	8	33	→	9.5	17.9	→
Uruguay	37	52	3			7.1	12.1	→
Zimbabwe			11	36	→	14.7	10.0	←
<b>Countries below average</b>								
Angola			6	15	→	9.5	15.5	→
Argentina	26	53	3	7	→	25.3	34.0	→
Belarus			4	26	→		10.3	
Belize	31	52	10	11		3.4	3.3	
Brazil		62	13	0	←	6.6	8.6	→
Burkina Faso			10	9	←	3.7	11.7	→
Burundi			4	5			18.4	
Chile	21	52	12	26	→	7.5	12.5	→
China			4	5		21.0	20.2	
Côte d'Ivoire			3	9	→	8.3	8.5	
Dominica			31	0	←	9.4	18.8	→
Ecuador	25	44	10	20	→		16.0	
El Salvador	26	46	18	15	←	10.7	10.7	
Eritrea				12		21.0	22.0	
Ethiopia			11	22	→	2.0	7.7	→
Fiji	51	9	10	21	→	4.3	5.7	→
Gabon			6	12	→		9.2	
Ghana			11	9	←		9.5	
Greece	26	48	6	7		6.3	14.0	→
Guinea			5	11	→	7.0	19.3	→
Haiti			14	18	→	3.6	3.6	
Honduras	22	36	17	33	→	7.8	5.5	←
Hong Kong (China)	26	40						
India			6	10	→	7.2	8.1	
Israel	26	54	10	6	←	7.5	15.0	→
Italy	21	45	10	18	→	11.1	11.5	
Jamaica			13	13		11.7	11.7	
Lao PDR			3	10	→	9.4	22.9	→
Macedonia, FYR	19	51	11	11		3.3	18.3	→
Malawi			6	12	→	5.6	14.6	→
Malaysia	20	45	6			7.8	9.1	
<p>  <b>Significant progress</b>   <b>Slight progress</b>   <b>Stagnant</b>   <b>Slight regression</b>   <b>Significant regression</b> </p> <p><b>Note:</b> * Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  <b>A:</b> Latest available data taken from ILO Laborsta Database (March, 2004) as published by Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.</p>								

	FEMALE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS	FEMALE LEGISLATORS, SENIOR OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS	WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL			SEATS IN PARLIAMENT HELD BY WOMEN		
	Latest available data (A) (%)	Latest available data (A) (%)	1995* (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1997 (%)	2004 (%)	Progress or regression
Mexico	25	40	7	11	→	14.2	22.6	→
Mongolia	30	66	5	10	→	7.9	5.4	←
Nigeria			4	23	→		6.1	
Paraguay	23	54	3			2.5	10.0	→
Senegal			2	16	→	11.7	19.2	→
Sierra Leone			5	8	→	6.3	14.5	→
Singapore	26	43	5	6	"	2.5	16.0	→
Slovenia	29	55	15			7.8	12.2	→
St. Lucia			5	18	→	0.0	11.1	→
St. Vincent and the Grenadines			25	0	←	9.5	22.7	→
Swaziland	24	61	7	13	→	3.1	10.8	→
Syrian Arab Republic			4	11	→	9.6	12.0	→
Thailand	27	55	4	6	→	5.6	9.2	→
Tunisia			5	10	→	6.7	11.5	→
Venezuela	27	61	6	0	←	5.9	9.7	→
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>								
Albania			12	15	→	12.1	5.7	←
Algeria			2	0	←	6.6	6.2	"
Antigua and Barbuda			30	0	←	5.3	10.5	→
Azerbaijan			5	3	←	12.0	10.5	←
Bahrain	10	19	0				0.0	
Bangladesh	8	25	3	10	→	9.1	2.0	←
Benin			10	11	"	7.2	7.2	"
Cambodia	14	33	5	7	→	5.8	9.8	→
Cameroon			5	6	"	12.2	8.9	←
Cyprus	14	46	5			5.4	10.7	→
Djibouti			1	5	→	0.0	10.8	→
Egypt	9	30	2	6	→	2.0	2.4	"
Guatemala			18	7	←	12.5	8.2	←
Indonesia			2	6	→	12.6	11.1	←
Iran, Islamic Rep.	13	33	0	9	→	4.0	3.1	"
Japan	10	46	8	6	←	4.6	7.1	→
Jordan			7	0	←	1.3	5.5	→
Kenya			5	1	←	3.0	7.1	→
Korea, Rep.	5	34	2	7	→	3.0	13.0	→
Kuwait			6	0	←	0.0	0.0	"
Lebanon			0	0	"	2.3	2.3	"
Madagascar			0	13	→	3.7	3.8	"
Maldives	15	40	10			6.3	6.0	"
Malta	17	40	2	5	→	5.8	9.2	→
Mauritania			5	14	→	1.3	3.7	→
Mauritius			7	9	→	7.6	5.7	←
Morocco			1	5	→	0.6	10.8	→
Nepal			0	15	→	3.4	5.9	→
Niger			9	10	"		1.2	
Pakistan	9	26	2				21.6	
Papua New Guinea			2	0	←	0.0	0.9	"
Samoa			7	8	"	4.1	6.1	→
Saudi Arabia	1	31	0			5.3	0.0	
Sri Lanka	4	49	9			5.3	4.9	"
St. Kitts and Nevis			21	0	←	13.3	13.3	"
Sudan			1	5	→	5.3	9.7	→
Togo			3	7	→	1.2	7.4	→
Turkey	7	31	5	0	←	2.4	4.4	→
United Arab Emirates	8	25	0			0.0	0.0	"
Uzbekistan			3	4	→	6.0	7.2	"
West Bank and Gaza	10	33						

**Significant progress**  
**Slight progress**  
**Stagnant**  
**Slight regression**  
**Significant regression**

**Note:** \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  
A: Latest available data taken from ILO Laborsta Database (March, 2004) as published by Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.

	FEMALE PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL WORKERS	FEMALE LEGISLATORS, SENIOR OFFICIALS AND MANAGERS	WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL			SEATS IN PARLIAMENT HELD BY WOMEN		
	Latest available data (A) (%)	Latest available data (A) (%)	1995* (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1997 (%)	2004 (%)	Progress or regression
Yemen	4	15	0			0.7	0.3	"
Zambia			9	6	←	9.7	12.0	→
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>								
Armenia			2			6.3	4.6	←
Bhutan			5			2.0	9.5	→
Bosnia and Herzegovina							16.7	
Brunei Darussalam			2	0	←			
Central African Republic			5			3.5		
Chad			3			17.3	5.8	←
Comoros			3			0.0	3.0	→
Congo, Dem. Rep.							12.0	
Congo, Rep.			4			1.6	8.5	→
Equatorial Guinea			3			8.8	18.0	→
Guinea-Bissau			12	8	←	10.0		
Guyana			16			20.0	20.0	"
Iraq			0					
Kazakhstan			1	18	→	13.4		
Kiribati						0.0	4.8	→
Korea, Dem. Rep.						20.1	20.1	"
Kyrgyzstan			8			1.4	10.0	→
Lesotho			14			4.6	11.7	→
Liberia						5.7	5.3	"
Libya			0	13	→			
Liechtenstein						8.0	12.0	→
Marshall Islands							3.0	
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.						0.0	0.0	"
Monaco						5.6	20.8	→
Mozambique			13			25.2	30.0	→
Myanmar			0					
Nauru						5.6	0.0	←
Oman			4					
Palau						0.0	0.0	"
Qatar			2	0	←			
San Marino						11.7	16.7	→
São Tomé and Príncipe			4			7.3	9.1	→
Serbia and Montenegro							7.9	
Solomon Islands			0			2.1	0.0	←
Tajikistan			4			2.8	12.7	→
Tanzania			9			17.5	21.4	→
Timor-Leste							26.1	
Tonga						0.0	0.0	"
Turkmenistan			4			18.0	26.0	→
Tuvalu						7.7	0.0	←
Vanuatu			0				3.8	
Viet Nam			4			28.5	27.3	"

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Sources:**  
**Female professional and technical workers:** UN Statistics Division and Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.  
**Female legislators, senior officials and managers:** UN Statistics Division and Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.  
**Women in decision-making positions in government at ministerial level:** UN Statistics Division and Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.  
**Seats in parliament held by women:** IPU Database, October, 2004.

→ **Significant progress**  
→ **Slight progress**  
" **Stagnant**  
← **Slight regression**  
← **Significant regression**

**Note:** \* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  
**A:** Latest available data taken from ILO Laborsta Database (March, 2004) as published by Human Development Report 2004, UNDP.

## WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: The governments of the world agreed on...

"...States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation."

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article 12, 1979.

"Provide more accessible, available and affordable primary health-care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care, which includes family planning information and services, and giving particular attention to maternal and emergency obstetric care..."

Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action, Paragraph 106, 1995.

### HUMAN RIGHTS

The right to women's reproductive health is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 25 CEDAW - Art. 11, 12 & 14  
CESCR - Art. 10 & 12 CRC - Art. 24

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Women's reproductive health is considered in:

Millennium Development Goals - Goals 5  
World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 8  
Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)*		CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49		
	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	1995 Model	2000	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>											
Albania		81 <sup>D</sup>			99 <sup>D</sup>		31	55		57.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Antigua and Barbuda		82 <sup>M</sup>		100.0 <sup>K</sup>	100 <sup>D</sup>	▬					
Argentina	95.0 <sup>G</sup>			95.8 <sup>G</sup>	99 <sup>P</sup>	→	85	82			
Armenia	82.0 <sup>L</sup>	82 <sup>D</sup>	▬	96.4 <sup>L</sup>	97 <sup>D</sup>	▬	29	55		60.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Australia	100.0 <sup>F</sup>				100 <sup>N</sup>		6	8			
Austria	100.0 <sup>G</sup>				100 <sup>H</sup>		11	4	50.81 <sup>K</sup>		
Bahamas					99 <sup>D</sup>		10	60			
Bahrain	63.0 <sup>J</sup>			97.6 <sup>J</sup>			38	28	61.8 <sup>J</sup>		
Belarus		100 <sup>N</sup>			100 <sup>D</sup>		33	35	50.4 <sup>J</sup>		
Belgium					100 <sup>B</sup>		8	10	78.4 <sup>G</sup>		
Belize	96.0 <sup>A,F</sup>	96 <sup>N</sup>	▬	77.0 <sup>F</sup>	83 <sup>N</sup>	→	140	140	46.7 <sup>F</sup>		
Bosnia and Herzegovina		99 <sup>D</sup>		97.4 <sup>F</sup>	100 <sup>D</sup>	▬	15	31		47.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Brunei Darussalam	100.0 <sup>I</sup>				99 <sup>N</sup>		22	37			
Bulgaria							23	32		41.5 <sup>L</sup>	
Canada					98 <sup>P</sup>		6	6	74.7 <sup>J</sup>		
Chile	95.0 <sup>G</sup>			99.5 <sup>J</sup>	100 <sup>D</sup>	▬	33	31			
China				97.0 <sup>J</sup>			60	56		83.8 <sup>L</sup>	
Cook Islands					100 <sup>M</sup>				63.2 <sup>K</sup>		
Costa Rica	95.0 <sup>B,G</sup>			98.0 <sup>G</sup>	98 <sup>P</sup>	▬	35	43	75.0 <sup>H</sup>		
Croatia					100 <sup>D</sup>		18	8			
Cuba	100.0 <sup>M</sup>			99.8 <sup>H</sup>	100 <sup>N</sup>	▬	24	33			
Cyprus							0	47			
Czech Republic	99.0 <sup>H</sup>				100 <sup>D</sup>		14	9		72.0 <sup>L</sup>	
Denmark					100 <sup>B</sup>		15	5			
Dominica	90.0 <sup>E</sup>			100.0 <sup>J</sup>	100 <sup>N</sup>	▬					
Dominican Republic	98.3 <sup>K</sup>	100 <sup>N</sup>	→	95.3 <sup>K</sup>	98 <sup>D</sup>	→	110	150	63.7 <sup>K</sup>		
El Salvador	68.7 <sup>H</sup>			51.0 <sup>H</sup>	90 <sup>M</sup>	→	180	150		59.7 <sup>M</sup>	
Estonia					100 <sup>D</sup>		80	63	70.3 <sup>I</sup>		
Fiji					100 <sup>M</sup>		20	75			
Finland	100.0 <sup>F,H</sup>				100 <sup>D</sup>		6	6	77.4 <sup>D</sup>		
France	99.0 <sup>F,H</sup>				99 <sup>H</sup>		20	17	74.6 <sup>I</sup>		
French Polynesia							20	20			
Georgia	74.0 <sup>L</sup>	91 <sup>N</sup>	→		96 <sup>N</sup>		22	32		40.5 <sup>D</sup>	
Germany							12	8	74.7 <sup>G</sup>		
Greece							2	9			
Grenada	100.0 <sup>E</sup>			100.0 <sup>E</sup>	100 <sup>D</sup>	▬			54.3 <sup>E</sup>		
Guadeloupe							5	5			
Guam							12	12			
Hungary							23	16	77.4 <sup>H</sup>		
Iran, Islamic Rep.					90 <sup>D</sup>		130	76		72.9 <sup>L</sup>	

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
▬ Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

Notes: \* Due to changes in the model of estimation, 1995 and 2000 data are not comparable.  
\*\* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  
Data source year: A: 1986; B: 1987; C: 1988; D: 1989; E: 1990; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002; R: 2003.

	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)*		CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49		
	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	1995 Model	2000	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
Ireland					100 <sup>0</sup>		9	5			
Israel					99 <sup>B</sup>		8	17	68.0 <sup>B,C</sup>		
Italy							11	5	60.2 <sup>K</sup>		
Jamaica					95 <sup>L</sup>		120	87		65.9 <sup>L</sup>	
Japan				100.0 <sup>K</sup>			12	10	58.6 <sup>I</sup>	55.9 <sup>0</sup>	←
Jordan		99 <sup>0</sup>		96.7 <sup>L</sup>	100 <sup>0</sup>		41	41	52.6 <sup>L</sup>	55.8 <sup>0</sup>	→
Kazakhstan	92.5 <sup>J</sup>	82 <sup>N</sup>	←	99.6 <sup>J</sup>	99 <sup>N</sup>		80	210	59.1 <sup>J</sup>	66.1 <sup>N</sup>	→
Korea, Dem. Rep.		98 <sup>0</sup>			97 <sup>0</sup>		35	67	61.8 <sup>G</sup>		
Korea, Rep.					100 <sup>L</sup>		20	20		80.5 <sup>L</sup>	
Kuwait	95.0 <sup>J</sup>	83 <sup>K</sup>	←	98.2 <sup>K</sup>	98 <sup>J</sup>		25	5	50.2 <sup>K</sup>		
Kyrgyzstan		88 <sup>L</sup>			98 <sup>L</sup>		80	110		59.5 <sup>L</sup>	
Latvia				100.0 <sup>J</sup>	100 <sup>0</sup>		70	42	48.0 <sup>J</sup>		
Lithuania							27	13	46.6 <sup>J</sup>		
Luxembourg					100 <sup>0</sup>		0	28			
Macedonia, FYR					98 <sup>0</sup>		17	23			
Malaysia					97 <sup>P</sup>		39	41	54.5 <sup>L</sup>		
Malta					98 <sup>H</sup>		0	21			
Mauritius				97.0 <sup>I</sup>	99 <sup>N</sup>	→	45	24	74.7 <sup>F</sup>		
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.					93 <sup>N</sup>						
Moldova		99 <sup>L</sup>			99 <sup>L</sup>		65	36		62.4 <sup>0</sup>	
Mongolia	89.8 <sup>M</sup>				99 <sup>0</sup>		65	110	64.6 <sup>I</sup>	67.4 <sup>0</sup>	→
Netherlands				99.9 <sup>J</sup>	100 <sup>J</sup>		10	16	78.5 <sup>H</sup>		
Netherlands Antilles							20	20			
New Caledonia							10	10			
New Zealand	95.0 <sup>I</sup>			100.0 <sup>J</sup>			15	7	74.9 <sup>J</sup>		
Norway				100.0 <sup>C</sup>			9	16	73.8 <sup>0</sup>		
Palau					100 <sup>M</sup>						
Poland					100 <sup>0</sup>		12	13	49.4 <sup>F</sup>		
Portugal					100 <sup>0</sup>		12	5			
Puerto Rico							30	25	77.7 <sup>K</sup>		
Romania		89 <sup>N</sup>		99.0 <sup>K</sup>	98 <sup>N</sup>	←	60	49	57.3 <sup>H</sup>		
Russian Federation		96 <sup>N</sup>		99.1 <sup>M</sup>	99 <sup>0</sup>		75	67			
Samoa					100 <sup>M</sup>		15	130			
Saudi Arabia	77.0 <sup>K</sup>			91.4 <sup>K</sup>			23	23	31.8 <sup>K</sup>		
Serbia and Montenegro					93 <sup>P</sup>			11		58.3 <sup>0</sup>	
Singapore					100 <sup>M</sup>		9	30		62.0 <sup>L</sup>	
Slovakia					99 <sup>0</sup>		14	3	74.0 <sup>F</sup>		
Slovenia	98.0 <sup>G</sup>				100 <sup>0</sup>		17	17	73.8 <sup>I</sup>		
Spain							8	4	80.9 <sup>J</sup>		
Sri Lanka	80.2 <sup>H</sup>			94.0 <sup>H</sup>	97 <sup>0</sup>	→	60	92	66.1 <sup>H</sup>		
St. Vincent and the Grenadines					100 <sup>E</sup>						
Suriname	91.0 <sup>K</sup>	91 <sup>P</sup>		95.0 <sup>K</sup>	85 <sup>0</sup>	←	230	110			
Sweden					100 <sup>B</sup>		8	2			
Switzerland							8	7	82.0 <sup>J</sup>		
Thailand	85.9 <sup>K</sup>			85.0 <sup>J</sup>	99 <sup>0</sup>	→	44	44		72.2 <sup>L</sup>	
Trinidad and Tobago	97.6 <sup>B</sup>	96 <sup>P</sup>		99.0 <sup>L</sup>	96 <sup>0</sup>	←	65	160			
Turkmenistan		87 <sup>0</sup>		95.8 <sup>K</sup>	97 <sup>0</sup>	→	65	31		61.8 <sup>0</sup>	
Tuvalu					99 <sup>L</sup>						
Ukraine		90 <sup>N</sup>		99.9 <sup>K</sup>	99 <sup>N</sup>	←	45	35		67.5 <sup>N</sup>	
United Arab Emirates	96.8 <sup>J</sup>	97 <sup>J</sup>		99.2 <sup>J</sup>			30	54	27.5 <sup>J</sup>		
United Kingdom					99 <sup>M</sup>		10	13	82.0 <sup>H</sup>		
United States of America	99.0 <sup>0</sup>				99 <sup>L</sup>		12	17	76.4 <sup>J</sup>		
Uruguay				99.0 <sup>J</sup>	100 <sup>L</sup>	→	50	27			
Uzbekistan	94.9 <sup>K</sup>			97.5 <sup>K</sup>	96 <sup>0</sup>	←	60	24	55.6 <sup>K</sup>	67.2 <sup>0</sup>	→
Venezuela				95.0 <sup>L</sup>	94 <sup>0</sup>	←	43	96			
<b>Countries above average</b>											
Algeria	58.0 <sup>E</sup>	79 <sup>0</sup>	→		92 <sup>0</sup>		150	140	46.7 <sup>G</sup>		
Azerbaijan	98.3 <sup>L</sup>	70 <sup>P</sup>	←	99.8 <sup>M</sup>	84 <sup>0</sup>	←	37	94	55.1 <sup>0</sup>	55.4 <sup>P</sup>	→
Barbados	100.0 <sup>E</sup>	89 <sup>P</sup>	←		91 <sup>N</sup>		33	95			
Botswana	92.2 <sup>C</sup>	99 <sup>P</sup>	→	87.0 <sup>K</sup>	94 <sup>0</sup>	→	480	100		40.4 <sup>0</sup>	
Brazil	84.0 <sup>K</sup>			87.6 <sup>K</sup>			260	260	76.7 <sup>K</sup>		

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
|| Stagnant  
← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

**Notes:** \* Due to changes in the model of estimation, 1995 and 2000 data are not comparable.  
\*\* Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  
Data source year: A: 1986; B: 1987; C: 1988; D: 1989; E: 1990; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994;  
J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002; R: 2003.

	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)*		CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49		
	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	1995 Model	2000	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
Cape Verde		99 <sup>M</sup>		54.0 <sup>J</sup>	89 <sup>M</sup>	→	190	150		52.9 <sup>M</sup>	
Colombia	82.6 <sup>J</sup>	90 <sup>O</sup>	→	76.8 <sup>J</sup>	86 <sup>O</sup>	→	120	130	66.1 <sup>E</sup>		
Gabon		94 <sup>O</sup>			86 <sup>O</sup>		620	420		32.7 <sup>O</sup>	
Guyana		88 <sup>O</sup>		95.0 <sup>L</sup>	86 <sup>O</sup>	←	150	170			
Indonesia	82.3 <sup>I</sup>	97 <sup>O-R</sup>	→	36.5 <sup>I</sup>	66 <sup>O-R</sup>	→	470	230		57.4 <sup>L</sup>	
Kiribati	88.0 <sup>I</sup>				85 <sup>M</sup>						
Lebanon	87.0 <sup>J</sup>			88.0 <sup>K</sup>			130	150	61.0 <sup>K</sup>		
Libya	80.8 <sup>J</sup>			94.4 <sup>J</sup>			120	97	39.7 <sup>J</sup>		
Maldives		98 <sup>P</sup>			70 <sup>O</sup>		390	110			
Marshall Islands					95 <sup>M</sup>						
Mexico	86.1 <sup>J</sup>				86 <sup>L</sup>		65	83	66.5 <sup>J</sup>		
Namibia	87.2 <sup>G</sup>	85 <sup>O</sup>	←	68.2 <sup>G</sup>	76 <sup>O</sup>	→	370	300	28.9 <sup>G</sup>		
Nicaragua	71.5 <sup>G-H</sup>	85 <sup>P</sup>	→	59.2 <sup>H</sup>	67 <sup>P</sup>	→	250	230		60.3 <sup>M</sup>	
Oman	77.0 <sup>J</sup>			91.0 <sup>J</sup>	95 <sup>O</sup>	→	120	87	23.7 <sup>J</sup>		
Panama				86.1 <sup>H</sup>	90 <sup>M</sup>	→	100	160			
Papua New Guinea	77.5 <sup>K</sup>			53.2 <sup>K</sup>			390	300	25.9 <sup>K</sup>		
Paraguay	88.7 <sup>J-K</sup>			56.8 <sup>K</sup>	61 <sup>M</sup>	→	170	170		57.4 <sup>M</sup>	
Philippines	83.1 <sup>H</sup>	94 <sup>R</sup>	→	52.8 <sup>H</sup>	60 <sup>R</sup>	→	240	200		46.5 <sup>M</sup>	
Qatar	94.0 <sup>B</sup>	62 <sup>M</sup>	←		99 <sup>M</sup>		41	7		43.2 <sup>M</sup>	
São Tomé and Príncipe		91 <sup>O</sup>			79 <sup>O</sup>					29.3 <sup>O</sup>	
Solomon Islands					85 <sup>N</sup>		60	130			
South Africa	89.0 <sup>I-J</sup>	89 <sup>M</sup>		82.0 <sup>J</sup>	84 <sup>M</sup>	→	340	230		56.3 <sup>M</sup>	
Syrian Arab Republic	51.0 <sup>H</sup>				76 <sup>H</sup>		200	160	36.1 <sup>H</sup>		
Tonga					92 <sup>O</sup>						
Tunisia	79.0 <sup>I-J</sup>			80.5 <sup>I-J</sup>	90 <sup>O</sup>	→	70	120	60.0 <sup>I</sup>		
Turkey	62.3 <sup>H</sup>	67 <sup>M</sup>	→	75.9 <sup>H</sup>	83 <sup>R</sup>	→	55	70		63.9 <sup>M</sup>	
Vanuatu				89.1 <sup>J</sup>			32	130			
Viet Nam	70.6 <sup>L</sup>	70 <sup>O</sup>		77.1 <sup>L</sup>	85 <sup>O</sup>	→	95	130	75.3 <sup>L</sup>	78.5 <sup>O</sup>	→
West Bank and Gaza				94.9 <sup>K</sup>			120	100			
<b>Countries below average</b>											
Bolivia	52.5 <sup>I</sup>	84 <sup>P</sup>	→	42.3 <sup>I</sup>	65 <sup>O</sup>	→	550	420	30.3 <sup>O</sup>		
Comoros	84.5 <sup>K</sup>	74 <sup>O</sup>	←	51.6 <sup>K</sup>	62 <sup>O</sup>	→	570	480	21.0 <sup>K</sup>	25.7 <sup>O</sup>	→
Congo, Rep.							1100	510			
Côte d'Ivoire	83.2 <sup>I</sup>	84 <sup>M-N</sup>		45.4 <sup>I</sup>	63 <sup>O</sup>	→	1200	690	11.4 <sup>I</sup>	15.0 <sup>M-N</sup>	→
Djibouti					61 <sup>R</sup>		520	730			
Ecuador	74.7 <sup>I</sup>	56 <sup>N</sup>	←	63.5 <sup>I</sup>	69 <sup>N</sup>	→	210	130		65.8 <sup>N</sup>	
Egypt	39.1 <sup>J</sup>	54 <sup>O</sup>	→	46.3 <sup>J</sup>	69 <sup>R</sup>	→	170	84	45.5 <sup>F</sup>	56.1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Gambia		92 <sup>O</sup>			55 <sup>O</sup>		1100	540	11.8 <sup>F</sup>	9.6 <sup>O</sup>	←
Ghana	85.7 <sup>H</sup>	90 <sup>R</sup>	→	43.8 <sup>H</sup>	47 <sup>R</sup>	→	590	540		22.0 <sup>H</sup>	
Guatemala	52.5 <sup>J</sup>	86 <sup>M-N</sup>	→	34.3 <sup>J</sup>	41 <sup>R</sup>	→	270	240		38.2 <sup>N</sup>	
Honduras	84.2 <sup>K</sup>			54.1 <sup>K</sup>	56 <sup>P</sup>	→	220	110	46.7 <sup>G</sup>		
India	49.1 <sup>G-H</sup>	65 <sup>M-N</sup>	→	34.2 <sup>H</sup>	43 <sup>O</sup>	→	440	540		48.2 <sup>N</sup>	
Iraq	78.0 <sup>K</sup>				72 <sup>O</sup>		370	250	13.7 <sup>O</sup>		
Kenya	94.9 <sup>H</sup>	88 <sup>R</sup>	←	45.4 <sup>H</sup>	42 <sup>R</sup>	←	1300	1000		39.0 <sup>M</sup>	
Lesotho	87.6 <sup>J</sup>	91 <sup>P</sup>	→	49.6 <sup>H</sup>	60 <sup>O</sup>	→	530	550	23.2 <sup>G</sup>	30.4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Liberia					51 <sup>O</sup>		1000	760	6.4 <sup>A</sup>		
Madagascar		91 <sup>L</sup>		47.3 <sup>L</sup>	46 <sup>O</sup>	←	580	550	16.7 <sup>G</sup>	18.8 <sup>O</sup>	→
Malawi	89.7 <sup>G</sup>	94 <sup>O</sup>	→		61 <sup>O</sup>		580	1800	13.0 <sup>G</sup>	30.6 <sup>O</sup>	→
Morocco	44.7 <sup>J</sup>	32 <sup>G</sup>	→	39.6 <sup>J</sup>			390	220	50.3 <sup>J</sup>		
Myanmar					56 <sup>L</sup>		170	360		32.7 <sup>L</sup>	
Peru	67.3 <sup>K</sup>	85 <sup>O</sup>	→	49.6 <sup>K</sup>	59 <sup>O</sup>	→	240	410	59.0 <sup>G</sup>		
Senegal	73.6 <sup>G-H</sup>	82 <sup>N</sup>	→	46.6 <sup>L</sup>	58 <sup>O</sup>	→	1200	690		12.9 <sup>L</sup>	
Sudan	74.6 <sup>G-H</sup>			86.3 <sup>H</sup>	87 <sup>O</sup>		1500	590	8.3 <sup>H</sup>		
Swaziland					70 <sup>O</sup>		370	370		27.7 <sup>O</sup>	
Tajikistan		75 <sup>O</sup>		79.0 <sup>K</sup>	71 <sup>O</sup>	←	120	100		33.9 <sup>O</sup>	
Tanzania	49.5 <sup>K</sup>	96 <sup>N</sup>	→	38.2 <sup>K</sup>	36 <sup>N</sup>	←	1100	1500	10.4 <sup>F</sup>	25.4 <sup>N</sup>	→
Togo		78 <sup>M</sup>		50.5 <sup>M</sup>	49 <sup>O</sup>	←	980	570	23.5 <sup>M</sup>	25.7 <sup>O</sup>	→
Uganda	91.2 <sup>J</sup>	92 <sup>O-P</sup>		37.8 <sup>J</sup>	39 <sup>O</sup>	→	1100	880	4.9 <sup>O</sup>	22.8 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Zambia	95.6 <sup>K</sup>	94 <sup>P-O</sup>	←	46.5 <sup>K</sup>	43 <sup>P-O</sup>	←	870	750	15.2 <sup>G</sup>	34.2 <sup>P-O</sup>	→
Zimbabwe	93.1 <sup>I</sup>	82 <sup>N</sup>	←	69.2 <sup>I</sup>	73 <sup>N</sup>	→	610	1100		53.5 <sup>N</sup>	

→ Significant progress  
→ Slight progress  
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← Slight regression  
← Significant regression

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J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002; R: 2003.



	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL			ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (PER 100,000 LIVE BIRTHS)*		CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN AGED 15-49		
	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression	1995 Model	2000	Initial data** (%)	Latest available data (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>											
Afghanistan		52 <sup>R</sup>		12.0 <sup>J+Q</sup>	14 <sup>R</sup>	→	820	1900		4.8 <sup>O</sup>	
Angola					45 <sup>P</sup>		1300	1700	8.1 <sup>K</sup>	6.2 <sup>P</sup>	←
Bangladesh	25.7 <sup>H+I</sup>	39 <sup>N-O</sup>	→	9.5 <sup>H+I</sup>	14 <sup>R</sup>	→	600	380	39.9 <sup>F</sup>	53.8 <sup>N-O</sup>	→
Benin	80.3 <sup>K</sup>	88 <sup>P</sup>	→	59.8 <sup>K</sup>	66 <sup>P</sup>	→	880	850	16.4 <sup>K</sup>	18.6 <sup>P</sup>	→
Bhutan				15.0 <sup>I</sup>	24 <sup>O</sup>	→	500	420	18.8 <sup>I</sup>		
Burkina Faso	58.6 <sup>H</sup>	72 <sup>R</sup>	→	41.5 <sup>H</sup>	38 <sup>R</sup>	←	1400	1000	7.9 <sup>H</sup>	11.9 <sup>M+N</sup>	→
Burundi	79.0 <sup>B</sup>	93 <sup>P</sup>	→		25 <sup>O</sup>		1900	1000		15.7 <sup>O</sup>	
Cambodia	34.3 <sup>M</sup>	44 <sup>O</sup>	→	34.0 <sup>M</sup>	32 <sup>O</sup>	←	590	450	12.5 <sup>J</sup>	23.8 <sup>O</sup>	→
Cameroon		77 <sup>M</sup>		55.0 <sup>M</sup>	60 <sup>O</sup>	→	720	730		19.3 <sup>M</sup>	
Central African Republic	75.0 <sup>I</sup>			45.9 <sup>J+J</sup>	44 <sup>O</sup>	←	1200	1100	14.8 <sup>J</sup>	27.9 <sup>O</sup>	→
Chad	23.4 <sup>K-L</sup>	42 <sup>O</sup>	→	15.0 <sup>K-L</sup>	16 <sup>O</sup>	→	1500	1100		7.9 <sup>O</sup>	
Congo, Dem. Rep.		72			61 <sup>P</sup>		940	990	7.7 <sup>F</sup>	31.4 <sup>P</sup>	→
Equatorial Guinea	37.0 <sup>I</sup>				65 <sup>P</sup>		1400	880			
Eritrea	48.9 <sup>J</sup>				28 <sup>O</sup>		1100	630	5.0 <sup>J</sup>	8.0 <sup>O</sup>	→
Ethiopia		27 <sup>O</sup>			6 <sup>O</sup>		1800	850	4.3 <sup>E</sup>	8.1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Guinea	57.6 <sup>G</sup>	74 <sup>N</sup>	→	30.5 <sup>G</sup>	35 <sup>N</sup>	→	1200	740	1.7 <sup>H</sup>	6.2 <sup>N</sup>	→
Guinea-Bissau		89 <sup>P</sup>			35 <sup>O</sup>		910	1100		7.6 <sup>O</sup>	
Haiti	67.7 <sup>I+J</sup>	79 <sup>O</sup>	→	19.5 <sup>I+J</sup>	24 <sup>O</sup>	→	1100	680	10.2 <sup>D</sup>		
Lao PDR		44 <sup>P-O</sup>			19 <sup>P</sup>		650	650	18.6 <sup>H</sup>	32.2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Mali	46.9 <sup>J+K</sup>	53 <sup>P</sup>	→	23.7 <sup>J+K</sup>	41 <sup>P</sup>	→	630	1200		8.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Mauritania	48.0 <sup>E-F</sup>	63 <sup>O-P</sup>	→	40.0 <sup>F</sup>	57 <sup>O-P</sup>	→	870	1000	3.3 <sup>F</sup>	8.0 <sup>O-P</sup>	→
Mozambique		71 <sup>L</sup>			48 <sup>L</sup>		980	1000		5.6 <sup>L</sup>	
Nepal	23.6 <sup>K</sup>	49 <sup>P</sup>	→	9.0 <sup>K</sup>	11 <sup>P</sup>	→	830	740	22.7 <sup>F</sup>	39.3 <sup>P</sup>	→
Niger	30.1 <sup>G</sup>	39 <sup>M</sup>	→	17.6 <sup>M</sup>	16 <sup>O</sup>	←	920	1600	4.4 <sup>G</sup>	14.0 <sup>O</sup>	→
Nigeria	56.5 <sup>E</sup>	61 <sup>R</sup>	→	30.8 <sup>E</sup>	35 <sup>R</sup>	→	1100	800	6.0 <sup>F</sup>	15.3 <sup>N</sup>	→
Pakistan		36 <sup>K-L</sup>		18.0 <sup>K-L</sup>	20 <sup>M</sup>	→	200	500	11.8 <sup>F</sup>	27.6 <sup>O</sup>	→
Rwanda	94.4 <sup>G</sup>	93 <sup>P</sup>		25.8 <sup>G</sup>	31 <sup>O</sup>	→	2300	1400	21.2 <sup>G</sup>	13.2 <sup>O</sup>	←
Sierra Leone		82 <sup>P</sup>			42 <sup>O</sup>		2100	2000		4.3 <sup>O</sup>	
Somalia					34 <sup>N</sup>		1600	1100			
Timor-Leste					24 <sup>O</sup>		850	660			
Yemen	25.8 <sup>F-G</sup>	34 <sup>L</sup>	→	15.9 <sup>G</sup>	22 <sup>L</sup>	→	850	570		20.8 <sup>L</sup>	
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>											
Aruba				97.0 <sup>E</sup>							
British Virgin Islands	100.0 <sup>E</sup>			100.0 <sup>H</sup>							
Cayman Islands				100.0 <sup>E</sup>							
Hong Kong (China)									86.2 <sup>G</sup>		
Iceland							16	0			
Macao (China)							20				
Niue				100.0 <sup>K</sup>							
St. Kitts and Nevis	100.0 <sup>E</sup>			100.0 <sup>J</sup>							
St. Lucia	100.0 <sup>E</sup>			100.0 <sup>J</sup>							
Turks and Caicos Islands	100.0 <sup>M</sup>			100.0 <sup>M</sup>							
Virgin Islands (USA)				100.0 <sup>E</sup>							
<p><b>UDHR:</b> Universal Declaration of Human Rights  <b>CESCR:</b> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  <b>CEDAW:</b> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  <b>CRC:</b> Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p><b>Sources:</b>  <b>Women aged 15-49 attended at least once during pregnancy:</b> UNICEF End Decade Website Database (<a href="http://www.childinfo.org">www.childinfo.org</a>); Reproductive Health Indicator Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (<a href="http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/">www.who.int/reproductive-health/</a>) and The World Health Report 2005, WHO (<a href="http://www.who.int/whr/2005/">www.who.int/whr/2005/</a>).  <b>Births attended by skilled health personnel:</b> WHO End Decade Website Database (<a href="http://www.childinfo.org">www.childinfo.org</a>); Reproductive Health Indicator Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (<a href="http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/">www.who.int/reproductive-health/</a>) and The World Health Report 2005, WHO (<a href="http://www.who.int/whr/2005/">www.who.int/whr/2005/</a>).  <b>Maternal mortality ratio:</b> Reproductive Health Indicators Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (<a href="http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/">www.who.int/reproductive-health/</a>).  <b>Contraceptive use:</b> The UN Statistics Division Website (<a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/">unstats.un.org/unsd/</a>) and UN Population Information Network website (<a href="http://www.un.org/popin/">www.un.org/popin/</a>).</p>											
<p>→ <b>Significant progress</b>  → <b>Slight progress</b>     <b>Stagnant</b>  ← <b>Slight regression</b>  ← <b>Significant regression</b></p> <p><b>Notes:</b> * Due to changes in the model of estimation, 1995 and 2000 data are not comparable.  ** Initial data in this table refer to 1995 or around 1995 in order to monitor progress from Beijing to date.  Data source year: <b>A:</b> 1986; <b>B:</b> 1987; <b>C:</b> 1988; <b>D:</b> 1989; <b>E:</b> 1990; <b>F:</b> 1991; <b>G:</b> 1992; <b>H:</b> 1993; <b>I:</b> 1994; <b>J:</b> 1995; <b>K:</b> 1996; <b>L:</b> 1997; <b>M:</b> 1998; <b>N:</b> 1999; <b>O:</b> 2000; <b>P:</b> 2001; <b>Q:</b> 2002; <b>R:</b> 2003.</p>											

## INFORMATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The governments of the world agreed on...

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 19, 1948.

"We recognize that education, knowledge, information and communication are at the core of human progress, endeavour and well-being... The rapid progress of these technologies opens completely new opportunities to attain higher levels of development."

World Summit on the Information Society, 2003.

### HUMAN RIGHTS:

The right to information, research and professional training is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 19 & 27 CEDAW - Art. 10 & 14  
CERD - Art. 5 CRC - Art. 17 & 28  
CESCR - Art. 13 & 15






### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS:

Information, communication and research are considered in:

World Summit for Social Development - Commitment 6  
Millennium Development Goals - Goal 8

	INTERNET USERS (per 1,000 people)			PERSONAL COMPUTERS (per 1,000 people)			TELEPHONE MAINLINES (per 1,000 people)			SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (PER MILLION PEOPLE)			INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATIO, (GROSS)			
	1995	2002	Progress or regression	1990	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression	Initial data	Latest available data	Progress or regression	1992	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression	
<b>Countries in better situation</b>																			
Australia	28	482	→	150	565	→	456	539	→	3365 <sup>L</sup>	3439 <sup>P</sup>	→	7.2	6.4		35	65 <sup>D</sup>	→	
Austria	19	409	→	65	369	→	418	489	→		2313 <sup>M</sup>	→	5.0	5.3		35	57 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Belgium	10	328	→	88	241	→	393	494	→	253 <sup>L</sup>	2953 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.5	5.5		40	58 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Bermuda	67	464 <sup>O</sup>	→	317 <sup>K</sup>	523	→	617	862	→		587 <sup>M</sup>	→					62 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Canada	43	513	→	107	487	→	565	635	→	3059 <sup>L</sup>	2978 <sup>O</sup>	←	6.8	5.9		95	59 <sup>P</sup>	←	
Croatia	5	180	→	15 <sup>G</sup>	174	→	172	417	→		1187 <sup>O</sup>	→		8.0			24	36 <sup>O</sup>	→
Czech Republic	15	256	→	12	177	→	158	362	→	1257 <sup>L</sup>	1466 <sup>O</sup>	→	6.3	7.2		16	30 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Denmark	38	513	→	115	577	→	567	689	→	3186 <sup>L</sup>	3476 <sup>O</sup>	→	6.4	5.8		36	59 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Estonia	27	328	→	68 <sup>L</sup>	210	→	204	351	→		2079 <sup>L</sup>	1947 <sup>P</sup>	←				26	59 <sup>P</sup>	→
Faeroe Islands	23 <sup>F</sup>	524	→		67 <sup>D</sup>	→	481	482				→							
Finland	137	509	→	100	442	→	534	523		4114 <sup>M</sup>	711 <sup>O</sup>	←	4.7	5.8	→	49	85 <sup>P</sup>	→	
France	16	314	→	71	347	→	495	569	→	2658 <sup>L</sup>	2718 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.8	5.2		40	54 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Germany	18	412	→	90	431	→	441	651	→	281 <sup>L</sup>	3153 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.4	5.2		34	46 <sup>N</sup>	→	
Hong Kong (China)	32	430	→	47	422	→	450	565	→	93 <sup>K</sup>	1998 <sup>M</sup>	→	5.0	4.6		19	27 <sup>M</sup>	→	
Iceland	112	648	→	39	451	→	510	653	→	4902 <sup>M</sup>	6639 <sup>P</sup>	→	6.3 <sup>I</sup>	7.4 <sup>A</sup>	→	25	48 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Israel	9	301	→	63	243	→	343	467	→	1332 <sup>L</sup>	1563 <sup>M</sup>	→	4.6	6.4	→	34	53 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Italy	5	352	→	36	231	→	388	481	→	1333 <sup>L</sup>	1128 <sup>O</sup>	←	3.7	4.4		32	50 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Japan	16	449	→	60	382	→	441	558	→	4909 <sup>L</sup>	5321 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.7	5.3		30	48 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Korea, Rep.	8	552	→	37	556	→	306	489	→	2193 <sup>L</sup>	288 <sup>O</sup>	←	4.9	6.5	→	39	82 <sup>O</sup>	→	
Latvia	8 <sup>F</sup>	133	→	3 <sup>J</sup>	172	→	234	301	→	1136 <sup>L</sup>	1078 <sup>O</sup>	←				25	64 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Luxembourg	16	370	→	373 <sup>L</sup>	594	→	481	797	→			→				6	10 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Monaco		494	→			→	815	1040	→		676 <sup>M</sup>	→							
Netherlands	65	506	→	94	467	→	464	618	→	2219 <sup>L</sup>	2572 <sup>O</sup>	→	6.7	5.8		40	55 <sup>P</sup>	→	
New Zealand	50	484	→	97 <sup>G</sup>	414	→	434	448		1419 <sup>E</sup>	2197 <sup>M</sup>	→	9.1	7.4	←	40	72 <sup>O</sup>	→	
Norway	64	503	→	145 <sup>G</sup>	528	→	502	734	→	2876 <sup>E</sup>	4377 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.6	4.1	←	42	70 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Portugal	15	194	→	27	135	→	243	421	→	1383 <sup>M</sup>	1754 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.8	5.8	→	23	50 <sup>P</sup>	→	
San Marino	14	531	→	725 <sup>O</sup>	760	→	445	763	→			→							
Singapore	28	504	→	66	622	→	346	463	→	1211 <sup>C</sup>	4052 <sup>O</sup>	→	6.8	6.5		19	44 <sup>M</sup>	→	
Slovenia	29	376	→	32 <sup>G</sup>	301	→	211	506	→	2255 <sup>L</sup>	2258 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.8	4.9	→	25	61 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Spain	4	156	→	28	196	→	316	506	→	1304 <sup>L</sup>	1948 <sup>O</sup>	→	4.0	4.5		37	57 <sup>P</sup>	→	
St. Kitts and Nevis	20 <sup>F</sup>	213	→	113 <sup>N</sup>	191	→	237	500	→			→							
Sweden	51	573	→	105	621	→	681	736	→	4164 <sup>M</sup>	5186 <sup>P</sup>	→	7.6	6.5	←	32	70 <sup>P</sup>	→	
Switzerland	36	351	→	87	709	→	574	744	→	2452 <sup>E</sup>	3592 <sup>P</sup>	→	7.6	6.2	←	26	42 <sup>P</sup>	→	
United Kingdom	19	423	→	108	406	→	441	591	→		2477 <sup>L</sup>	→	7.2	6.1	←	30	59 <sup>P</sup>	→	
United States of America	95	551	→	218	659	→	547	646	→	3882 <sup>O</sup>		→	7.5	6.5		75	71 <sup>P</sup>	←	
<b>Countries above average</b>																			
Aruba	27 <sup>F</sup>	226 <sup>O</sup>	→			→	282	350 <sup>D</sup>	→			→				26 <sup>M</sup>	29 <sup>O</sup>	→	
Bahamas	10	192	→			→	274	406	→			→				19	25 <sup>M</sup>	→	
<p>→ Significant progress                      → Slight progress                         Stagnant                      ← Slight regression                      ← Significant regression</p>																			
<p>Notes: Figure 0 means a value under 0.5. Data source year: A: 1985; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1990; G: 1991; H: 1992; I: 1993; J: 1994; K: 1995; L: 1996; M: 1997; N: 1998; O: 1999; P: 2000; Q: 2001.</p>																			

	INTERNET USERS (per 1,000 people)			PERSONAL COMPUTERS (per 1,000 people)			TELEPHONE MAINLINES (per 1,000 people)			SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (PER MILLION PEOPLE)			INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATIO, (GROSS)		
	1995	2002	Progress or regression	1990	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression	Initial data	Latest available data	Progress or regression	1992	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression
Bahrain	4	247	→	52 <sup>K</sup>	160	→	191	263	→							18	21 <sup>N</sup>	→
Barbados	0	112	→	57 <sup>K</sup>	104	→	281	494	→							27	39 <sup>O</sup>	→
Belarus	0	82	→				154	299	→	2247 <sup>L</sup>	1893 <sup>M</sup>	←				48	62 <sup>O</sup>	→
Bulgaria	1	81	→	11 <sup>H</sup>	52	→	242	368	→	1765 <sup>L</sup>	1167 <sup>P</sup>	←	2.1	6.9	→	31	40 <sup>P</sup>	→
Chile	4	238	→	9	119	→	66	230	→	310 <sup>E</sup>	419 <sup>O</sup>	→	4.6	5.7	→	21	37 <sup>P</sup>	→
Costa Rica	4	193	→	69 <sup>M</sup>	197	→	101	251	→	530 <sup>D</sup>						27	21 <sup>O</sup>	←
Cyprus	5	294	→	9	270	→	419	688	→	6989 <sup>L</sup>	400 <sup>P</sup>	←				13	22 <sup>P</sup>	→
Dominica	5	160	→	65 <sup>O</sup>	90	→	164	304	→									
Greece	8	155	→	17	82	→	389	491	→	1038 <sup>M</sup>	14 <sup>O</sup>	←	2.4	4.8	→	36	61 <sup>P</sup>	→
Grenada	3 <sup>F</sup>	142	→	108 <sup>N</sup>	132	→	177	316	→									
Ireland	11	271	→	86	421	→	281	502	→	1873 <sup>L</sup>	219 <sup>O</sup>	←	5.5	4.0	←	29	47 <sup>P</sup>	→
Jordan	0	58	→	7 <sup>J</sup>	38	→	72	127	→		1948 <sup>M</sup>					16	31 <sup>O</sup>	→
Lithuania	3 <sup>F</sup>	144	→	5 <sup>J</sup>	110	→	212	270	→	2074 <sup>L</sup>	2303 <sup>O</sup>	→				34	59 <sup>P</sup>	→
Macao (China)	3	260	→	137 <sup>O</sup>	208	→	255	399	→	27 <sup>O</sup>	41 <sup>P</sup>	→				25	66 <sup>O</sup>	→
Malaysia	1	320	→	8	147	→	89	190	→	92 <sup>L</sup>	160 <sup>N</sup>	→	4.7	7.3	→	7	26 <sup>O</sup>	→
Malta	2	209	→	14	255	→	360	523	→	96 <sup>D</sup>						13	25 <sup>P</sup>	→
Poland	6	230	→	8	106	→	86	295 <sup>O</sup>	→	1359 <sup>L</sup>	1473 <sup>O</sup>	→	1.9	5.2	→	22	56 <sup>P</sup>	→
Puerto Rico	1	156 <sup>O</sup>	→				279	346 <sup>O</sup>	→							45	41 <sup>M</sup>	←
Russian Federation	1	41	→	3	89	→	140	242	→	3801 <sup>L</sup>	3494 <sup>O</sup>	←	1.5	3.7	→	52	68 <sup>O</sup>	→
Serbia and Montenegro	2 <sup>F</sup>	60	→	12 <sup>I</sup>	27	→	166	233	→	1337 <sup>G</sup>	2389 <sup>O</sup>	→				18	36 <sup>P</sup>	→
Seychelles	7 <sup>F</sup>	145	→	120 <sup>N</sup>	161	→	124	269	→									
Slovakia	5	160	→	28 <sup>J</sup>	180	→	135	268	→	1863 <sup>L</sup>	1774 <sup>O</sup>	←	4.0	5.8	→	19	30 <sup>P</sup>	→
South Africa	7	68	→	7	73	→	93	107	→	288 <sup>E</sup>	992 <sup>I</sup>	→	5.4	9.2	→	13	15 <sup>O</sup>	→
St. Lucia	3	82 <sup>O</sup>	→	0 <sup>I</sup>	150	→	129	320	→							25	25 <sup>N</sup>	→
United Arab Emirates	1	337	→	29 <sup>H</sup>	129	→	206	314	→							9	10 <sup>N</sup>	→
<b>Countries below average</b>																		
Argentina	1	112	→	7	82	→	93	219	→	350 <sup>D</sup>	684 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.4	3.9	→	39	57 <sup>O</sup>	→
Armenia	0	16	→	2 <sup>M</sup>	16	→	157	143	→	1547 <sup>M</sup>	1313 <sup>P</sup>	←				20	26 <sup>O</sup>	→
Azerbaijan	0	37	→				86	113	→	2791 <sup>L</sup>	2799 <sup>M</sup>	→				24	23 <sup>O</sup>	→
Belize	0	119	→	29 <sup>K</sup>	138	→	92	124	→							1	1 <sup>M</sup>	→
Bolivia	1	32	→	2 <sup>G</sup>	23	→	28	68	→	74 <sup>N</sup>	123 <sup>O</sup>	→				21	39 <sup>O</sup>	→
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0 <sup>F</sup>	26	→				140 <sup>H</sup>	237	→							15	16 <sup>M</sup>	→
Brazil	1	82	→	3	75	→	65	223	→		323 <sup>P</sup>		3.5	8.3	→	11	18 <sup>O</sup>	→
Brunei Darussalam	11	102 <sup>O</sup>	→	11 <sup>H</sup>	77	→	136	256	→							4	13 <sup>O</sup>	→
China	0	46	→	0	28	→	6	167	→	459 <sup>L</sup>	584 <sup>O</sup>	→	1.9	5.8	→	3	13 <sup>P</sup>	→
Colombia	2	46	→	9 <sup>H</sup>	49	→	69	179	→	83 <sup>L</sup>	101 <sup>P</sup>	→	4.4	6.7	→	13	24 <sup>O</sup>	→
Dominican Republic	0	36	→				48	110	→							20	23 <sup>M</sup>	→
Fiji	0	61	→	40 <sup>N</sup>	49	→	58	119	→	50 <sup>B</sup>						8	14 <sup>M</sup>	→
French Polynesia	1 <sup>F</sup>	143	→	224 <sup>O</sup>	285	→	194	214	→							1	3 <sup>M</sup>	→
Georgia	0	15	→	19 <sup>O</sup>	32	→	99	131	→	3186 <sup>L</sup>	2421 <sup>O</sup>	←				37	36 <sup>O</sup>	→
Guyana	1 <sup>F</sup>	142	→	24 <sup>N</sup>	27	→	20	92	→							6	12 <sup>M</sup>	→
Hungary	7	158	→	10	108	→	96	361	→	1021 <sup>L</sup>	144 <sup>O</sup>	←	3.7	6.4	→	14	40 <sup>P</sup>	→
Iran, Islamic Rep.	0	48	→	14 <sup>J</sup>	75	→	40	187	→	68 <sup>A</sup>	590 <sup>J</sup>	→				10	19 <sup>O</sup>	→
Jamaica	1	229	→	3 <sup>J</sup>	54	→	45	170	→	8 <sup>B</sup>						7	17 <sup>O</sup>	→
Kazakhstan	0	16	→				80	130	→	888 <sup>L</sup>	716 <sup>M</sup>	←				40	39 <sup>O</sup>	→
Kuwait	2	106	→	5	121	→	188	204	→	235 <sup>L</sup>	212 <sup>P</sup>	←				12 <sup>G</sup>	21 <sup>N</sup>	→
Kyrgyzstan	1 <sup>H</sup>	30	→		13	→	72	77	→		581 <sup>M</sup>					14	44 <sup>O</sup>	→
Lebanon	1	117	→	14 <sup>J</sup>	81	→	155	199	→							29	45 <sup>O</sup>	→
Libya	1 <sup>I</sup>	23	→		23	→	48	118 <sup>O</sup>	→		361 <sup>P</sup>					15	58 <sup>O</sup>	→
Macedonia, FYR	0	48	→				148	271	→	1333 <sup>K</sup>	387 <sup>O</sup>	←				17	24 <sup>P</sup>	→
Maldives	2 <sup>F</sup>	53	→	12 <sup>K</sup>	71	→	29	102	→									
Mauritius	2 <sup>F</sup>	99	→	4	116	→	52	270	→	184 <sup>E</sup>	360 <sup>H</sup>	→				4	11 <sup>O</sup>	→
Mexico	1	98	→	8	82	→	65	147	→	215 <sup>L</sup>	225 <sup>O</sup>	→	3.2	4.4	→	15	20 <sup>P</sup>	→
Moldova	0	34	→	2 <sup>K</sup>	18	→	106	161	→	250 <sup>L</sup>	329 <sup>M</sup>	→				36	29 <sup>O</sup>	←
Netherlands Antilles	2 <sup>F</sup>	9 <sup>O</sup>	→				247	372 <sup>O</sup>	→							14 <sup>N</sup>	14 <sup>O</sup>	→
New Caledonia	0	134	→				168	232	→	503 <sup>A</sup>						6	5 <sup>M</sup>	→
Panama	1	41 <sup>O</sup>	→	27 <sup>N</sup>	38	→	93	122	→	117 <sup>L</sup>	95 <sup>O</sup>	←				21	34 <sup>O</sup>	→
Peru	0	93	→	15 <sup>K</sup>	43	→	26	66	→	231 <sup>L</sup>	229 <sup>M</sup>	←				30	26 <sup>M</sup>	←
Qatar	2	115	→	47 <sup>J</sup>	180	→	190	289	→	591 <sup>B</sup>						27	23 <sup>O</sup>	→
Romania	1	83	→	2	69	→	102	194	→	2577 <sup>E</sup>	879 <sup>O</sup>	←	1.0	4.3	→	10	27 <sup>P</sup>	→
Saudi Arabia	0	62	→	24	130	→	77	144	→							12	22 <sup>O</sup>	→

 Significant progress  
 Slight progress  
 Stagnant  
 Slight regression  
 Significant regression

**Notes:** Figure 0 means a value under 0.5. Data source year: **A:** 1985; **B:** 1986; **C:** 1987; **D:** 1988; **E:** 1989; **F:** 1990; **G:** 1991; **H:** 1992; **I:** 1993; **J:** 1994; **K:** 1995; **L:** 1996; **M:** 1997; **N:** 1998; **O:** 1999; **P:** 2000; **Q:** 2001.

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	1995	2002	Progress or regression	1990	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression	Initial data	Latest available data	Progress or regression	1992	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1	60	→	89 <sup>N</sup>	120	→	124	234	→									
Suriname	1	42	→		45 <sup>K</sup>	→	92	164	→							7 <sup>N</sup>	12 <sup>O</sup>	→
Thailand	1	78	→	4	40	→	24	105	→	102 <sup>L</sup>	74 <sup>M</sup>	←	2.9	4.7	→	17	37 <sup>O</sup>	→
Trinidad and Tobago	2	106	→	4 <sup>G</sup>	80	→	141	250	→		145 <sup>N</sup>					7	7 <sup>O</sup>	→
Turkey	1	73	→	5	45	→	122	281	→		290 <sup>L</sup>		2.7	4.6	→	13	25 <sup>O</sup>	→
Ukraine	0	18	→	2	19	→	136	216	→		2882 <sup>L</sup>					47	57 <sup>O</sup>	→
Uruguay	3	119 <sup>O</sup>	→	22 <sup>K</sup>	110 <sup>K</sup>	→	134	280	→		219 <sup>O</sup>					30	38 <sup>O</sup>	→
Venezuela	1	51	→	10	61	→	76	113	→		187 <sup>O</sup>		3.6	4.4	→	29	18 <sup>O</sup>	←
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>																		
Afghanistan		0					2	1	→							2	2 <sup>M</sup>	→
Albania	0	4	→	2 <sup>L</sup>	12	→	13	71	→							7	15 <sup>P</sup>	→
Algeria	0	16	→	1	8	→	32	61	→							11	15 <sup>N</sup>	→
Angola	0 <sup>F</sup>	3	→	1 <sup>M</sup>	2	→	8	6	→							1	1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Bangladesh	0 <sup>G</sup>	2	→	0 <sup>M</sup>	3	→	2	5	→	50 <sup>I</sup>	51 <sup>K</sup>	→				4	6 <sup>O</sup>	→
Benin	0 <sup>F</sup>	7	→	1 <sup>K</sup>	2	→	3	9	→	174 <sup>E</sup>						3	4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Bhutan	1 <sup>I</sup>	14	→	4 <sup>N</sup>	14	→	4	28	→									
Botswana	1	30 <sup>O</sup>	→	7 <sup>J</sup>	41	→	21	87	→							3	5 <sup>O</sup>	→
Burkina Faso	0 <sup>F</sup>	2	→	0	2	→	2	5	→	15 <sup>L</sup>	16 <sup>M</sup>	→				1	1 <sup>M</sup>	→
Burundi	0 <sup>F</sup>	1	→	1	1	→	1	3	→	21 <sup>E</sup>						1	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Cambodia	0 <sup>G</sup>	2	→	0 <sup>K</sup>	2	→	0	3	→							1	3 <sup>O</sup>	→
Cameroon	0 <sup>G</sup>	4	→	2 <sup>K</sup>	6	→	3	7	→	3 <sup>L</sup>	3 <sup>O</sup>	→				3	5 <sup>O</sup>	→
Cape Verde	2 <sup>G</sup>	36	→	4 <sup>M</sup>	80	→	24	160	→								4 <sup>O</sup>	
Central African Republic	0 <sup>F</sup>	1	→	1 <sup>N</sup>	2	→	2	2	→	55 <sup>F</sup>	47 <sup>L</sup>	←				2	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Chad	0 <sup>G</sup>	2	→	1 <sup>N</sup>	2	→	1	2	→							1	1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Comoros	0 <sup>I</sup>	4	→	0	6	→	8	13	→							0	1 <sup>O</sup>	→
Congo, Dem. Rep.	0 <sup>I</sup>	1	→				1	0	→							2	1 <sup>N</sup>	→
Congo, Rep.	0 <sup>F</sup>	2	→	3 <sup>N</sup>	4	→	7	7	→	54 <sup>L</sup>	33 <sup>P</sup>	←				5	4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Côte d'Ivoire	0 <sup>F</sup>	5	→	1 <sup>L</sup>	9	→	6	20	→							3	7 <sup>N</sup>	→
Cuba	0 <sup>F</sup>	11 <sup>O</sup>	→	5 <sup>M</sup>	32	→	31	51 <sup>O</sup>	→	1145 <sup>E</sup>	489 <sup>O</sup>	←				21	27 <sup>O</sup>	→
Djibouti	0	7	→	2	15	→	11	15	→								0 <sup>G</sup>	1 <sup>O</sup>
Ecuador	0	42	→	2 <sup>G</sup>	31	→	48	110	→	84 <sup>L</sup>	83 <sup>M</sup>	←				20	18 <sup>M</sup>	→
Egypt	0	28	→	3 <sup>J</sup>	17	→	30	110	→	469	493 <sup>G</sup>	→	1.9	3.3	→	16	37 <sup>N</sup>	→
El Salvador	1 <sup>F</sup>	46	→	16 <sup>O</sup>	25	→	24	103	→	15 <sup>L</sup>	47 <sup>P</sup>	→				16	17 <sup>O</sup>	→
Equatorial Guinea	0 <sup>G</sup>	4	→	2 <sup>N</sup>	7	→	4	17	→								3 <sup>O</sup>	
Eritrea	0 <sup>G</sup>	2	→	2 <sup>O</sup>	3	→	4 <sup>N</sup>	9	→							1 <sup>J</sup>	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Ethiopia	0 <sup>F</sup>	1	→	1 <sup>N</sup>	1	→	3	5	→							1	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Gabon	0 <sup>G</sup>	19	→	1 <sup>I</sup>	19	→	22	25	→								7 <sup>N</sup>	→
Gambia	0	18	→	0 <sup>J</sup>	14	→	7	28	→							2 <sup>J</sup>	2 <sup>M</sup>	→
Ghana	0 <sup>F</sup>	8	→	0	4	→	3	13	→							1	3 <sup>O</sup>	→
Guatemala	0	33	→	1 <sup>I</sup>	14	→	21	71	→	103 <sup>O</sup>						8	8 <sup>M</sup>	→
Guinea	0	5	→	1 <sup>K</sup>	5	→	2	3	→							1	1 <sup>M</sup>	→
Guinea-Bissau	0 <sup>G</sup>	4	→				6	9	→							1	0 <sup>O</sup>	→
Haiti	0 <sup>F</sup>	10	→				7	16	→							1	1 <sup>M</sup>	→
Honduras	0	25	→	3 <sup>M</sup>	14	→	17	48	→		73 <sup>P</sup>					9	14 <sup>O</sup>	→
India	0	16	→	0	7	→	6	40	→		157 <sup>L</sup>		1.7	2.8	→	6	11 <sup>P</sup>	→
Indonesia	0	38	→	1	12	→	6	37	→	130 <sup>A</sup>			1.7	1.5	→	9	15 <sup>O</sup>	→
Iraq		1	→		8	→	39	28	→							13	14 <sup>O</sup>	→
Kenya	0	13	→	0	6	→	8	10	→							2	4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Kiribati	6 <sup>N</sup>	23	→	7 <sup>N</sup>	11	→	17	51	→									
Lao PDR	0 <sup>H</sup>	3	→	1 <sup>L</sup>	3	→	2	11	→							1	4 <sup>O</sup>	→
Lesotho	0 <sup>F</sup>	10	→				7	13	→							3	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Liberia	0 <sup>G</sup>	0 <sup>O</sup>	→				4	2 <sup>O</sup>	→							3	8 <sup>N</sup>	→
Madagascar	0 <sup>F</sup>	3	→	1 <sup>M</sup>	4	→	3	4	→	14 <sup>N</sup>	15 <sup>P</sup>	→				3	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Malawi	0 <sup>G</sup>	3	→	1 <sup>N</sup>	1	→	3	7	→							1	0 <sup>N</sup>	→
Mali	0 <sup>F</sup>	2	→	0 <sup>K</sup>	1	→	1	5	→							1	2 <sup>O</sup>	→
Marshall Islands	0 <sup>F</sup>	22	→	0	53	→	11	77	→									
Mauritania	0 <sup>G</sup>	4	→	6 <sup>L</sup>	11	→	3	12	→							3	3 <sup>O</sup>	→
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	3 <sup>F</sup>	51	→				25	87 <sup>O</sup>	→							4 <sup>N</sup>		
Mongolia	0	21	→	3 <sup>K</sup>	28	→	32	53	→	578 <sup>L</sup>	531 <sup>P</sup>	←				14	35 <sup>O</sup>	→
Morocco	0	24	→	2 <sup>I</sup>	24	→	16	38	→							11	10 <sup>O</sup>	→

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 → Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

Notes: Figure 0 means a value under 0.5. Data source year: A: 1985; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1990; G: 1991; H: 1992; I: 1993; J: 1994; K: 1995; L: 1996; M: 1997; N: 1998; O: 1999; P: 2000; Q: 2001.

	INTERNET USERS (per 1,000 people)			PERSONAL COMPUTERS (per 1,000 people)			TELEPHONE MAINLINES (per 1,000 people)			SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (PER MILLION PEOPLE)			INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TERTIARY EDUCATION ENROLMENT RATIO, (GROSS)		
	1995	2002	Progress or regression	1990	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression	Initial data	Latest available data	Progress or regression	1992	2002	Progress or regression	1990	Latest available data	Progress or regression
Mozambique	0 <sup>F</sup>	2 <sup>D</sup>	⇨	1 <sup>L</sup>	5	⇨	3	5	⇨							0	1 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Myanmar	0 <sup>I</sup>	1	⇨	1 <sup>O</sup>	5	⇨	2	7	⇨							4	11 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Namibia	0	27	⇨	12 <sup>L</sup>	71	⇨	39	65	⇨							3 <sup>G</sup>	7 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Nepal	0	3	⇨	1 <sup>I</sup>	4	⇨	3	14	⇨							5	5 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Nicaragua	0	17	⇨	7 <sup>I</sup>	28	⇨	13	32	⇨	203 <sup>C</sup>	73 <sup>M</sup>	⇨				8	12 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Niger	0 <sup>F</sup>	1	⇨	0 <sup>M</sup>	1	⇨	1	2	⇨							1	1 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Nigeria	0 <sup>F</sup>	4	⇨	4 <sup>I</sup>	7	⇨	3	6	⇨	15 <sup>C</sup>						4	4 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Oman	4 <sup>M</sup>	66	⇨	2	35	⇨	60	84	⇨	3 <sup>O</sup>	4 <sup>P</sup>	⇨				4	7 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Pakistan	0 <sup>F</sup>	10	⇨	1	4 <sup>K</sup>	⇨	8	25	⇨	65 <sup>D</sup>	69 <sup>M</sup>	⇨				3	4 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Papua New Guinea	0 <sup>F</sup>	14	⇨	41 <sup>N</sup>	59	⇨	8	12	⇨							3	2 <sup>N</sup>	⇨
Paraguay	0 <sup>F</sup>	17	⇨	10 <sup>N</sup>	35	⇨	27	47	⇨		166 <sup>D</sup>					8	18 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Philippines	0	44	⇨	3	28	⇨	10	42	⇨	156 <sup>H</sup>			2.2	4.2	⇨	28	30 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Rwanda	0 <sup>F</sup>	3	⇨				2	3	⇨	30 <sup>A</sup>						1	2 <sup>P</sup>	⇨
Samoa	2 <sup>G</sup>	22	⇨	1 <sup>K</sup>	7	⇨	26	57	⇨							5	7 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
São Tomé and Príncipe	3 <sup>H</sup>	73	⇨				19	41	⇨								1 <sup>O</sup>	⇨
Senegal	0	10	⇨	2	20	⇨	6	22	⇨	2 <sup>L</sup>	2 <sup>M</sup>	⇨				3	4 <sup>N</sup>	⇨
Sierra Leone	0 <sup>F</sup>	2	⇨				3	5	⇨							1	2 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Solomon Islands	0	5	⇨	23 <sup>M</sup>	41	⇨	15	15	⇨									⇨
Somalia	0 <sup>H</sup>	9	⇨				2	10	⇨							3	3 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Sri Lanka	0	11	⇨	0	13	⇨	7	47	⇨	176 <sup>A</sup>	191 <sup>L</sup>	⇨				5	5 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Sudan	0 <sup>G</sup>	3	⇨	0 <sup>J</sup>	6	⇨	3	21	⇨							3	7 <sup>N</sup>	⇨
Swaziland	0	19	⇨		24	⇨	17	34	⇨							4	5 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Syrian Arab Republic	0 <sup>G</sup>	13	⇨	6 <sup>J</sup>	19	⇨	41	123	⇨		29 <sup>M</sup>					18	6 <sup>N</sup>	⇨
Tajikistan	0 <sup>I</sup>	1	⇨				45	37	⇨	713 <sup>H</sup>	660 <sup>I</sup>	⇨				22	15 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Tanzania	0 <sup>F</sup>	2	⇨	2 <sup>M</sup>	4	⇨	3	5	⇨							0	1 <sup>P</sup>	⇨
Togo	0 <sup>F</sup>	41	⇨	4 <sup>K</sup>	31	⇨	3	11	⇨	82 <sup>E</sup>						3	4 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Tonga	1	29	⇨	6 <sup>M</sup>	20	⇨	46	113	⇨							3 <sup>O</sup>	3 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Tunisia	0	52	⇨	3	31	⇨	37	117	⇨		119 <sup>L</sup>					9	23 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Turkmenistan	0 <sup>I</sup>	2 <sup>O</sup>	⇨				60	77	⇨							22	19 <sup>M</sup>	⇨
Uganda	0	4	⇨	1 <sup>K</sup>	3	⇨	2	2	⇨		20 <sup>I</sup>					1	3 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Uzbekistan	0	11	⇨				69	66	⇨	1754 <sup>H</sup>						30	9 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
Vanuatu	1 <sup>F</sup>	35	⇨	7 <sup>M</sup>	15	⇨	18	33	⇨								4 <sup>O</sup>	⇨
Viet Nam	0 <sup>G</sup>	18	⇨	0 <sup>H</sup>	10	⇨	1	48	⇨	274 <sup>K</sup>			2.2	2.4	⇨	2	10 <sup>D</sup>	⇨
West Bank and Gaza		30	⇨		36	⇨	41 <sup>H</sup>	87	⇨									⇨
Yemen	0 <sup>F</sup>	5	⇨	1 <sup>L</sup>	7	⇨	11	28	⇨							4	11 <sup>N</sup>	⇨
Zambia	0	5	⇨	6 <sup>N</sup>	7	⇨	8	8	⇨							2	2 <sup>P</sup>	⇨
Zimbabwe	0	43	⇨	0	52	⇨	13	25	⇨							5	4 <sup>O</sup>	⇨
<b>Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area</b>																		
Andorra	14 <sup>F</sup>	90 <sup>P</sup>	⇨				414	438 <sup>O</sup>	⇨									⇨
Antigua and Barbuda	23	128	⇨				253	488	⇨									⇨
Cayman Islands		42 <sup>K</sup>	⇨				470	849 <sup>O</sup>	⇨									⇨
Greenland	1	441	⇨	107 <sup>K</sup>			299	447	⇨									⇨
Guam	7	313	⇨				293	509 <sup>O</sup>	⇨	167 <sup>G</sup>								⇨
Korea, Dem. Rep.			⇨				25	21	⇨									⇨
Liechtenstein		585	⇨				570	583	⇨									⇨
Mayotte			⇨				31	70 <sup>O</sup>	⇨									⇨
Northern Mariana Islands			⇨				287 <sup>H</sup>	396 <sup>P</sup>	⇨									⇨
Palau			⇨						⇨							39 <sup>P</sup>		⇨
Virgin Islands (USA)	28	273	⇨				453	635 <sup>O</sup>	⇨									⇨
<p><b>UDHR:</b> Universal Declaration of Human Rights  <b>CERD:</b> International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  <b>CESCR:</b> International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  <b>CEDAW:</b> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  <b>CRC:</b> Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> <p><b>Source:</b> World Development Indicators 2004 website (<a href="http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/">www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/</a>).</p> <p><b>Notes:</b> Figure 0 means a value under 0.5. Data source year: <b>A:</b> 1985; <b>B:</b> 1986; <b>C:</b> 1987; <b>D:</b> 1988; <b>E:</b> 1989; <b>F:</b> 1990; <b>G:</b> 1991; <b>H:</b> 1992; <b>I:</b> 1993; <b>J:</b> 1994; <b>K:</b> 1995; <b>L:</b> 1996; <b>M:</b> 1997; <b>N:</b> 1998; <b>O:</b> 1999; <b>P:</b> 2000; <b>Q:</b> 2001.</p> <p>⇨ <b>Significant progress</b>  ⇨ <b>Slight progress</b>  ⇨ <b>Stagnant</b>  ⇨ <b>Slight regression</b>  ⇨ <b>Significant regression</b></p>																		

## PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: The governments of the world agreed on...

"Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 22, 1948.

"We call on the industrialized countries... to implement the enhanced programme of debt relief for the heavily indebted poor countries without further delay and to agree to cancel all official bilateral debts of those countries in return for their making demonstrable commitments to poverty reduction."

Millennium Declaration, Paragraph 15, 2000.

### HUMAN RIGHTS:

The right to health services, education and social security is enshrined in:

UDHR - Art. 22, 25 & 26

CEDAW - Art. 11 & 14

CERD - Art. 6

CRC - Art. 24, 26 & 28

CESCR - Art. 9, 12 & 13

### INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Public expenditure and debt are considered in: Millennium Development Goals

World Summit for Social Development

Fourth World Conference on Women - Beijing Platform

for Action - Critical Areas of Concern

	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TOTAL DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)			MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)		
	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries in better situation</b>												
Albania	3.4	2.4		5.9			0.3 <sup>F</sup>	1.2		4.6 <sup>G</sup>	1.2	→
Australia	5.3	6.2		4.9	4.6					2.2	1.7	
Austria	5.2	5.5		5.3	5.8 <sup>O</sup>					1.0	0.8	
Barbados	5.0	4.3		7.8	6.5	←						
Belarus	2.5	4.8	→	4.8	6.0 <sup>N</sup>	→	0.1 <sup>H</sup>	1.4		1.5 <sup>G</sup>	1.4 <sup>P</sup>	
Belgium	6.6	6.4		4.9	5.9 <sup>N</sup>	→				2.4	1.3	
Bhutan	1.7	3.6	→	3.2 <sup>D</sup>	5.2 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.0	1.2				
Canada	6.8	6.8		6.5	5.2 <sup>O</sup>	←				2.0	1.1	
Cuba	4.9	6.2	→	7.5 <sup>I</sup>	8.5 <sup>O</sup>	→						
Denmark	7.0	7.0		6.9 <sup>F</sup>	8.3 <sup>O</sup>	→				2.0	1.6	
Finland	6.4	5.3		5.5	5.9 <sup>O</sup>					1.6	1.2	
France	6.7	7.3		5.3	5.8 <sup>O</sup>					3.5	2.5	
Germany	5.9	8.1	→	4.7 <sup>H</sup>	4.5 <sup>O</sup>					2.8	1.5	→
Iceland	6.8	7.6		5.4	6.0 <sup>O</sup>						0.0	
Italy	6.3	6.3		3.1	4.7 <sup>O</sup>	→				2.1	1.9	
Japan	4.6	6.2	→	3.5 <sup>G</sup>	3.6 <sup>O</sup>					0.9	1.0	
Kiribati	7.8	8.5										
Luxembourg	5.7	5.4		3.1	3.6 <sup>N</sup>					0.9	0.9	
Malta	5.9 <sup>J</sup>	6.0		4.3	4.9 <sup>N</sup>					0.9	0.8	
Marshall Islands	13.0	6.4	←		10.6							
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	6.9 <sup>J</sup>	5.6	←		7.0							
Netherlands	5.7	5.7		5.7	4.8 <sup>N</sup>	←				2.5	1.6	
New Zealand	5.8	6.4		6.1	6.6					1.9	1.1	
Norway	6.4	6.8		7.1	6.9 <sup>O</sup>					2.9	1.8 <sup>P</sup>	
Palau	6.6 <sup>J</sup>	8.5	→		11.0							
Portugal	4.1	6.3	→	4.1	5.8 <sup>O</sup>	→				2.7	2.3	
San Marino	9.3 <sup>J</sup>	5.3	←									
Serbia and Montenegro		6.5						1.0			4.9 <sup>P</sup>	
Seychelles	3.6	4.1		7.8	7.5 <sup>N</sup>		6.1	2.3	→	4.0	1.7	→
Slovenia	5.2 <sup>F</sup>	6.3	→	4.8 <sup>F</sup>	5.8 <sup>J</sup>	→				2.2 <sup>G</sup>	1.5	
Spain	5.2	5.4		4.2	4.5 <sup>N</sup>					1.8	1.2	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	4.4	3.8		5.9 <sup>F</sup>	9.3 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.3	3.8				
Suriname	3.5	5.7	→	8.1								
Sweden	7.6	7.4		7.2	7.7 <sup>N</sup>					2.7	1.9	

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression  
 ← Significant regression

Notes: Data source year: A: 1984; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002.



	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TOTAL DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)			MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)		
	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Switzerland	5.7	6.4		5.1	5.5 <sup>A</sup>					1.8	1.1	
Timor-Leste		5.8										
Vanuatu	2.6	2.2		4.6	10.5	→	1.5	1.0				
<b>Countries above average</b>												
Andorra	8.3 <sup>J</sup>	4.0	←									
Argentina	4.2	5.1		10.0	4.6 <sup>O</sup>	←	4.6	6.1		1.3	1.2	
Aruba				5.0	4.8							
Botswana	1.7	4.4	→	6.2	8.6 <sup>N</sup>	→	2.9	1.2		4.1	4.0	
Cape Verde	3.0 <sup>F</sup>	3.8		3.6 <sup>F</sup>	4.4 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.7	3.4		1.8 <sup>D</sup>	0.7	
Central African Republic	0.9 <sup>F</sup>	2.3	→	2.2	1.9 <sup>M</sup>		2.0	0.1		1.6 <sup>F</sup>	1.2 <sup>K</sup>	
Costa Rica	6.7	4.9	←	4.4	4.7		9.2	4.1	→			
Cyprus	3.9 <sup>J</sup>	3.9		3.5	5.6 <sup>O</sup>	→				5.0	2.1	→
Czech Republic	4.8	6.7	→	4.4 <sup>G</sup>	4.4 <sup>O</sup>		4.1 <sup>H</sup>	6.9	←	2.3 <sup>H</sup>	2.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Djibouti		4.1		3.5	3.5 <sup>M</sup>			2.0		6.3	4.4 <sup>M</sup>	→
Dominica	3.9	4.3		5.3 <sup>E</sup>	5.0 <sup>N</sup>		3.6	4.8				
El Salvador	1.4	3.7	→	1.9	2.5		4.4	3.2		2.7	0.8 <sup>P</sup>	→
Estonia	1.9	4.3	→	6.1 <sup>G</sup>	7.4 <sup>N</sup>	→	0.1 <sup>G</sup>	12.7	←	0.5 <sup>G</sup>	1.9	←
Fiji	2.0	2.7		4.6	5.5		8.2	1.6	→	2.3	2.2 <sup>P</sup>	
Ghana	1.3	2.8	→	3.2	4.1 <sup>N</sup>		6.4	3.5	→	0.4	0.6 <sup>P</sup>	
Guatemala	1.8	2.3		1.4	1.7 <sup>O</sup>		2.9	1.8		1.5	0.6	
Haiti	1.2	2.7	→	1.5			1.3	0.9				
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1.5	2.7	→	4.1	5.0		0.5	1.3		2.7	4.8 <sup>P</sup>	←
Ireland	4.8	4.9		4.8	4.3 <sup>O</sup>					1.2	0.7	
Israel	3.8	6.0	→	6.3	7.3 <sup>O</sup>					12.2	8.6	→
Lesotho	2.6	4.3	→	6.2	10.0 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.3	7.7	←	3.9	3.1 <sup>O</sup>	
Liberia	2.0 <sup>J</sup>	3.3	→					0.2		7.4		
Lithuania	3.0	4.2	→	4.6	5.4 <sup>K</sup>	→	0.1 <sup>G</sup>	9.2	←	0.7 <sup>H</sup>	2.0	←
Malawi	1.5 <sup>F</sup>	2.7	→	3.2	4.1 <sup>N</sup>		7.2	1.9	→	1.3	0.8 <sup>P</sup>	
Maldives	3.6	5.6	→	3.8	3.7 <sup>M</sup>		4.5	3.7				
Monaco	3.6 <sup>J</sup>	4.3	→									
Mongolia	6.5	4.6	←	12.3	6.2 <sup>L</sup>	←	5.0 <sup>H</sup>	4.7		5.7	2.3	→
Mozambique	3.6	4.0		3.1	2.4 <sup>N</sup>		3.4	2.2		10.1	2.5	→
Namibia	3.7	4.7		6.7	8.1 <sup>M</sup>	→				5.6 <sup>F</sup>	2.9	→
Nepal	0.8	1.5		2.0	3.4	→	2.0	1.8		0.9	1.4	
Nicaragua	7.0	3.8	←	3.4	5.0 <sup>M</sup>	→	1.6	4.0		2.1	1.4	
Paraguay	0.7	3.0	→	1.2	4.7	→	6.0	5.8		1.2	0.9	
Poland	4.8	4.6		5.1 <sup>F</sup>	5.1 <sup>O</sup>		1.7	7.1	←	2.7	1.8	
Samoa	2.8	4.8	→	3.2	4.5	→	3.4	3.0				
Senegal	0.7	2.8	→	3.9	6.5 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.9	4.5		2.0	1.5	
Solomon Islands	5.0	4.7		3.8 <sup>F</sup>	3.5 <sup>O</sup>		5.6	2.4	→			
South Africa	3.1	3.6		5.9	5.7 <sup>N</sup>		2.2 <sup>I</sup>	4.5	←	3.8	1.6 <sup>P</sup>	→
St. Lucia	2.1	2.9		9.2 <sup>I</sup>	6.0 <sup>O</sup>	←	1.7	4.1	←			
Sudan	0.7	0.6		6.0	7.6 <sup>K</sup>	→	0.4	0.2		3.6	3.0 <sup>O</sup>	
Swaziland	1.9	2.3		6.0	5.5		4.9	1.6	→	1.5	1.5 <sup>P</sup>	
Tonga	3.7	3.4		4.8 <sup>G</sup>	5.0		1.6	2.0				
Tunisia	3.0	4.9	→	6.0	6.8 <sup>O</sup>		12.1	7.2	→	2.0	1.6 <sup>P</sup>	
United Kingdom	5.1	6.3	→	4.8	4.4 <sup>N</sup>					3.9	2.4	→
United States of America	4.7	6.2	→	5.1	4.9 <sup>O</sup>					5.3	3.4	→
Uzbekistan	4.6	2.7	←	9.5	7.7 <sup>K</sup>	←	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.7	←	1.5 <sup>I</sup>	1.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Venezuela	2.5	3.7	→	3.0			10.6	8.2	→	1.8 <sup>F</sup>	1.2	
Yemen	1.1	1.5		5.7 <sup>H</sup>	10.0	→	3.5	1.9		8.5	4.5	→
Zimbabwe	3.2	2.8		7.7	10.4 <sup>N</sup>	→	5.5	1.4 <sup>P</sup>	→	4.5	3.2	→

**Significant progress**  
**Slight progress**  
**Stagnant**  
**Slight regression**  
**Significant regression**

**Notes:** Data source year: A: 1984; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002.

	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TOTAL DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)			MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)		
	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression
<b>Countries below average</b>												
Afghanistan	0.7 <sup>J</sup>	2.7	→									
Algeria	3.0	3.1		5.3	4.8 <sup>K</sup>		14.7	7.8	→	1.5	3.7	←
Antigua and Barbuda	2.9	3.4		2.5 <sup>A</sup>	3.2 <sup>H</sup>							
Armenia	4.7 <sup>G</sup>	3.2	←	7.0	3.2	←	0.2 <sup>H</sup>	3.0	←	2.2 <sup>G</sup>	2.7	
Azerbaijan	2.7	0.7 <sup>O</sup>	←	7.6 <sup>H</sup>	3.5	←	0.0 <sup>H</sup>	3.2	←	0.0	2.1	←
Bahamas	2.8	3.2		4.0	3.2 <sup>K</sup>	←						
Bahrain	3.2 <sup>J</sup>	2.9		4.1	3.2					5.1	3.9	
Bangladesh	0.7	1.5		1.5	2.3		2.4	1.5		1.0	1.1	
Belize	2.2	2.3		4.7	6.2 <sup>O</sup>	→	5.0	22.7	←	1.2	1.5 <sup>L</sup>	
Benin	1.6	2.1			3.3		2.1	2.4		1.8		
Bolivia	2.1	3.5	→	2.4	5.5 <sup>O</sup>	→	8.3	6.3		2.4	1.7	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.1 <sup>J</sup>	2.8	→					2.7			9.5 <sup>O</sup>	
Brazil	3.0	3.2		1.7 <sup>I</sup>	4.0	→	1.8	11.7	←	1.9	1.6	
Bulgaria	4.1	3.9		5.2	3.2 <sup>M</sup>	←	2.8 <sup>F</sup>	8.9	←	3.5	2.7	
Burkina Faso	1.0	1.5 <sup>O</sup>		2.7	1.5 <sup>K</sup>	←	1.1	1.7		3.0	1.7	→
Cambodia	0.2 <sup>G</sup>	1.7	→		2.0		2.7	0.6		3.1	2.7	
Cameroon	0.9	1.2		3.2	3.2 <sup>O</sup>		4.9	3.9		1.5	1.4	
Chad	2.5 <sup>H</sup>	2.0 <sup>O</sup>		1.6 <sup>F</sup>	2.5 <sup>O</sup>		0.7	1.5		2.7 <sup>H</sup>	1.4	→
China	2.2	2.0		2.3	2.2 <sup>M</sup>		2.0	2.5		2.7	2.5	
Colombia	1.2	3.6	→	2.4	4.4	→	10.2	8.9		2.2	3.7	←
Comoros	2.9	1.9			3.8 <sup>M</sup>		0.4	1.9				
Congo, Rep.	1.5	1.4		5.0	0.1 <sup>H</sup>	←	22.9	1.1	→			
Côte d'Ivoire	1.5	1.0		6.8 <sup>G</sup>	4.6 <sup>O</sup>	←	13.7	7.5	→	1.5	0.9 <sup>L</sup>	
Croatia	9.5	7.3	←	7.2	4.2 <sup>N</sup>	←	3.0 <sup>H</sup>	13.6	←	7.6 <sup>G</sup>	2.5	→
Dominican Republic	1.6	2.2		1.3 <sup>G</sup>	2.4	→	3.4	3.3				
Ecuador	1.5	2.3		2.0			11.9	9.7		1.9	2.1 <sup>N</sup>	
Egypt	1.8	1.9		3.9	4.7 <sup>J</sup>	→	7.3	2.3	→	3.9	2.7	
Equatorial Guinea	1.0	1.2		1.6 <sup>O</sup>	0.6		4.1	1.0 <sup>P</sup>	→	2.0 <sup>I</sup>	2.1 <sup>J</sup>	←
Eritrea	0.6 <sup>G</sup>	3.7	→		2.7		0.0 <sup>I</sup>	1.2		21.4 <sup>H</sup>	27.5 <sup>N</sup>	←
Ethiopia	0.9	1.4		3.4	4.8 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.8	1.8		8.5	5.2	→
Gabon	2.0	1.7		2.8 <sup>G</sup>	3.9 <sup>O</sup>	→	3.3	9.8	←		0.3 <sup>M</sup>	
Gambia	2.2	3.2		3.8	2.7 <sup>O</sup>	←	12.9	4.9	→	1.1	0.9	
Georgia	3.0	1.4	←	7.7 <sup>I</sup>	2.5	←	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	3.9	←		0.6	
Greece	4.7	5.2		2.4	3.8 <sup>O</sup>	→				4.7	4.3	
Grenada	3.4	3.8		5.1	4.4 <sup>N</sup>		1.6	6.8	←			
Guinea	2.0	1.9		2.0 <sup>F</sup>	1.9 <sup>O</sup>		6.3	4.3		2.4 <sup>F</sup>	1.7 <sup>P</sup>	
Guyana	2.9	4.2	→	3.4	4.1 <sup>N</sup>		107.4	11.6	→	0.9	0.8 <sup>K</sup>	
Honduras	3.3	3.2		3.8 <sup>F</sup>	4.0 <sup>M</sup>		13.7	6.2	→	1.6 <sup>O</sup>		
Hungary	5.9 <sup>F</sup>	5.1		5.8	4.9 <sup>O</sup>		13.4	24.3	←	2.8	1.8	
India	0.9	0.9		3.7	4.1 <sup>O</sup>		2.6	2.6		2.7	2.6	
Jamaica	2.6	2.9		4.5	6.4	→	15.9	11.6	→			
Jordan	3.6	4.5		8.1	4.6	←	16.5	6.3	→	9.9	8.4	→
Kazakhstan	3.2	1.9	←	3.2	4.4 <sup>L</sup>	→	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	17.4	←	1.0 <sup>H</sup>	0.9	
Kenya	2.4	1.7		6.7	6.3 <sup>O</sup>		9.8	3.7	→	2.9	1.6	→
Korea, Rep.	1.8	2.6		3.4	3.6					3.7	2.7	
Kuwait	4.0	3.5		4.8	6.1 <sup>L</sup>	→				48.5	11.2	→
Lao PDR	0.0	1.7	→	2.5 <sup>G</sup>	3.2		1.1	2.6			2.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Latvia	2.7	3.4		3.8	5.9 <sup>O</sup>	→	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.7	←	0.8 <sup>H</sup>	1.8	←
Macedonia, FYR	9.2	5.8	←	5.1 <sup>G</sup>	3.7 <sup>O</sup>	←	0.7 <sup>H</sup>	6.3	←		2.8	
Madagascar	1.4 <sup>G</sup>	1.2 <sup>O</sup>		2.1	2.5		7.5	1.7	→	1.2	1.2 <sup>O</sup>	
Malaysia	1.5	2.0		5.1	7.9	→	10.3	9.1		2.6	2.1	

Significant progress  
 Slight progress  
 Stagnant  
 Slight regression  
 Significant regression

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	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TOTAL DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)			MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)		
	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Mali	1.6	1.7		3.2 <sup>C</sup>	2.8 <sup>H</sup>		2.8	2.9		2.1	2.0 <sup>P</sup>	
Mauritania	1.1 <sup>F</sup>	2.6	→	4.7 <sup>F</sup>	3.6 <sup>N</sup>	←	13.5	5.7	→	3.8	1.9	→
Mauritius	2.1 <sup>F</sup>	2.0		3.8	3.3		6.6	5.5		0.3	0.2	
Mexico	1.8	2.7		3.6	4.4 <sup>H</sup>		4.5	6.8		0.4	0.5	
Moldova	4.4	2.8	←	5.6	4.0 <sup>O</sup>	←	0.2 <sup>G</sup>	12.6	←	0.5 <sup>H</sup>	0.3	
Niger	1.5 <sup>F</sup>	1.4		3.2	2.3		4.1	1.3	→	1.2 <sup>I</sup>	1.1 <sup>O</sup>	
Nigeria	1.0	0.8		0.9	0.7 <sup>J</sup>		13.0	4.0	→	0.9	1.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Panama	4.6	4.8		4.7	4.3		6.8	13.9	←	1.4	1.2 <sup>N</sup>	
Papua New Guinea	3.1	3.9			2.3 <sup>O</sup>		17.9	10.4	→	2.1	0.8 <sup>O</sup>	→
Peru	1.3	2.6	→	2.8	3.4 <sup>N</sup>		1.9	6.1	←		1.3	
Philippines	1.5	1.5		2.9	3.2		8.1	11.1	←	1.4	1.0	
Qatar	3.5 <sup>J</sup>	2.2	←	3.5	3.6 <sup>M</sup>							
Romania	2.8	5.2	→	2.8	3.5 <sup>N</sup>		0.1	6.8	←	4.6	2.3	→
Russian Federation	2.5	3.7	→	3.0	3.1		0.3 <sup>G</sup>	4.2	←	12.3	4.0	→
Rwanda	1.7	3.1	→	3.8 <sup>E</sup>	2.8 <sup>O</sup>		0.8	1.3		3.7	3.6	
Saudi Arabia	4.2 <sup>J</sup>	3.4	←	6.5	8.3 <sup>M</sup>	→				12.8	11.3	→
Sierra Leone	1.5 <sup>O</sup>	2.6	→	1.1 <sup>E</sup>	1.0 <sup>M</sup>		3.7	3.1		0.9	2.2	←
Slovakia	5.0	5.1		5.1	4.1 <sup>O</sup>	←	4.8 <sup>H</sup>	14.2	←	2.1 <sup>H</sup>	1.9 <sup>P</sup>	
St. Kitts and Nevis	2.7	3.2		2.6	7.7	→	1.9	12.4	←			
Syrian Arab Republic	0.4	1.7 <sup>O</sup>	→	4.0	4.1		10.0	1.4	→	6.9	6.1	
Tajikistan	4.9	1.0	←	10.0	2.4	←	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.0	←	0.4 <sup>G</sup>	1.2 <sup>P</sup>	
Tanzania	1.6	2.0		2.8	2.2 <sup>M</sup>		4.4	1.6	→	2.0 <sup>F</sup>	1.3 <sup>N</sup>	
Thailand	1.0	2.1	→	3.6	5.0	→	6.3	15.8	←	2.3	1.4	
Togo	1.4	1.5		5.5	4.8 <sup>O</sup>		5.4	1.0	→	3.2	2.9 <sup>J</sup>	
Trinidad and Tobago	2.5	1.7		3.7	4.0		9.6	3.0	→			
Turkey	2.2	4.4 <sup>O</sup>	→	2.2	3.7	→	4.9	15.2	←	3.5	5.0	←
Uganda	2.3 <sup>H</sup>	3.4	→	1.5	2.5 <sup>N</sup>	→	3.4	1.4		3.0	2.4	
Ukraine	3.0	2.9		5.2	4.2 <sup>O</sup>		0.0 <sup>G</sup>	7.8	←	0.5 <sup>H</sup>	2.8	←
United Arab Emirates	0.8	2.6	→	1.8	2.0 <sup>M</sup>					4.7	2.5 <sup>P</sup>	→
Uruguay	2.0	5.1	→	2.7	2.5		11.0	10.5		2.1	1.3 <sup>P</sup>	
Zambia	2.6	3.0		2.4	2.3 <sup>M</sup>		6.7	8.7		3.7	0.6 <sup>O</sup>	→
<b>Countries in worse situation</b>												
Angola	1.4	2.8	→	3.0	2.8		4.0			5.8	3.7	→
Brunei Darussalam	1.6	2.5		3.9	4.4 <sup>M</sup>					0.0	7.0	←
Burundi	1.1	2.1		3.4	3.6		3.8	3.3		3.4	7.6	←
Chile	2.2	3.1		2.5	3.9 <sup>O</sup>	→	9.7	11.9		3.7	2.9	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	1.2 <sup>J</sup>	1.5					4.1	16.9	←			
Guinea-Bissau	1.1	3.2	→	1.7 <sup>C</sup>	2.1 <sup>N</sup>		3.6	7.6	←	0.2 <sup>E</sup>	3.1 <sup>P</sup>	←
Hong Kong (China)	1.6			2.8	2.9 <sup>J</sup>							
Indonesia	0.6	0.6		1.0	1.3		9.1	10.3		1.8	1.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Iraq	3.8	1.0	←	5.1 <sup>D</sup>								
Korea, Dem. Rep.	2.5 <sup>J</sup>	1.9										
Kyrgyzstan	4.7	1.9	←	8.4	3.1	←	0.0 <sup>G</sup>	11.2	←	0.7 <sup>G</sup>	1.7 <sup>P</sup>	←
Lebanon	2.1 <sup>G</sup>	2.2 <sup>M</sup>		3.2 <sup>E</sup>	2.9		2.9	12.2	←	7.6	4.7	→
Libya	1.5 <sup>J</sup>	1.6		9.6 <sup>B</sup>	2.7 <sup>H</sup>	←						
Macao (China)				1.7	3.0	→						
Morocco	0.9	2.0	→	5.3	5.0 <sup>O</sup>		7.2	10.4	←	4.1	4.1 <sup>P</sup>	
Myanmar	1.1	0.4		2.4 <sup>E</sup>	1.3 <sup>O</sup>					3.4	2.3 <sup>O</sup>	→
Oman	2.0	2.4		3.2	3.9		7.2	8.8		18.3	13.0	→
Pakistan	1.1	1.0		2.6	1.8 <sup>O</sup>		4.9	4.8		5.8	4.5	→
São Tomé and Príncipe	3.1 <sup>H</sup>	1.5	←	4.0 <sup>B</sup>			5.3	13.1	←			
Singapore	1.0	1.3		3.1	3.1 <sup>J</sup>					4.8	5.2	
Significant progress Slight progress Stagnant Slight regression Significant regression			<b>Notes:</b> Data source year: A: 1984; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002.									

	PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			PUBLIC EDUCATION EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)			TOTAL DEBT SERVICE (% OF GNI)			MILITARY EXPENDITURE (% OF GDP)		
	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2001 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression	1990 (%)	2002 (%)	Progress or regression
Somalia	1.1 <sup>J</sup>	1.2		0.4 <sup>B</sup>			1.3					
Sri Lanka	1.5	1.8		2.7	1.3	←	4.9	4.4		2.1	3.9 <sup>P</sup>	←
Turkmenistan	4.0	3.0		4.3			3.8 <sup>I</sup>	11.8 <sup>M</sup>	←	1.8 <sup>I</sup>	3.8 <sup>O</sup>	←
Viet Nam	0.9	1.5		2.0	2.8 <sup>L</sup>	→	2.9	3.4		7.9		
Countries with insufficient data to summarize area												
Bermuda	0.5			3.3								
Cayman Islands	2.1 <sup>H</sup>											
French Polynesia				0.4								
New Caledonia				0.5								
Virgin Islands (USA)				7.5 <sup>A</sup>								

**UDHR:** Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
**CERD:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination  
**CESCR:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights  
**CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women  
**CRC:** Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Source:**  
 World Development Indicators 2004 website  
 (www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/).

→ Significant progress  
 → Slight progress  
 || Stagnant  
 ← Slight regression

**Notes:** Data source year: A: 1984; B: 1986; C: 1987; D: 1988; E: 1989; F: 1991; G: 1992; H: 1993; I: 1994; J: 1995; K: 1996; L: 1997; M: 1998; N: 1999; O: 2000; P: 2001; Q: 2002.

## TRENDS IN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (% OF GNI)<sup>A</sup>

### Net Official Development Assistance from DAC Countries to Developing Countries and Multilateral Organizations

	1986/1987 average	1991/1992 average <sup>B</sup>	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Australia	0.40	0.37	0.27	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.26	0.25
Austria	0.19	0.14	0.22	0.24	0.23	0.29	0.26	0.20
Belgium	0.48	0.40	0.35	0.30	0.36	0.37	0.43	0.60
Canada	0.48	0.46	0.30	0.28	0.25	0.22	0.28	0.24
Denmark	0.88	0.99	0.99	1.01	1.06	1.03	0.96	0.84
Finland	0.48	0.72	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.32	0.35	0.35
France	0.58	0.62	0.40	0.39	0.32	0.32	0.38	0.41
Germany	0.41	0.38	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.28
Greece			0.15	0.15	0.20	0.17	0.21	0.21
Ireland	0.23	0.18	0.30	0.31	0.29	0.33	0.40	0.39
Italy	0.37	0.32	0.20	0.15	0.13	0.15	0.20	0.17
Japan	0.30	0.31	0.27	0.27	0.28	0.23	0.23	0.20
Luxembourg	0.17	0.29	0.65	0.66	0.71	0.76	0.77	0.81
Netherlands	0.99	0.87	0.80	0.79	0.84	0.82	0.81	0.80
New Zealand	0.28	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.25	0.22	0.23
Norway	1.13	1.15	0.89	0.88	0.76	0.80	0.89	0.92
Portugal	0.10	0.32	0.24	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.27	0.22
Spain	0.08	0.26	0.24	0.23	0.22	0.30	0.26	0.23
Sweden	0.87	0.96	0.72	0.70	0.80	0.77	0.83	0.79
Switzerland	0.30	0.41	0.32	0.35	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.39
United Kingdom	0.29	0.32	0.27	0.24	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.34
United States	0.21	0.20	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.13	0.15

**Notes:** A: Net disbursements at current prices and exchange rates.

B: Including debt forgiveness of non-ODA claims in 1991 and 1992, except for total DAC.

Sources: OECD, "Final ODA Data for 2003" (www.oecd.org/dataoecd/19/52/34352584.pdf) and Website Database 2004 (www.oecd.org).

## Status of ratifications of fundamental ILO Conventions

Up to April 2005

**C87:** Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948.

**C98:** Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949.

**C100:** Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951.

**C105:** Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957.

**C111:** Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958.

**C138:** Minimum Age Convention, 1973.

**C182:** Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999.

	FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING		ELIMINATION OF FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR	ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION		ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR			FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING		ELIMINATION OF FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR	ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION		ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR	
	C 87	C 98	C 105	C 100	C 111	C 138	C 182		C 87	C 98	C 105	C 100	C 111	C 138	C 182
Afghanistan	□	□	■	■	■	□	□	Dominica	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Albania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Dominican Republic	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Algeria	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ecuador	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Angola	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Egypt	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Antigua and Barbuda	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	El Salvador	□	□	■	■	■	■	■
Argentina	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Equatorial Guinea	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Armenia	□	■	■	■	■	□	□	Eritrea	■	■	■	■	■	■	□
Australia	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	Estonia	■	■	■	■	□	□	■
Austria	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ethiopia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Azerbaijan	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Fiji	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bahamas	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Finland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bahrain	□	□	■	□	■	□	□	France	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bangladesh	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	Gabon	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Barbados	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Gambia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Belarus	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Georgia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Belgium	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Germany	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Belize	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ghana	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Benin	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Greece	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bolivia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Grenada	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bosnia and Herzegovina	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Guatemala	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Botswana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Guinea	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Brazil	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	Guinea-Bissau	□	■	■	■	■	□	□
Bulgaria	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Guyana	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Burkina Faso	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Haiti	■	■	■	■	■	□	□
Burundi	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Honduras	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cambodia	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	Hungary	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cameroon	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Iceland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Canada	■	□	■	■	■	□	■	India	□	□	■	■	■	□	□
Cape Verde	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	Indonesia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Central African Republic	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Iran, Islamic Rep.	□	□	■	■	■	□	■
Chad	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Iraq	□	■	■	■	■	■	■
Chile	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ireland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
China	□	□	□	■	□	■	■	Israel	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Colombia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Italy	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Comoros	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Jamaica	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Congo, Dem. Rep.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Japan	■	■	□	■	□	■	■
Congo, Rep.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Jordan	□	■	■	■	■	■	■
Costa Rica	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Kazakhstan	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Côte d'Ivoire	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Kenya	□	■	■	■	■	■	■
Croatia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Kiribati	■	■	■	□	□	□	□
Cuba	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	Korea, Rep.	□	□	□	■	■	■	■
Cyprus	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Kuwait	■	□	■	□	■	■	■
Czech Republic	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	Kyrgyzstan	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Denmark	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Lao PDR	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Djibouti	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	Latvia	■	■	■	■	■	□	□

Source: ILOLEX. ILO Website Database (www.ilo.org).

- Convention ratified
- Convention not yet ratified
- Convention denounced

## Status of ratifications of fundamental ILO Conventions

Up to April 2005

**C87:** Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948.  
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	FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING		ELIMINATION OF FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR	ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION		ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR			FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING		ELIMINATION OF FORCED AND COMPULSORY LABOUR	ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION IN RESPECT OF EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION		ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR	
	C 87	C 98	C 105	C 100	C 111	C 138	C 182		C 87	C 98	C 105	C 100	C 111	C 138	C 182
Lebanon	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	Senegal	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Lesotho	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Serbia and Montenegro	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Liberia	■	■	■	□	■	■	□	Seychelles	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Libya	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Sierra Leone	■	■	■	■	■	□	□
Lithuania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Singapore	□	■	●	■	□	□	■
Luxembourg	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Slovakia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Macedonia, FYR	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Slovenia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Madagascar	■	■	□	■	■	■	■	Solomon Islands	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Malawi	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Somalia	□	□	■	□	■	□	□
Malaysia	□	■	●	■	□	■	■	South Africa	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mali	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Spain	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Malta	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Sri Lanka	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mauritania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	St. Kitts and Nevis	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Mauritius	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	St. Lucia	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Mexico	■	□	■	■	■	■	□	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	■	■	■	■	■	□	■
Moldova	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Sudan	□	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mongolia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Suriname	■	■	■	□	□	□	□
Morocco	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	Swaziland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Mozambique	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Sweden	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Myanmar	■	□	□	□	□	□	□	Switzerland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Namibia	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	Syrian Arab Republic	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Nepal	□	■	□	■	■	■	■	Tajikistan	■	■	■	■	■	■	□
Netherlands	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Tanzania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
New Zealand	□	■	■	■	■	■	□	Thailand	□	□	■	■	□	■	■
Nicaragua	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Timor-Leste	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Niger	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Togo	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Nigeria	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Trinidad and Tobago	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Norway	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Tunisia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Oman	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	Turkey	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pakistan	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	Turkmenistan	■	■	■	■	■	□	□
Panama	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Uganda	□	■	■	□	□	■	■
Papua New Guinea	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Ukraine	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Paraguay	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	United Arab Emirates	□	□	■	■	■	■	■
Peru	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	United Kingdom	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Philippines	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	United States of America	□	□	■	□	□	□	■
Poland	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Uruguay	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Portugal	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Uzbekistan	□	■	■	■	■	□	□
Qatar	□	□	□	□	■	■	□	Vanuatu	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Romania	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Venezuela	■	■	■	■	■	■	□
Russian Federation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Viet Nam	□	□	□	■	■	■	■
Rwanda	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Yemen	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
San Marino	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	Zambia	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
São Tomé and Príncipe	■	■	□	■	■	■	□	Zimbabwe	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Saudi Arabia	□	□	■	■	■	■	□	<b>Total of 177</b>	143	154	163	161	161	136	153

Source: IOLEX. ILO Website Database ([www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)).

- Convention ratified
- Convention not yet ratified
- Convention denounced



## Status of ratifications of the main International Human Rights Treaties

Up to April 2005

- A:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), 1966. Entry into force: 3 January 1976.  
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**D:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981. (See table *25 years of the CEDAW in the world.*)

- E:** Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984. Entry into force: 26 June 1987.  
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**G:** Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948. Entry into force: 12 January 1951.  
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**I:** International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (MWC), 1990. Entry into force: 1 July 2003.

	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I		A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I
Afghanistan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Dominica	•	•			•		•	
Albania	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Dominican Republic	•	•	•	◦	•	◦	•	
Algeria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Ecuador	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Andorra		◦	◦	◦	•				Egypt	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Angola	•	•			•		•		El Salvador	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Antigua and Barbuda			•	•	•	•	•		Equatorial Guinea	•	•	•	•	•		•	
Argentina	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	◦	Eritrea	•	•	•	•	•			
Armenia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Estonia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Australia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Ethiopia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Austria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Fiji			•		•	•	•	
Azerbaijan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Finland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Bahamas			•	•	•	•	•		France	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Bahrain			•	•	•	•			Gabon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	◦
Bangladesh	•	•	•	•	•	•		◦	Gambia	•	•	•	◦	•	•	•	
Barbados	•	•	•	•	•	•			Georgia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Belarus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Germany	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Belgium		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ghana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Belize	◦	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Greece	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Benin	•	•	•	•	•		•		Grenada	•	•	◦					
Bhutan			◦	•					Guatemala	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bolivia	•	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•	Guinea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bosnia and Herzegovina	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guinea-Bissau	•	◦	◦	◦			•	◦
Botswana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Guyana	•	•	•	•	•			
Brazil	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Haiti		•	•	•	•	•	•	
Brunei Darussalam					•				Holy See			•	•	•	•	•	
Bulgaria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Honduras	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Burkina Faso	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Burundi	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Iceland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Cambodia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	◦	India	•	•	•	◦	•	•		
Cameroon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Indonesia			•	•	•	•		◦
Canada	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Iran, Islamic Rep.	•	•	•			•	•	
Cape Verde	•	•	•	•	•		•		Iraq	•	•	•		•	•	•	
Central African Republic	•	•	•		•		•		Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Chad	•	•	•	•	•		•		Israel	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Chile	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
China	•	◦	•	•	•	•	•		Jamaica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Colombia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Japan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Comoros			•	◦	•	•		◦	Jordan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Kazakhstan	◦	◦	•	•	•	•	•	
Congo, Rep.	•	•	•	•	•		•		Kenya	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Cook Islands					•				Kiribati					•			
Costa Rica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Korea, Dem. Rep.	•	•	•			•	•	
Côte d'Ivoire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Korea, Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Croatia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Kuwait	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Cuba			•	•	•	•	•		Kyrgyzstan			•	•	•	•	•	•
Cyprus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Lao PDR	◦	◦						
Czech Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Latvia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Denmark	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		Lebanon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Djibouti	•	•		•	•		•		Lesotho	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	◦

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection website, Database "Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General" (<http://untreaty.un.org/>).

- Ratification, accession, approval, notification or succession, acceptance, consent to be bound or definitive signature.
- Signature not yet followed by ratification.

## Status of ratifications of the main International Human Rights Treaties

### Up to April 2005

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- I:** International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (MWC), 1990. Entry into force: 1 July 2003.

	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I		A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I
Liberia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	São Tomé and Príncipe	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	○
Libya	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Saudi Arabia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Liechtenstein	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Senegal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lithuania	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Serbia and Montenegro	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Luxembourg	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Seychelles	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Macedonia, FYR	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sierra Leone	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Madagascar	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Singapore	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Malawi	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Slovakia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Malaysia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Slovenia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Maldives	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Solomon Islands	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mali	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Somalia	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Malta	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	South Africa	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Marshall Islands	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Spain	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mauritania	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sri Lanka	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mauritius	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	St. Kitts and Nevis	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mexico	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	St. Lucia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Moldova	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sudan	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Monaco	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Suriname	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mongolia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Swaziland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Morocco	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Sweden	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Mozambique	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Switzerland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Myanmar	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Syrian Arab Republic	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Namibia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Tajikistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nauru	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Tanzania	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nepal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Thailand	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Netherlands	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Timor-Leste	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
New Zealand	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Togo	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Nicaragua	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	Tonga	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Niger	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Trinidad and Tobago	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nigeria	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Tunisia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Niue	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Turkey	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Norway	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Turkmenistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Oman	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Tuvalu	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Pakistan	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Uganda	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Palau	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Ukraine	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Panama	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	United Arab Emirates	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Papua New Guinea	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	United Kingdom	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Paraguay	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	United States of America	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
Peru	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	Uruguay	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Philippines	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Uzbekistan	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Poland	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Vanuatu	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Portugal	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Venezuela	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Qatar	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Viet Nam	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Romania	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Yemen	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Russian Federation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Zambia	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rwanda	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	Zimbabwe	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Samoa	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●									
San Marino	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●									

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection website, Database "Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General" (<http://untreaty.un.org/>).

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## Status of ratifications of International Treaties mentioned in the Millennium Declaration

### Up to April 2005

**A:** Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998. Entry into force: 1 July 2002.  
**B:** Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, 1997. Entry into force: 1 March 1999.  
**C:** Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices as amended on 3 May 1996 annexed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, 1996. Entry into force: 3 December 1998.  
**D:** Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1997. Entry into force: 16 February 2005.  
**E:** Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989. Entry into force: 2 September 1990. (See table *Status of ratifications of the main International Human Rights Treaties*.)

**F:** Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2000. Entry into force: 12 February 2002.  
**G:** Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000. Entry into force: 18 January 2002.  
**H:** Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992. Entry into force: 29 December 1993.  
**I:** United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, 1994. Entry into force: 26 December 1996.  
**J:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981. (See table *25 years of the CEDAW in the world*.)

	A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I		A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I
Afghanistan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Dominica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Albania	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Dominican Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Algeria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ecuador	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Andorra	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Egypt	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Angola	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	El Salvador	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Antigua and Barbuda	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Equatorial Guinea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Argentina	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Eritrea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Armenia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Estonia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Aruba	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ethiopia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Australia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	European Community	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Austria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Faeroe Island	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Azerbaijan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Fiji	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bahamas	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Finland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bahrain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	France	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bangladesh	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	French Polynesia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Barbados	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Gabon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Belarus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Gambia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Belgium	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Georgia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Belize	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Germany	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Benin	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ghana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bermuda	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Greece	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bhutan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Greenland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bolivia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Grenada	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bosnia and Herzegovina	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guadeloupe	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Botswana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guam	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Brazil	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guatemala	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
British Virgin Islands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guinea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Brunei Darussalam	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guinea-Bissau	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bulgaria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Guyana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Burkina Faso	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Haiti	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Burundi	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Holy See	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cambodia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Honduras	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cameroon	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Hong Kong (China)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Canada	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cape Verde	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Iceland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cayman Islands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	India	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Central African Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Indonesia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chad	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Iran, Islamic Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Channel Islands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Iraq	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Chile	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
China	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Isle of Man	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Colombia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Israel	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Comoros	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Congo, Dem. Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jamaica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Congo, Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Japan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cook Islands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Jordan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Costa Rica	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kazakhstan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Côte d'Ivoire	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kenya	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Croatia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kiribati	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cuba	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Korea, Dem. Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cyprus	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Korea, Rep.	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Czech Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kuwait	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Denmark	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Kyrgyzstan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Djibouti	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Lao PDR	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Source: United Nations Treaty Collection website, Database "Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General" (<http://untreaty.un.org/>).

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	A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I		A	B	C	D	F	G	H	I
Latvia	•		•	•	◦	◦	•	•	Russian Federation	◦		•	•	◦		•	•
Lebanon					◦	•	•	•	Rwanda	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Lesotho	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Samoa	•	•		•			•	•
Liberia	•	•		•	◦	◦	•	•	San Marino	•	•			◦	◦	•	•
Libya					•	•	•	•	Sao Tomé and Príncipe	◦	•					•	•
Liechtenstein	•	•	•	•		◦	•	•	Saudi Arabia				•			•	•
Lithuania	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Senegal	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Luxembourg	•	•	•	•		◦	•	•	Serbia and Montenegro	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Macao (China)									Seychelles	◦	•	•	•	◦	◦	•	•
Macedonia, FYR	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Sierra Leone	•	•	•			•	•	•
Madagascar	◦	•		•	•	•	•	•	Singapore					◦		•	•
Malawi	•	•		•	◦	◦	•	•	Slovakia	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•	•
Malaysia		•		•			•	•	Slovenia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Maldives		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Solomon Islands	◦	•		•			•	•
Mali	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Somalia								•
Malta	•	•	•	•		◦	•	•	South Africa	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•	•
Marshall Islands	•	◦		•			•	•	Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mauritania		•							Sri Lanka			•	•	•	◦	•	•
Mauritius	•	•		•	◦	◦	•	•	St. Kitts and Nevis		•					•	•
Mayotte									St. Lucia	◦	•		•			•	•
Mexico	◦	•		•	•	•	•	•	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	•	•		•			•	•
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.				•	◦	◦	•	•	Sudan	◦	•		•	◦	•	•	•
Moldova	◦	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•	Suriname		•			◦	◦	•	•
Monaco	◦	•	•	◦	•	◦	•	•	Swaziland							•	•
Mongolia	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Sweden	•	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•
Morocco	◦		•	•	•	•	•	•	Switzerland	•	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•
Mozambique	◦	•		•	•	•	•	•	Syrian Arab Republic	◦	•		•	•	•	•	•
Myanmar				•			•	•	Tajikistan	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Namibia	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Tanzania	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Nauru	•	•	•	•	◦	◦	•	•	Thailand	◦	•		•	•		◦	•
Nepal					◦	◦	•	•	Timor-Leste	•	•			•	•	•	•
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	◦	◦	•	•	Togo		•		•	◦	•	•	•
Netherlands Antilles									Tonga							•	•
New Caledonia									Trinidad and Tobago	•	•		•			•	•
New Zealand	•	•	•	•		◦	•	•	Tunisia		•		•	•	•	•	•
Nicaragua	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Turkey		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Niger	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Turkmenistan		•	•	•		•	•	•
Nigeria	•	•		•	◦	◦	•	•	Turks and Caicos Islands							•	•
Niue		•		•			•	•	Tuvalu				•			•	•
Northern Mariana Islands.									Uganda	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Norway	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Ukraine	◦	◦	•		◦	•	•	•
Oman	◦			•	•	•	•	•	United Arab Emirates	◦			•			•	•
Pakistan			•	•	◦	◦	•	•	United Kingdom	•	•	•	•	•	◦	•	•
Palau				•			•	•	United States of America	◦		•	◦	•	•	◦	•
Panama	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Uruguay	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Papua New Guinea				•			•	•	Uzbekistan	◦			•			•	•
Paraguay	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Vanuatu		◦		•			•	•
Peru		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Venezuela	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Philippines	◦	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Viet Nam				•	•	•	•	•
Poland	•	◦	•	•	•	•	•	•	Virgin Islands (USA)								
Portugal	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	West Bank and Gaza								
Puerto Rico									Yemen	◦	•		•		•	•	•
Qatar		•		•	•	•	•	•	Zambia	•	•		◦			•	•
Romania	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Zimbabwe	◦	•					•	•

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## Status of official countries' reports to the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies

### Up to April 2005

**A:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), 1966. Entry into force: 3 January 1976.

**B:** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), 1966. Entry into force: 23 March 1976.

**C:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1965. Entry into force: 4 January 1969.

**D:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981.

**E:** Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984. Entry into force: 26 June 1987.

**F:** Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989. Entry into force: 2 September 1990.

	A	B	C	D	E	F		A	B	C	D	E	F
Afghanistan	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Dominican Republic	▼	■	▼	▼		▼
Albania	■	■	■	▼	■	■	Ecuador	■	▼	■	▼	■	■
Algeria		▼	▼	■	▼	■	Egypt	▼	■	■	▼	▼	▼
Andorra				▼		▼	El Salvador	■	■	■	■	▼	▼
Angola	▼	▼		▼		▼	Equatorial Guinea	▼	▼		■	▼	▼
Antigua and Barbuda			▼	▼	▼	▼	Eritrea	▼	▼	▼	■		■
Argentina	▼	■	■	■	■	■	Estonia	■	■	■	▼	■	■
Armenia	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Ethiopia	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Australia	■	■	■	■	■	■	Fiji			■	▼		▼
Austria	■	▼	▼	■	■	■	Finland	■	■	■	■	■	■
Azerbaijan	■	■	■	▼	■	■	France	■	▼	■	■	■	■
Bahamas			■	▼		■	Gabon	▼	▼	▼	▼	■	▼
Bahrain			■	▼	■	▼	Gambia	▼	▼	▼	■		▼
Bangladesh	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Georgia	■	■	■	■	■	■
Barbados	▼	▼	■	▼		▼	Germany	■	■	▼	■	▼	■
Belarus	▼	▼	■	■	▼	■	Ghana	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	■
Belgium	■	■	▼	▼	▼	■	Greece	■	■	▼	▼	■	▼
Belize		▼	▼	▼	▼	■	Grenada	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Benin	■	■	▼	■	▼	▼	Guatemala	■	■	▼	■	■	■
Bhutan				■		▼	Guinea	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Bolivia	■	▼	■	▼	▼	■	Guinea-Bissau	▼			▼		▼
Bosnia and Herzegovina	■	▼	■	▼	■	■	Guyana	■	▼	■	■	■	■
Botswana		▼	■	▼	▼	■	Haiti		▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Brazil	■	■	■	■	▼	▼	Holy See			▼	▼	▼	▼
Brunei Darussalam						■	Honduras	■	■		▼	▼	▼
Bulgaria	▼	▼	▼	▼	■	▼	Hungary	▼	■	▼	▼	■	■
Burkina Faso	▼	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	Iceland	■	■	■	■	■	■
Burundi	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	India	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	■
Cambodia	▼	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	Indonesia			▼	▼	▼	■
Cameroon	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Iran, Islamic Rep.	▼	▼	■			■
Canada	■	■	▼	▼	■	■	Iraq	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Cape Verde	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	Ireland	■	■	■	■	▼	▼
Central African Republic	▼	▼	▼	▼		▼	Israel	■	■	▼	■	▼	■
Chad	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Italy	■	■	▼	■	■	■
Chile	■	▼	▼	■	▼	■	Jamaica	▼	▼	▼	■		■
China	■	▼	▼	■	▼	■	Japan	■	▼	▼	■	▼	▼
Colombia	■	■	▼	▼	▼	■	Jordan	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Comoros				▼		▼	Kazakhstan		▼	■	▼	▼	■
Congo, Dem. Rep.	▼	▼	▼	■	■	▼	Kenya	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	▼
Congo, Rep.	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Kiribati						▼
Costa Rica	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	■	Korea, Dem. Rep.	■	▼		■		■
Côte d'Ivoire	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	Kuwait	■	■	▼	▼	▼	▼
Croatia	■	■	▼	■	■	▼	Kyrgyzstan	■	■	▼	■	▼	■
Cuba			▼	▼	▼	▼	Lao PDR			■	▼		■
Cyprus	▼	▼	▼	■	▼	■	Latvia	▼	■	■	■	▼	■
Czech Republic	■	■	■	■	■	■	Lebanon	▼	▼	■	■	▼	■
Denmark	■	■	▼	■	■	■	Lesotho	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Djibouti	▼	▼		▼		▼	Liberia	▼	▼	▼	▼		■
Dominica	▼	▼		▼		■							

Sources: Amnesty International website ([web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng](http://web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng)) and Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([www.ohchr.org/tbr/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbr/Reporting_schedule.pdf)).

- ▼ Overdue
- Pending
- Not yet due

## Status of official countries' reports to the UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies

### Up to April 2005

**A:** International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), 1966. Entry into force: 3 January 1976.

**B:** International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), 1966. Entry into force: 23 March 1976.

**C:** International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1965. Entry into force: 4 January 1969.

**D:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979. Entry into force: 3 September 1981.

**E:** Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984. Entry into force: 26 June 1987.

**F:** Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989. Entry into force: 2 September 1990.

	A	B	C	D	E	F		A	B	C	D	E	F
Libya	II	▼	■	II	▼	■	Senegal	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	▼
Liechtenstein	II	■	▼	II	▼	II	Serbia and Montenegro	II	■	▼	▼	▼	▼
Lithuania	■	■	II	▼	▼	II	Seychelles	▼	▼	II	▼	▼	▼
Luxembourg	■	■	■	■	II	■	Sierra Leone	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Macedonia, FYR	▼	▼	▼	II	▼	▼	Singapore				II		■
Madagascar	▼	▼	■	▼		■	Slovakia	■	■	■	▼	▼	▼
Malawi	▼	▼	II	II	▼	▼	Slovenia	II	II	■	■	▼	■
Malaysia				II		▼	Solomon Islands	■		▼	▼		■
Maldives			▼	▼	▼	▼	Somalia	▼	▼	▼		▼	
Mali	▼	■	■	II	▼	▼	South Africa		▼	II	▼	▼	▼
Malta	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Spain	■	▼	■	■	▼	▼
Marshall Islands						II	Sri Lanka	▼	■	▼	▼	II	■
Mauritania			■	▼			St. Kitts and Nevis				▼	▼	▼
Mauritius	▼	■	▼	II	▼	II	St. Lucia			II	▼		II
Mexico	II	▼	II	▼	II	II	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	▼
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.						▼	Sudan	▼	▼	▼			■
Moldova	■	■	▼	II	▼	■	Suriname	▼	■	■	▼		▼
Monaco	II	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	Swaziland			▼			▼
Mongolia	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	II	Sweden	■	■	■	▼	▼	■
Morocco	II	■	■	▼	■	■	Switzerland	▼	■	▼	■	II	■
Mozambique		▼	II	▼	▼	▼	Syrian Arab Republic	■	II	▼	▼		■
Myanmar				▼	▼	■	Tajikistan	▼	II	■	▼	▼	▼
Namibia	▼	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	Tanzania	▼	▼	II	▼		II
Nauru						▼	Thailand	▼	II	▼	II		II
Nepal	■	▼	■	▼	II	II	Timor-Leste	■	■	▼	▼	▼	■
Netherlands	▼	■	■	▼	II	■	Togo	▼	■	▼	II	II	■
New Zealand	■	■	■	■	▼	■	Tonga			▼			▼
Nicaragua	▼	▼	▼	▼		II	Trinidad and Tobago	■	▼	▼	▼		II
Niger	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	Tunisia	▼	▼	■	▼	▼	■
Nigeria	▼	▼	II	■	▼	■	Turkey	■		▼	■	▼	▼
Norway	II	■	■	■	II	II	Turkmenistan	▼	▼	II	II	▼	▼
Oman			▼	▼	▼	▼	Tuvalu				▼	▼	▼
Pakistan			▼	▼		■	Uganda	▼	■	■	▼	II	II
Palau						▼	Ukraine	■	■	▼	▼	II	■
Panama	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	■	United Arab Emirates			▼			▼
Papua New Guinea			▼	▼	■	■	United Kingdom	■	■	■	II	■	■
Paraguay	▼	II		■	▼	■	United States of America		▼	▼		▼	
Peru	▼	▼	▼	II	II	II	Uruguay	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Philippines	▼	■	▼	II	▼	II	Uzbekistan	II	■	▼	II	▼	▼
Poland	■	■	■	II	II	■	Vanuatu						▼
Portugal	■	■	■	▼	▼	■	Venezuela	■	■	II	II	▼	▼
Qatar			▼		II	▼	Viet Nam	▼	■	▼	▼		■
Romania	▼	▼	▼	II	▼	■	Yemen	■	II	■	■	▼	II
Russian Federation	■	■	■	▼	II	II	Zambia	II	▼	II	▼	▼	■
Rwanda	▼	▼	▼	▼		■	Zimbabwe	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Samoa				■		▼							
San Marino	▼	▼	▼			■							
São Tomé and Príncipe													
Saudi Arabia			■	▼	▼	II							

**Note:** This table brings together information contained in various sources of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to provide an overview of the status of reporting to the various Committees. For an official reference document please visit the United Nations Human Rights Database website ([www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf](http://www.unhcr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf)).

Sources: Amnesty International website ([web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng](http://web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng)) and Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting_schedule.pdf)).

- ▼ Overdue
- II Pending
- Not yet due



## Reports to be submitted to the UN Treaty Bodies during 2005 - 2006

### Up to 10 March 2005

	COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN	COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE	COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Albania	37th Session December 2006	83rd Session March 2005			34th Session April/May 2005	38th Session January 2005
Algeria				32nd Session January 2005		40th Session September 2005
Australia			66th Session March 2005	34th Session January 2006		40th Session September 2005
Austria <sup>^</sup>	35th Session November 2005				35th Session November 2005	38th Session January 2005
Azerbaijan			66th Session March 2005			41st Session January 2006
Bahamas						38th Session January 2005
Bahrain			66th Session March 2005		34th Session April/May 2005	
Barbados			67th Session August 2005			
Belize						38th Session January 2005
Benin				33rd Session July 2005		
Bolivia	35th Session November 2005					38th Session January 2005
Bosnia and Herzegovina	36th Session May 2006				35th Session November 2005	39th Session May 2005
Brazil		85th Session October 2005				
Burkina Faso				33rd Session July 2005		
Cambodia				34th Session January 2006		
Canada	36th Session May 2006	85th Session October 2005			34th Session April/May 2005	
China	34th Session May 2005					
Colombia						41st Session January 2006
Congo, Dem. Rep. <sup>c</sup>					35th Session November 2005	
Costa Rica						39th Session May 2005
Croatia				32nd Session January 2005		
Denmark <sup>^</sup>					36th Session April/May 2006	40th Session September 2005
Ecuador					35th Session November 2005	39th Session May 2005
El Salvador	36th Session May 2006					
Eritrea				34th Session January 2006		
Finland <sup>^</sup>					34th Session April/May 2005	40th Session September 2005
France			66th Session March 2005		35th Session November 2005	
Gabon				32nd Session January 2005		
Gambia				33rd Session July 2005		
Georgia			67th Session August 2005		36th Session April/May 2006	
Ghana						41st Session January 2006
Greece		83rd Session March 2005				
Guatemala					36th Session April/May 2006	

Source: UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website ([www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting_schedule.pdf)).

## Reports to be submitted to the UN Treaty Bodies during 2005 - 2006

### Up to 10 March 2005

	COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN	COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE	COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Guyana				33rd Session July 2005		
Honduras		85th Session October 2005				
Hong Kong (China)						40th Session September 2005
Hungary <sup>c</sup>					35th Session November 2005	41st Session January 2006
Iceland		83rd Session March 2005	67th Session August 2005			
Iran, Islamic Rep.						38th Session January 2005
Ireland			66th Session March 2005	33rd Session July 2005		
Israel				33rd Session July 2005		
Italy		85th Session October 2005		32nd Session January 2005	36th Session April/May 2006	
Kenya		83rd Session March 2005				
Korea, Dem. Rep.				33rd Session July 2005		
Korea, Rep. <sup>c</sup>					35th Session November 2005	
Lao PDR			66th Session March 2005	32nd Session January 2005		
Latvia						42nd Session May 2006
Lebanon				33rd Session July 2005		42nd Session May 2006
Libya	35th Session November 2005					
Liechtenstein	36th Session May 2006					41st Session January 2006
Lithuania			67th Session August 2005			41st Session January 2006
Luxembourg			66th Session March 2005		37th Session November 2006	38th Session January 2005
Macedonia, FYR				34th Session January 2006		
Mali				34th Session January 2006		
Marshall Islands						42nd Session May 2006
Mauritius		83rd Session March 2005				41st Session January 2006
Mexico	37th Session December 2006				37th Session November 2006	42nd Session May 2006
Monaco	35th Session November 2005					
Mongolia						39th Session May 2005
Morocco	36th Session May 2006					
Nepal <sup>c</sup>					35th Session November 2005	39th Session May 2005
Netherlands					36th Session April/May 2006	
Nicaragua						39th Session May 2005
Nigeria			66th Session March 2005			38th Session January 2005
Norway <sup>a</sup>	34th Session May 2005				37th Session November 2006	39th Session May 2005
Paraguay		85th Session October 2005		32nd Session January 2005		

Source: UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website ([www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting_schedule.pdf)).

## Reports to be submitted to the UN Treaty Bodies during 2005 - 2006

### Up to 10 March 2005

	COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS	COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION	COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN	COMMITTEE AGAINST TORTURE	COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
Peru					37th Session November 2006	41st Session January 2006
Philippines						39th Session May 2005
Poland					37th Session November 2006	
Qatar					37th Session November 2006	
Russian Federation					36th Session April/May 2006	40th Session September 2005
Samoa				32nd Session January 2005		
Saudi Arabia						40th Session September 2005
Serbia and Montenegro	34th Session May 2005					
Slovenia	35th Session November 2005	84th Session July 2005				
Sri Lanka					35th Session November 2005	
St. Lucia						39th Session May 2005
Sweden						38th Session January 2005
Switzerland					34th Session April/May 2005	
Syrian Arab Republic		84th Session July 2005				
Tajikistan		84th Session July 2005				
Tanzania			67th Session August 2005			42nd Session May 2006
Thailand		84th Session July 2005		34th Session January 2006		41st Session January 2006
Togo				34th Session January 2006	34th Session April/May 2005	38th Session January 2005
Trinidad and Tobago						40th Session September 2005
Turkey				32nd Session January 2005		
Turkmenistan			67th Session August 2005			
Uganda					34th Session April/May 2005	40th Session September 2005
Ukraine					36th Session April/May 2006	
Uzbekistan	35th Session November 2005					
Venezuela			67th Session August 2005	34th Session January 2006		
Yemen		84th Session July 2005				39th Session May 2005
Zambia	34th Session May 2005		67th Session August 2005			

**Notes:** This schedule is tentative and the information might be updated during 2005. For official confirmation please visit the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website.

<sup>a</sup> Includes consideration of a report under Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

<sup>b</sup> Includes consideration of a report under Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

<sup>c</sup> The Committee has requested an additional week of meeting time and is awaiting confirmation. If confirmed, these reports will be considered.

Source: UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights website ([www.ohchr.org/tbr/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbr/Reporting_schedule.pdf)).

## 25 years of the CEDAW

# Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the world

### Introduction

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by the UN General Assembly resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979. At a special ceremony that took place during the Copenhagen mid-decade review conference<sup>1</sup> on 17 July 1980, 64 States signed the Convention and two States submitted their instruments of ratification. On 3 September 1981, 30 days after the twentieth member State had ratified it, the Convention entered into force.<sup>2</sup>

As of 18 March 2005, 180 countries - over 90% of UN members - are party to the Convention and an additional country (United States of America) has signed the treaty, binding itself to do nothing in contravention of its terms.

The last country to ratify the Convention was Monaco in March 2005. The years 1981 and 1985 were when most ratifications were registered (around 20 countries each year). After 2000, the pace of ratifications slowed down. In early 2005 only 11 member States had not yet ratified (Brunei Darussalam, Holy See, Iran, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Oman, Palau, Qatar, Somalia, Sudan and Tonga). In most cases, these States have cited religious reasons for not ratifying the Convention.

This international bill of rights for women consists of a preamble and 30 articles; it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

The Convention defines discrimination against women as "...any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field."<sup>3</sup>

According to the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women,<sup>4</sup> by accepting the Convention, States commit themselves to undertake a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms, including:

- to incorporate the principle of equality of men and women in their legal system, abolish all discriminatory laws and adopt appropriate ones prohibiting discrimination against women;
- to establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination;
- to ensure elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises.

The Convention provides the basis for realizing equality between women and men through ensuring women's equal access to, and equal opportunities in, political and public life - including the right to vote and to stand for election - as well as education, health and employment. States parties agree to take all appropriate measures, including legislation and temporary special measures, so that women can enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Convention is the only human rights treaty which affirms the reproductive rights of women and targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations. It affirms women's rights to acquire, change or retain their nationality and the nationality of their children. States parties also agree to take appropriate measures against all forms of trafficking and exploitation of women.

Countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations.

### Beijing World Conference on Women and the CEDAW

In September 1995 the Fourth World Conference on Women was held in Beijing and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were adopted.

Paragraph 8 of the Beijing Declaration states that: "The equal rights and inherent human dignity of women and men and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Declaration on the Right to Development."

It also upholds the CEDAW and in the Mission Statement, paragraph 25, states: "In 1979, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which entered into force in 1981 and set an international standard for what was meant by equality between women and men. In 1985, the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace adopted the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, to be implemented by the year 2000. There has been important progress in achieving equality between women and men. Many Governments have enacted legislation to promote equality between women and men and have established national machineries to ensure the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all spheres of society. International agencies have focused greater attention on women's status and roles."

### Optional Protocol to the CEDAW

On 6 October 1999, at the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW was adopted.<sup>5</sup>

The draft Optional Protocol incorporates the features of existing UN complaints procedures. It incorporates some of the practices of other UN treaty bodies that have developed as their complaints procedures have been used. It also refers to the principles of equality and non-discrimination as embodied in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It reaffirms the determination of States parties which adopt the protocol to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action to prevent violations of these rights and freedoms.

The Fourth World Conference on Women called on UN member States to support the elaboration of the Optional Protocol. In the Beijing Platform for Action, among the actions to be taken it is also noted: "Support the process initiated by the Commission on the Status of Women with a view to elaborating a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women that could enter into force as soon as possible on a right of petition procedure,

1 World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.

2 CEDAW, Article 27 (1): "The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession."

3 CEDAW, Part I, Article 1.

4 [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/)

5 Adopted by Resolution A/RES/54/4.

taking into consideration the Secretary-General's report on the optional protocol, including those views related to its feasibility."<sup>6</sup>

The Protocol entered into force on 22 December 2000, in accordance with Article 16 (1). The last country to accede to the Optional Protocol was Cameroon in January 2005, bringing the total number of ratifying countries to 71, while 76 countries signatory countries are still to ratify.

The signature and/or ratification of the Optional Protocol represents a measure of the political will of the States towards the full implementation of the CEDAW. Among the countries that have signed or ratified the Protocol there is dissimilar behaviour according to regions: while 36 European countries have signed or ratified the Protocol, only 6 have done so in Central Asia, 8 in South Asia and the Pacific, 18 in Latin America and the Caribbean and 20 in Sub-Saharan Africa. It must be noted that in South Asia only Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have declared themselves in favour of the Protocol. At the regional level, the most notable case is Libya, which is the only member State that has ratified the Optional Protocol among the 20 countries belonging to the Middle East and North of Africa region.

### Amendment to Article 20, paragraph 1

In 1995 the Governments of Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Norway and Sweden proposed an amendment to Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention. It was adopted at the CEDAW Committee session held on 22 December 1997, and the General Assembly noted with approval the amendment.

Article 20 of CEDAW limits the Committee's normal meeting time to two weeks annually. The proposed amendment introduces a procedure that allows for more flexible time allocation. The amendment has not yet received the number of acceptances required for its entry into force. According to the resolution of the amendment, "...it shall enter into force following consideration by the General Assembly and when it has been accepted by a two-thirds majority of States parties which shall have so notified the Secretary-General as depositary of the Convention." As of May 2005, only 45 UN members are parties. Since the early 1990s, and pending the entry into force of the amendment, the General Assembly has authorized the Committee to meet for two three-week sessions annually. The most recent acceptances of this amendment were made by Ireland, Lithuania and Uruguay in 2004.

The acceptance by these countries and of the other UN member States constitutes an important gesture of political will as it gives the CEDAW Committee more freedom and flexibility to undertake its monitoring task. Furthermore, it gives more validity to the recommendations made to the countries in the implementation of the Convention, since the Committee will have more time to analyze each

country report as well as the complaints brought before it.

Without a doubt, the allocation of resources to the Committee will translate into better monitoring of the implementation of the Convention as well as the study of the interdependencies of the Convention with action plans that emerged from other conferences and summits of the 1990s, especially that of Beijing 1995.

### Reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an expert body established in 1982 and composed of 23 experts on women's issues from around the world. The Committee's mandate is very specific: it watches over the progress for women made in those countries that are the States parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. A country becomes a State party by ratifying or acceding to the Convention and thereby accepts a legal obligation to counteract discrimination against women. The Committee monitors the implementation of national measures to fulfil this obligation.

As remarked earlier, countries that have ratified or acceded to the Convention are legally bound to put its provisions into practice. They are also committed to submit national reports, at least every four years, on measures they have taken to comply with their treaty obligations.

The Committee reviews national reports submitted by the States parties within one year of ratification or accession, and every four years thereafter. These reports, which cover national action taken to improve the situation of women, are presented to the Committee by government representatives. In discussions with these officials, the CEDAW experts can comment on the report and obtain additional information. The Committee also makes recommendations on any issue affecting women to which it believes the States parties should devote more attention.

By analyzing the status of the reports to the Committee it is possible to see that many countries have not fulfilled their obligations: of the 180 States parties to the Convention, only 26 are up to date with their reports and another 45 countries are classified as "pending presentation". Within this last group, 16 countries are already scheduled for the presentation of their reports at the July 2005 and January 2006 sessions. These countries are: Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Eritrea, Gambia, Guyana, Ireland, Israel, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lebanon, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Mali, Thailand, Togo and Venezuela.

One hundred and two States parties are overdue in the presentation of their report to the Committee. The table marked **UN Member**

**States with Overdue Status (as of May 2005)** lists the countries that have not submitted their reports on time.

Sub-Saharan Africa presents a critical case where only 3 of the 43 countries in the region (Angola, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria) are up to date on their reports while 30 others are overdue. In North Africa and the Middle East there is an equally critical situation since only Algeria and Yemen are up to date; Lebanon, Israel and Libya have scheduled presentations, and the remainder of the countries are overdue in their obligations. The American continent follows the same pattern, as much in Latin America and the Caribbean as in Canada. In Europe, the countries that are not delayed in reporting (15) almost equal those countries (14) that have a pending status or are scheduled to present their respective reports in upcoming sessions.

### Countries' reservations to CEDAW

In accordance with the contractual outlook of International Law where the States may make reservations in order not to contradict their internal legislation, Article 28 of the Convention permits ratification subject to reservations, provided that the reservations are not incompatible with the objective and purpose of the Convention.

According to the Committee, Article 2 is central to the objective and purpose of the Convention. States parties which ratify the Convention do so because they agree that discrimination against women in all its forms should be condemned and that the strategies set out in Article 2, subparagraphs (a) to (g), should be implemented by States parties to eliminate it.

Neither traditional, religious or cultural practices nor incompatible domestic laws and policies can justify violations of the Convention. The Committee also has stated that reservations to Article 16, whether lodged for national, traditional, religious or cultural reasons, are incompatible with the Convention and therefore impermissible and should be reviewed and modified or withdrawn.

Although some States have withdrawn their reservations in what constitutes a true gesture of will to more integrally implement the Convention, many reservations still remain mainly due to religious, traditional and cultural reasons. Examples of this are the reservations entered by countries such as Bahrain, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iraq, Libya and Syria, which make reservations to certain Articles of the Treaty, based on its incompatibility with the Sharia.<sup>8</sup> Other cases such as the Maldives, Morocco and Mauritania ratify all articles provided they do not interfere with the Sharia since this is the law that

6 Beijing Platform for Action, "Actions to be taken by Governments", Para. 230 (k), 1995.

7 Adopted by Resolution 50/202.

8 The *Sharia* contains the rules by which a Muslim society is organized and governed, and it provides the means to resolve conflicts among individuals and between the individual and the State.

**UN Member States with Overdue Status (as of May 2005)**

CENTRAL ASIA AND EUROPE	THE AMERICAS	EAST ASIA & PACIFIC AND SOUTH ASIA	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
Albania	Belize	Afghanistan	Bahrain	Botswana
Andorra	Bolivia	Fiji	Djibouti	Burundi
Armenia	Canada	India	Egypt	Cameroon
Azerbaijan	Colombia	Indonesia	Iraq	Cape Verde
Belgium	Costa Rica	Lao PDR	Jordan	Central African Republic
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Cuba	Maldives	Kuwait	Chad
Bulgaria	Dominica	Mongolia	Malta	Comoros
Estonia	Dominican Republic	Myanmar	Morocco	Côte d'Ivoire
Greece	Ecuador	Nepal	Saudi Arabia	Ethiopia
Hungary	Grenada	Pakistan	Syrian Arab Republic	Gabon
Kazakhstan	Haiti	Papua New Guinea	Tunisia	Ghana
Lithuania	Honduras	Solomon Islands		Guinea
Netherlands	Mexico	Sri Lanka		Guinea-Bissau
Portugal	Nicaragua	Timor-Leste		Kenya
Russian Federation	Panama	Tuvalu		Lesotho
Serbia and Montenegro	St. Kitts and Nevis	Vanuatu		Liberia
Slovakia	St. Lucia	Viet Nam		Madagascar
Sweden	St. Vincent and Grenadines			Mauritania
Tajikistan	Suriname			Mozambique
Ukraine	Trinidad and Tobago			Namibia
Antigua and Barbuda	Uruguay			Niger
Bahamas				Rwanda
Barbados				Senegal
				Seychelles
				Sierra Leone
				South Africa
				Tanzania
				Uganda
				Zambia
				Zimbabwe

**Source:** Social Watch based on information from Amnesty International Website ([web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng](http://web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng)) and Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting\\_schedule.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/tbru/Reporting_schedule.pdf))

“governs all marital and family relations of the 100 percent Muslim population...”<sup>9</sup>

By analyzing the reservations it can be noted that some States enter reservations to particular articles on the ground that national law, tradition, religion or culture are not congruent with Convention principles, and purport to justify the reservation on that basis. In some cases, States entered reservations to Article 2, although their national constitutions or laws prohibit discrimination. There is therefore an inherent conflict between the provisions of the State's constitution and its reservation to the Convention.

There is an example of this in the declaration made by Chile when it signed the Convention in 1980: “The Government of Chile has signed this Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, mindful of the important step which this document represents, not only

<sup>9</sup> See full list of reservations at: [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm)

in terms of the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, but also in terms of their full and permanent integration into society in conditions of equality. The Government is obliged to state, however, that some of the provisions of the Convention are not entirely compatible with current Chilean legislation. At the same time, it reports the establishment of a Commission for the Study and Reform of the Civil Code, which now has before it various proposals to amend, inter alia, those provisions which are not fully consistent with the terms of the Convention.”

This case is significant since part of the commitment of the States to ratify the Treaty implies the confirmation of equality between men and women in the national laws, as well as the implementation of the premises and paradigms that this international treaty demands.

In two of the general recommendations and its statement on reservations the Committee has called on the States to re-examine their self-imposed limitations to full compliance with all the principles in the Convention.

Almost 30 States have already complied with this request and have reviewed and withdrawn part or all of their reservations. These States are: Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Fiji, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mongolia, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

Removal or modification of reservations, particularly to Articles 2 and 16, indicate a State party's determination to remove all barriers to women's full equality and its commitment to ensuring that women are able to participate fully in all aspects of public and private life without fear of discrimination or re-crimination. ■

<sup>10</sup> According to data provided by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/reservations-country.htm)



## 25 years of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the world: how the countries are performing...




COUNTRY	UN MEMBER SINCE	CEDAW SIGNATURE	CEDAW RATIFICATION, ACCESSION, SUCCESSION	OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO CEDAW	AMENDMENT TO ART. 20 OF CEDAW	REPORTS TO CEDAW	OBSERVATIONS	RESERVATIONS
Afghanistan	1946	1980	2003			Overdue		
Albania	1955		1994	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Algeria	1962		1996			Not yet due		Art. 2; Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16; Art. 29
Andorra	1993		1997	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Angola	1976		1986			Not yet due		
Antigua and Barbuda	1981		1989			Overdue		
Argentina	1945	1980	1985	Signature		Not yet due		Art. 29, para. 1
Armenia	1992		1993			Overdue		
Australia	1945	1980	1983		Acceptance	Pending Jan. 2006		Art. 11, para. 2
Austria	1955	1980	1982	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 11
Azerbaijan	1992		1995	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Bahamas	1973		1993		Acceptance	Overdue		Art. 2, para. (a); Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 16, para. (h); Art. 29, para. 1
Bahrain	1971		2002			Overdue		Art. 2; Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 1
Bangladesh	1974		1984	Ratification		Not yet due	Declaration under Art. 10 of OP	Art. 2
Barbados	1966	1980	1980			Overdue		
Belarus	1945	1980	1981	Ratification		Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Belgium	1945	1980	1985	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Belize	1981	1990	1990	Ratification		Overdue	Declaration under Art. 10 of OP	
Benin	1960	1981	1992	Signature		Pending Jul. 2005		
Bhutan	1971	1980	1981			Not yet due		
Bolivia	1945	1980	1990	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1992		1993	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Botswana	1966		1996			Overdue		
Brazil	1945	1981	1984	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 29, para. 1
Brunei Darussalam	1984							
Bulgaria	1955	1980	1982	Signature		Overdue		
Burkina Faso	1960		1987	Signature		Pending Jul. 2005		
Burundi	1962	1980	1992	Signature		Overdue		
Cambodia	1955	1980	1992	Signature		Pending Jan. 2006		
Cameroon	1960	1983	1994	Ratification		Overdue		
Canada	1945	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Cape Verde	1975		1980			Overdue		
Central African Republic	1960		1991			Overdue		
Chad	1960		1995			Overdue		
Chile	1945	1980	1989	Signature	Acceptance	Pending	Declaration under Art. 10 of OP	
China	1945	1980	1980		Acceptance	Pending		Art. 29, para. 1
Colombia	1945	1980	1982	Signature		Overdue		
Comoros	1975		1994			Overdue		
Congo, Dem. Rep.	1960	1980	1986			Pending		

### References:

#### • ABOUT THE RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION BY UN MEMBER STATES:

**YEAR** Ratification, accession, approval, notification or succession, acceptance, consent to be bound or definitive signature

#### • ABOUT SUBMISSION OF REPORT TO CEDAW:

 No yet due  
 Pending  
 Overdue

#### • OBSERVATIONS:

Accepts indiv. complaints: Countries that accept individual complaints.

Declaration under Art. 10 of OP: Countries that make the declaration under Art. 10 of the Optional Protocol to the Women's Convention do not recognize the competence of the CEDAW Committee to undertake inquiries.

Does not undertake Art. 8 and 9 of OP: Countries that do not undertake the obligations arising from Articles 8 and 9 of the Optional Protocol.

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Congo, Rep.	1960	1980	1982			Pending		
Costa Rica	1945	1980	1986	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Côte d'Ivoire	1960	1980	1995			Overdue		
Croatia	1992		1992	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Cuba	1945	1980	1980	Signature		Overdue	Does not undertake Art. 8 and 9 of OP	Art. 29
Cyprus	1960		1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Czech Republic	1993		1993	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Denmark	1945	1980	1983	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Djibouti	1977		1998			Overdue		
Dominica	1978	1980	1980			Overdue		
Dominican Republic	1945	1980	1982	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Ecuador	1945	1980	1981	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Egypt	1945	1980	1981		Acceptance	Overdue		Art. 2; Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 1
El Salvador	1945	1980	1981	Signature		Not yet due		Art. 29, para. 1
Equatorial Guinea	1968		1984			Not yet due		
Eritrea	1993		1995			Pending Jan. 2006		
Estonia	1991		1991			Overdue		
Ethiopia	1945	1980	1981			Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Fiji	1970		1995			Overdue		
Finland	1955	1980	1986	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
France	1945	1980	1983	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 14, para. 2; Art. 16, para. 1; Art. 29, para. 2
Gabon	1960	1980	1983	Ratification		Overdue		
Gambia	1965	1980	1993			Pending Jul. 2005		
Georgia	1992		1994	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Germany	1973	1980	1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Ghana	1957	1980	1986	Signature		Overdue		
Greece	1945	1982	1983	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Grenada	1974	1980	1990			Overdue		
Guatemala	1945	1981	1982	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Guinea	1958	1980	1982			Overdue		
Guinea-Bissau	1974	1980	1985	Signature		Overdue		
Guyana	1966	1980	1980			Pending Jul. 2005		
Haiti	1945	1980	1981			Overdue		
Holy See								
Honduras	1945	1980	1983			Overdue		
Hungary	1955	1980	1980	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Iceland	1946	1980	1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
India	1945	1980	1993			Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Indonesia	1950	1980	1984	Signature		Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Iran, Islamic Rep.	1945							
Iraq	1945		1986			Overdue		Art. 2, para. (f) and (g); Art. 9, para. 1 and 2; Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 1

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Ireland	1955		1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending Jul. 2005	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 11, para. 1; Art. 13, para. (a); Art. 16, para. 1 (d) and (f)
Israel	1949	1980	1991			Pending Jul. 2005		Art. 7, para. (b); Art. 16
Italy	1955	1980	1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Jamaica	1962	1980	1984			Pending		Art. 29, para. 1
Japan	1956	1980	1985		Acceptance	Not yet due		
Jordan	1955	1980	1992		Acceptance	Overdue		Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16, para. 1 (c), (d) and (g)
Kazakhstan	1992		1998	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Kenya	1963		1984			Overdue		
Kiribati	1999		2004					
Korea, Dem. Rep.	1991		2001			Pending Jul. 2005		Art. 2, para. (f); Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 29, para. 1
Korea, Rep.	1991	1983	1984		Acceptance	Pending		Art. 9
Kuwait	1963		1994			Overdue		Art. 7, para. (a); Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 16 (f); Art. 29, para. 1
Kyrgyzstan	1992		1997	Ratification		Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Lao PDR	1955	1980	1981			Overdue		
Latvia	1991		1992			Not yet due		
Lebanon	1945		1997			Pending Jul. 2005		Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 16, para. 1 (c), (d), (f) and (g); Art. 29, para. 2
Lesotho	1966	1980	1995	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 2
Liberia	1945		1984	Signature		Overdue		
Libya	1955		1989	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 2; Art. 16, para. 1 (c) and (d)
Liechtenstein	1990		1995	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 1; Art. 16 para. 1 (g)
Lithuania	1991		1994	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Luxembourg	1945	1980	1989	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Macedonia, FYR	1993		1994	Ratification		Pending Jul. 2005	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Madagascar	1960	1980	1989	Signature	Acceptance	Overdue		
Malawi	1964		1987	Signature		Pending		
Malaysia	1957		1995			Pending		Art. 5, para. (a); Art. 7, para. (b); Art. 9 (except para. 1); Art. 11; Art. 16, para. 1 (a), (c) and (g)
Maldives	1965		1993		Acceptance	Overdue		Art. 7, para. (a); Art. 16
Mali	1960	1984	1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending Jan. 2006	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Malta	1964		1991		Acceptance	Overdue		Art. 11, para. 1; Art. 13; Art. 15; Art. 16, para. 1
Marshall Islands	1991							
Mauritania	1961		2001			Overdue		
Mauritius	1968		1984	Signature	Acceptance	Pending		
Mexico	1945	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 29, para. 1
Micronesia, Fed. Sts.	1991		2004					Art. 2, para. (f) Art. 5; Art. 11, para. (1d) and (2b); Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 1
Moldova	1992		1994			Pending		
Monaco	1993		2005					
Mongolia	1961	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Morocco	1956		1993			Overdue		Art. 2; Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16; Art. 29

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Namibia	1990		1992	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Nauru	1999							
Nepal	1955	1991	1991	Signature		Overdue		
Netherlands	1945	1980	1991	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
New Zealand	1945	1980	1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Nicaragua	1945	1980	1981			Overdue		
Niger	1960		1999	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 2, para. (d) and (f); Art. 5, para. (a); Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16, para. 1 (c), (e) and (g); Art. 29, para. 1
Nigeria	1960	1984	1985	Ratification		Not yet due		
Norway	1945	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Oman	1971							
Pakistan	1947		1996			Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Palau	1994							
Panama	1945	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Papua New Guinea	1975		1995			Overdue		
Paraguay	1945		1987	Ratification		Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Peru	1945	1981	1982	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Philippines	1945	1980	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Poland	1945	1980	1980	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Portugal	1955	1980	1980	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Qatar	1971							
Romania	1955	1980	1982	Ratification		Pending	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Russian Federation	1945	1980	1981	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Rwanda	1962	1980	1981			Overdue		
Samoa	1976		1992			Not yet due		
San Marino	1992	2003	2003					
Sao Tomé and Príncipe	1975	1995	2003	Signature				
Saudi Arabia	1945	2000	2000			Overdue		
Senegal	1960	1980	1985	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 29, para. 1
Serbia and Montenegro	2000		2001	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Seychelles	1976		1992	Signature		Overdue		
Sierra Leone	1961	1988	1988	Signature		Overdue		
Singapore	1965		1995			Pending		Art. 2; Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 2
Slovakia	1993		1993	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Slovenia	1992		1992	Ratification		Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Solomon Islands	1978		2002	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Somalia	1960							
South Africa	1945	1993	1995			Overdue		
Spain	1955	1980	1984	Ratification		Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Sri Lanka	1955	1980	1981	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
St. Kitts and Nevis	1983		1985			Overdue		
St. Lucia	1979		1982			Overdue		

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St. Vincent and the Gren.	1980		1981			Overdue		
Sudan	1956							
Suriname	1975		1993			Overdue		
Swaziland	1968		2004					
Sweden	1946	1980	1980	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Switzerland	2002	1987	1997		Acceptance	Not yet due		Art. 15, para. 2; Art. 16, para.1 (g) and (h)
Syrian Arab Republic	1945		2003			Overdue		Art. 2; Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 15, para. 4; Art. 16, para. 1 (c), (d), (f) and (g); para. 2; Art. 29, para. 1
Tajikistan	1992		1993	Signature		Overdue		
Tanzania	1961	1980	1985			Overdue		
Thailand	1946		1985	Ratification		Pending Jan. 2006	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 16; Art. 29, para. 1
Timor-Leste	2002		2003	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Togo	1960		1983			Pending Jan. 2006		
Tonga	1999							
Trinidad and Tobago	1962	1985	1990			Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Tunisia	1956	1980	1985			Overdue		Art. 9, para. 2; Art. 16, para. 1 (c), (d), (f), (g) and (h); Art. 29, para. 1
Turkey	1945		1985	Ratification	Acceptance	Not yet due	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 9, para. 1; Art. 29, para. 1
Turkmenistan	1992		1997			Pending		
Tuvalu	2000		1999			Overdue		
Uganda	1962	1980	1985			Overdue		
Ukraine	1945	1980	1981	Ratification		Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
United Arab Emirates	1971		2004					
United Kingdom	1945	1981	1986	Ratification	Acceptance	Pending		Art. 1; Art. 2; Art. 9; Art. 11; Art. 15, para. 3; Art. 16, para. 1
United States of America	1945	1980						
Uruguay	1945	1981	1981	Ratification	Acceptance	Overdue	Accepts indiv. complaints	
Uzbekistan	1992		1995			Pending		
Vanuatu	1981		1995			Overdue		
Venezuela	1945	1980	1983	Ratification		Pending Jan. 2006	Accepts indiv. complaints	Art. 29, para. 1
Viet Nam	1977	1980	1982			Overdue		Art. 29, para. 1
Yemen	1947		1984			Not yet due		Art. 29, para. 1
Zambia	1964	1980	1985			Overdue		
Zimbabwe	1980		1991			Overdue		

#### Sources:

Amnesty International Website ([web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng](http://web.amnesty.org/pages/treaty-countries-reporting-eng)), Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) ([www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/)) and United Nations Treaty Collection Website, Database "Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General" ([untreaty.un.org/](http://untreaty.un.org/)).

#### References:

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# Methodology

## Sources and handling of information

Since its origins Social Watch has geared its efforts to measure, through the use of objective indicators, governments' compliance with the targets set by the governments themselves at different international forums. This is to allow the citizens of all the world to make accountable to them governments, the UN system and international organizations.

Despite the increase of available information on different social development indicators produced regularly by each country and compiled by international organizations, this data is not readily available to the public. Most of the international statistics databases are accessible only by subscription and at very high costs. In the case of the World Bank, the main source of international statistics on development, its policy of claiming copyright and charging for the use of the information is doubly contradictory, since it is an intergovernmental institution that handles information generated by the different governments, and is therefore public.

Once the obstacles to obtain the primary data are surmounted, there are further difficulties to face in the elaboration of the comparative tables, like the lack of coincidence in the dates for which data is available, the potential differences in methodological criteria for the construction of indicators at the level of each country, and the considerable discrepancies between the statistics provided for the same year by different sources.

Given these difficulties, Social Watch has kept in this report the criteria adopted in earlier editions. The data used is the most recent provided by recognized international organizations. In the case of recent data found in "secondary sources", we opted for the data that regularly showed the highest correspondence with data published by recognized sources on the subject in question. When the choice was between similar sources, we chose the one that covered the most countries.

In the case of information referring to an interval (e.g. 1990-1994) rather than a specific year, the criterion adopted was to give the data in the middle of the interval (e.g. 1992) as a means of calculating the rate of change.

## Measurement of the current situation of countries and the rate of change

In each of the thematic areas the information is displayed in relation to the chosen indicators. Each indicator covers three columns: the first shows the country's initial situation,<sup>1</sup> the second column shows

1 Initial situation was 1995 or the closest possible year for gender tables (in order to take into account the Beijing commitments), and 1990 or the closest possible year for the other thematic areas.

the latest available data<sup>2</sup> and the third and last column (titled "Progress or regression") shows the rate of change.

In order to assess the evolution of each indicator, two aspects were taken into account: initial and final levels and the rate of change of progress or regression.

The **situation** a country is in according to each indicator is given by the last available value for that indicator.

Each country is assigned a value from 1 to 4 (1 indicates worst situation and 4 indicates best situation) according to the distribution of values for each indicator<sup>3</sup> and an average of these values is then given for all the indicators in that area.<sup>4</sup> In this way a self-referential ranking is obtained, independent of the distance from the goals or from specific conceptually defined levels.

This ranking was only applied to those countries with information for at least half the indicators that make up the overall thematic area.

To avoid giving a false impression of accuracy, the average values were rescaled<sup>5</sup> to create four country categories:

- *Countries in better situation*
- *Countries above average*
- *Countries below average*
- *Countries in worse situation*

A fifth group is also presented showing information for those countries which lack sufficient data to be included in the ranking (*Countries with insufficient data to summarize the area*).

Within each group the countries are listed in alphabetical order.

The **rate of change** for each country is obtained by considering the variation in the values of the indicator over the time period within which the measurements are made. The quotient between the variation in the indicator and the time period reflects the rate of change for the item in question.

2 In some tables two extra columns appear displaying the date of the information selected.

3 For this the variable was normalized (by subtracting the mean and dividing by the standard deviation) and then the mean positive values and the mean negative values for the normalized indicator were calculated. The four categories were established according to the values above and below the mean positive values for the normalized indicator, and the values above and below the mean negative values for the normalized indicator.

4 In the case of the table showing morbidity and mortality rates the child immunization ranking was included as another indicator in the calculations of the average value for the area. The immunization table is presented separately and ordered according to the average value of its indicators.

5 The possible range for the average of the area was divided into four groups as follows: group 1 (between 4 and 3.26); group 2 (between 3.25 and 2.6); group 3 (between 2.5 and 1.76); group 4 (between 1.75 and 1).

The values for this rate of change have also been rescaled in sections (using a reference scale from 1 to 5), which are presented in the tables in the column "Progress or regression". A series of symbols are used to illustrate the changes in order to make the information easier to read and to avoid the false impression of accuracy given by a numerical value.

The categories defined in this rescaling are as follows:

- Significant progress
- Slight progress
- || Stagnant
- ← Slight regression
- ← Significant regression

"Significant progress" applies to those countries which are progressing at rates above the average for all countries making progress.

"Slight progress" applies to those countries which are progressing at rates below the average for all countries making progress.

"Stagnant" refers to those countries where no changes (or quantitatively insignificant changes) have been recorded over the period in question.

"Slight regression" applies to those countries which are regressing at rates below the average for all countries regressing (i.e. they are regressing more slowly).

"Significant regression" applies to those countries which are regressing at rates above the average for all countries regressing (i.e. they are regressing more rapidly).





## GENDER EQUITY INDEX (GEI)

Gender equity is a very complex concept that involves numerous quantitative and qualitative dimensions, and for many of these there is no information available. In 2004 Social Watch produced a Gender Equity Index (GEI) which appeared in the Annual Report for that year. The index was built up from information available in most countries in dimensions that are relevant to the study of gender equity.

The challenge was to assemble the different dimensions in which inequity was measured so as to obtain an overall ranking that was wider than that of the dimensions taken separately or of the indexes traditionally used.

The main obstacle to constructing a comprehensive tool, based on a selection of indicators and conceptually suitable for measuring gender inequities, is that in many countries basic information is scarce. Different dimensions were selected, bearing in mind the information available that could be used to make comparisons internationally. These dimensions were education, economic activity, and women's representation at decision-making levels in political and economic life ("empowerment").

The final ranking was built up from a combination of the main categorizations within each of the

### Technical notes: the construction of the GEI

The procedure that Social Watch used to construct the table ranking countries by the different dimensions of gender equity was the same as that used for the thematic tables for other areas. That is to say, the average of countries' situations in the different areas analyzed; in the case of gender equity these areas are education, economic activity and empowerment.

The final ranking was calculated by taking a non-weighted average of each country's rating in each area. The countries were classified into four categories in line with their distribution within each indicator. The average for each area was calculated according to the average values in the classification. With this first breakdown distances were eliminated and the distribution was homogenized; therefore the result of the GEI is a basic criterion for ranking by relative position and not according to the conceptual levels of the indicators.

Where two or more countries appear in the same relative position, they are ranked alphabetically.

dimensions mentioned above. This yielded 10 groups of countries classified in function of the average values of their indicators.

This tool is a first step towards combining the different dimensions in a single index, and no doubt it will have to be refined. However valuable it may be to build up an index that reflects the different areas in which gender equity is currently measured, what really matters is that the gender perspective should be incorporated into all the dimensions of

social development, that it should become an integral part of the concept of development. It is not that a society is "developed" or that it "has gender equity", it is rather that gender equity is a necessary condition for development.

The 2005 Social Watch Report contains a poster with GEI classification of countries, and the results are analyzed in the chapter entitled "No country treats its women the same as its men. The Gender Equity Index - a new perspective." ■

## BASIC CAPABILITIES INDEX (BCI)

This year, like every year since 1996, the Social Watch Annual Report includes a listing of the countries of the world ranked by their situation in a series of dimensions considered important for evaluating social development.

For its 2004 Annual Report Social Watch designed a summary-index which considered the multi-dimensional aspects of development and made it possible to classify countries more easily. This index was based on the methodological approach adopted by Social Watch Philippines in their 2001 Report, and its original name, "Quality of Life Index", was retained.<sup>6</sup>

Since the dimensions found in the index are the minimal or basic capabilities essential for social development, the name has now been changed to **Basic Capabilities Index (BCI)** so as to give a more accurate reflection of the kinds of information it contains.

The way the results are presented has also been modified. In the current edition the countries are ranked in ascending order in accordance with their BCI ratings. Lower values indicate that a country's basic needs are far from being satisfied, so the first countries on the list are those in which improvement is most urgently required if even a minimum level of well-being is to be attained.

The BCI reflects basic well-being gauged by capabilities<sup>7</sup> in different aspects of the human condition, and the indicators that make it up yield separate results for each aspect. The index gives an efficient rating for the basic levels of people's well-being on the basis of their state of health (child health and reproductive health) and their performance in primary education. Both these dimensions are of crucial importance in development goals.

The indicators that make up the BCI are as follows:

- The percentage of children in the first grade of primary education who reach the fifth grade.

- Under-5 mortality rate.<sup>8</sup>
- The percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel.

The BCI has comparative advantages in that it is relatively simple to calculate and inexpensive because it does not depend on household surveys to estimate levels of income. It is compatible with the various national and international statistical systems, and it can be calculated easily from indicator data that are regularly issued by governments and agencies. In addition to being an instrument for classifying the relative situation of countries or of particular sectors within a country (population groups or geographical areas, for example), it can also be used to generate time series for monitoring situations related to poverty.

The tests that evaluate the efficiency of the BCI to rank countries according to their minimum levels of well-being show that the index gives an adequate

6 Raya, Rene. *An alternative measure of poverty and human capability: Introducing the Quality of Life Index*. Social Watch Philippines. Report 2001. The Quality of Life Index, originally developed by the Philippine non-governmental organization Action for Economic Reforms, is derived from the Capability Poverty Index (CPI) developed by Professor Amartya Sen and popularized as the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index (HDI).

7 One difference between the BCI and the HDI is that the latter combines capability indicators with measures of income.

8 The original indicator used in the Philippines experience was "Malnutrition among children under 5". Social Watch Philippines developed this methodology, and in their own report they raise the possibility of using the infant mortality rate instead because there is more data available on this in different countries' statistical registers, and because there is a high correlation between it and the child malnutrition indicator.

**Table 1. BCI categories**

BCI categories	Points grouping	Number of countries
Critical	Up to 69 points	26
Very low	70 to 79 points	15
Low	80 to 89 points	13
Medium	90 to 97 points	24
High	98 to 100 points	15

synthesis of the dimensions studied by Social Watch in the thematic tables (education, morbidity-mortality, reproductive health, science and technology, public expenditure, food security, water and sanitation).<sup>9</sup> A country's ranking on the BCI scale is similar to the ranking given by its average performance for each thematic area. The correlation between the BCI and this ranking was 0.9.<sup>10</sup>

There is also a high correlation with other indicators and indexes that are generally used to measure development or to classify countries according to their levels of well-being: the Human Development Index, The Human Poverty Index, the International Poverty Line, and per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The BCI makes it possible to distinguish between countries in more unfavourable situations, but it is less sensitive when detecting differences between countries that have reached a relatively high level of development. This is because the indicators used relate to basic deficiencies that are characteristic of unfavourable development situations. Therefore as a tool it is more suitable for identifying critical situations than for detecting slight differences between more developed countries.

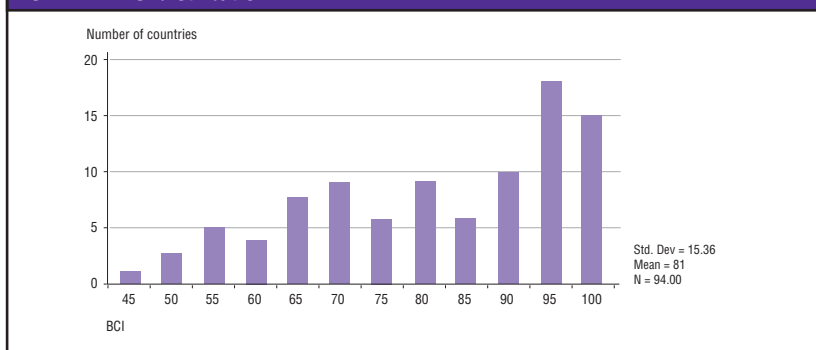
While the indicators used in the BCI are basic and are widely used at the international level, as well as having comparative advantages over other indicators that are more expensive or complex, problems can arise when it comes to obtaining up-to-date information from many countries. It has therefore been necessary to make assumptions about performance and to employ statistical tools, so as to be able to include more countries in the classification.

It should be noted that in order to avoid any methodological bias, all the statistical tests were made using the original countries' available information.

<sup>9</sup> The BCI explicitly excludes the gender dimension. There is a separate ranking for countries in that dimension, given by the Gender Equity Index (see related chapter in this report).

<sup>10</sup> This value was also obtained by correlating the average with the BCI before values were assigned. See "Technical Notes: BCI design in countries" at the end of this section.

**CHART 1. BCI distribution**



**Table 2. Characterization of BCI categories based on its indicators\***

BCI CATEGORIES		CHILDREN REACHING 5TH GRADE (%)	BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	UNDER-5 MORTALITY RATE (PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS)
Critical	Average	62.6	34.9	148.8
	Number of countries	26	26	26
	Standard deviation	16.2	16.0	54.6
Very low	Average	73.3	63.1	113.3
	Number of countries	15	15	15
	Standard deviation	9.4	7.2	50.8
Low	Average	78.4	80.6	43.1
	Number of countries	14	14	14
	Standard deviation	13.7	12.0	22.0
Medium	Average	90.5	94.8	25.8
	Number of countries	24	24	24
	Standard deviation	4.9	4.8	20.3
High	Average	98.8	99.7	8.3
	Number of countries	15	15	15
	Standard deviation	4	0.6	6.47
Total	Average	79.6	71.8	73.6
	Number of countries	94	94	94
	Standard deviation	17.1	27.7	68.0

\* Only countries with original data

**Table 3. BCI categories by HDI levels**

BCI CATEGORIES	LOW HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	MIDDLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT	TOTAL
Critical	69.6% (16)*	20.8% (10)		28.6% (26)
Very low	30.4% (7)	14.6% (7)		15.4% (14)
Low			27.1% (13)	14.3% (13)
Medium		33.3% (16)	35.0% (7)	25.3% (23)
High		4.2% (2)	65.0% (13)	16.5% (15)
Total	100.0% (23)	100.0% (48)	100.0% (20)	100.0% (91)

\* Number of countries.

**Table 4. BCI categories by income levels (per capita GDP)**

BCI CATEGORIES	LOW INCOME	LOWER MIDDLE	HIGHER MIDDLE	HIGH INCOME	HIGH INCOME NON-OECD	TOTAL
<b>Critical</b>	67.6% (25)*	3.3% (1)				<b>28.6% (26)</b>
<b>Very low</b>	24.3% (9)	20.0% (6)				<b>16.1% (15)</b>
<b>Low</b>	5.4% (2)	36.7% (11)				<b>14.0% (13)</b>
<b>Medium</b>	2.7% (1)	33.3% (10)	66.7% (12)		100.0% (1)	<b>25.8% (24)</b>
<b>High</b>		6.7% (2)	33.3% (6)	<b>100.0% (7)</b>		<b>16.1% (15)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0% (37)</b>	<b>100.0% (30)</b>	<b>100.0% (18)</b>	<b>100.0% (7)</b>	<b>100.0% (1)</b>	<b>100.0% (93)</b>

\* Number of countries.

### Technical notes: the construction of the BCI

Indicators that make up the BCI:

- Percentage of children in the first grade who reach the fifth grade of primary education
- Under 5 mortality rate
- Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel

In this edition of the report, the information available (infant mortality for 193 countries, school retention for 114, and assisted childbirth for 163) meant that the BCI could be designed directly for 94 countries. To increase the number of countries, values were assigned<sup>11</sup> for the indicators where information was lacking. This was done by assigning the average value of that indicator for the group the country was in as defined by its current situation in the thematic area in question. This made it possible to design an index covering a total of 163 countries.

The BCI was calculated using the non-weighted average of the original values of the three indicators in question (in the case of infant mortality a lineal transformation was previously applied to the indicator). To simplify the calculations all three indicators were given the same weight.

Child health is represented as I1 = (100 - M), where M is the under-5 mortality rate (expressed as a percentage) or the probability of death in the first five years of life expressed as per 100 live births. Education is represented as I2, where I2 is the rate of school retention or the percentage of children enrolled in the first grade who reach the fifth grade.

Reproductive health is shown as I3, where I3 is the percentage of births assisted by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses or midwives).

The Basic Capabilities Index value for a particular country is obtained by taking a simple average of the three components:  $BCI = (I1 + I2 + I3) / 3$

### The BCI categories

The lowest empirical value obtained in the BCI was 47 points, and the distribution was heavily concentrated at the upper end of the scale (values near 100).

Based on this distribution, five categories were used to classify countries by their different levels in the BCI. (see table 1).

In line with the indicators used in the BCI the groups are characterized by the average values given in Table 2.

For example, in the countries in the worst situation (critical BCI) the under-5 mortality rate is about 150 per 1,000 live births, only one third of births are assisted by skilled health personnel, and the primary school dropout rate is around 40%.

The five categories used in the BCI correlate very well with other international classification systems for well-being (HDI, per capita GDP).

As the BCI is an index that only expresses results it is a good tool to use in combination with other tools that include indicators of means (like income). This cross-checking also makes it possible to see how some countries have managed to achieve good BCI performance in spite of having low levels of income.

It should be borne in mind that the BCI is able to make finer distinctions between countries that have lower levels of basic capabilities than between those that have risen well above the minimum levels of well-being. ■

<sup>11</sup> No values were assigned in the mortality dimension, values were assigned for eight countries in the percentage of assisted births, and values were assigned for 65 countries in the percentage of children reaching the fifth grade. The procedures used to assign values have been designed to ensure that the position of countries in the situation ranking would be reflected with as little distortion as possible, on the hypothesis that the indicator would be consistent with the four big ranges defined by area. However, special care should be taken with countries that were assigned values when it comes to analyzing index values over time.

# Glossary

## **Births attended by skilled health personnel (%):**

Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses or midwives).

Defined by: UNICEF.

## **Children reaching 5th grade of primary school (%):**

Percentage of children entering first grade of primary school who eventually reach grade five.

Defined by: UNESCO.

## **Contraceptive use among currently married women aged 15-49 (%):**

Percentage of women in union aged 15-49 years currently using contraception.

Defined by: UN Statistics Division and UN Population Information Network.

## **DPT immunized 1-year-old children (%):**

Percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of DPT vaccine.

DPT: Diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough) and tetanus.

Defined by: UNICEF.

## **Estimated earned income ratio (women/men):**

Ratio of estimated female earned income to estimated male earned income.

Because of the lack of sex-disaggregated income data, female and male earned income are crudely estimated by UNDP on the basis of data on the ratio of the female non-agricultural wage to the male non-agricultural wage, the female and male shares of the economically active population, the total female and male population and GDP per capita (PPP USD). Estimates are based on data for the most recent year available during 1991-2000, unless otherwise specified.

Defined by: UNDP.

## **Estimated low birth weight (%):**

Percentage of newborns weighing less than 2,500 grams, with measurement taken within the first hours of life, before significant postnatal weight loss has occurred.

Defined by: WHO and UNICEF.

## **Estimated maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births):**

Annual number of deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes per 100,000 live births.

Due to changes in the model of estimation, 1995 and 2000 data are not comparable.

Defined by: UNICEF.

## **Female legislators, senior officials and managers (% of total positions):**

Women's share of positions defined according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) to include legislators, senior government officials, traditional chiefs and heads of villages, senior officials of special interest organisations, corporate managers, directors and chief executives, production and operations department managers and other department and general managers.

Defined by: UN Statistics Division.

## **Female professional and technical workers (as % of total positions):**

Women's share of positions defined according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations to include physical, mathematical and engineering science professionals (and associate professionals), life science and health professionals (and associate professionals), teaching professionals (and associate professionals) and other professionals and associate professionals.

Defined by: UN Statistics Division.

## **Gini Index:**

Measures the extent to which the distribution of income (or, in some cases, consumption expenditure) among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A Gini index of zero represents perfect equality, while an index of 100 implies perfect inequality.

Defined by: World Bank.

## **Gross tertiary enrolment ratio gap (women/men):**

Ratio of female gross tertiary enrolment ratio to male gross tertiary enrolment ratio.

Defined by: UNESCO.

## **Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births):**

Number of infants dying before reaching one year of age, per 1,000 live births in a given year.

Defined by: UNICEF.

## **Information and communication technology expenditure (% of GDP):**

Includes external spending on information technology ("tangible" spending on information technology products purchased by businesses, households, governments, and education institutions from vendors or organisations outside the purchasing entity), internal spending on information technology ("intangible" spending on internally customised software, capital depreciation, and the like), and spending on telecommunications and other office equipment.

Expressed as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Defined by: Digital Planet 2002: The Global Information Economy, World Information Technology and Services Alliance.

## **Internet users (per 1,000 people):**

People with access to the worldwide network, per 1,000 people.

Defined by: International Telecommunication Union.

## **Literacy (15-24 years old, %):**

Percentage of people aged 15-24 who can, with understanding, read and write a short, simple statement on their everyday life.

Defined by: UNESCO

## **Literacy ratio gap (women/men):**

Ratio of female literacy ratio (15-24 years old) to male literacy ratio (15-24 years old).

Calculated by Social Watch.

Defined by: UNESCO.

## **Malaria (cases per 100,000 people):**

Total number of malaria cases reported to the World Health Organization by countries in which malaria is endemic, per 100,000 people. Many countries report only laboratory-confirmed cases, but many in Sub-Saharan Africa report clinically diagnosed cases as well.

Defined by: UNDP.

## **Measles immunized 1-year-old children (%):**

Percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of measles vaccine.

Defined by: UNICEF.

## **Military expenditure (% of GDP):**

(based on the NATO definition) Includes all current and capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defence ministries and other government agencies engaged in defence projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. Expressed as percentage of Gross Domestic Product. Such expenditures include military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country). Excluded are civil defence and current expenditures for previous military activities, such as for veterans' benefits, demobilisation, conversion, and destruction of weapons.

Defined by: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

## **Net primary enrolment ratio gap (women/men):**

Ratio of female net primary enrolment ratio to male net primary enrolment ratio.

Calculated by Social Watch.

Defined by: UNESCO.

## **Net secondary enrolment ratio gap (women/men):**

Ratio of female net secondary enrolment ratio to male net secondary enrolment ratio.

Calculated by Social Watch.

Defined by: UNESCO.

## **Official Development Assistance (% of GNI):**

Grants or loans to countries and territories on Part I of the DAC List of Aid Recipients (developing countries) which are: (a) undertaken by the official sector; (b) with promotion of economic development and welfare as the main objective; (c) at concessional financial terms [if a loan, having a Grant Element (q.v.) of at least 25 per cent]. In addition to financial flows, Technical Co-operation (q.v.) is included in aid. Grants, loans and credits for military purposes are excluded. Transfer payments to private individuals (e.g. pensions, reparations or insurance payouts) are in general not counted.

Expressed as percentage of Gross National Income.

Defined by: OECD.

## **People living with HIV/AIDS (15-49 years old, %):**

Percentage of adults (15-49 years) living with HIV/AIDS.

Defined by: UNAIDS.

**Personal computers (per 1,000 people):**

Personal computers are self-contained computers designed to be used by a single individual, per 1,000 people.

Defined by: International Telecommunication Union.

**Polio immunized 1-year-old children (%):**

Percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of polio vaccine.

Defined by: UNICEF.

**Population below the national poverty line (%):**

Percentage of the population living below the national poverty line. National estimates are based on population-weighted subgroup estimates from household surveys.

Defined by: World Bank.

**Population living with less than USD 1 a day (%):**

Percentage of the population living on less than \$1.08 a day at 1993 international prices (equivalent to USD 1 in 1985 prices, adjusted for purchasing power parity).

Defined by: World Bank.

**Population with access to improved water sources (%):**

Percentage of the population who use any of the following types of water supply for drinking: piped water, public tap, borehole or pump, protected well, protected spring or rainwater. Improved water sources do not include vendor-provided waters, bottled water, tanker trucks or unprotected wells and springs.

Defined by: WHO and UNICEF.

**Population with access to sanitation (%):**

Percentage of the population with at least adequate excreta disposal facilities (private or shared, but not public) that can effectively prevent human, animal, and insect contact with excreta. Improved facilities range from simple but protected pit latrines to flush toilets with a sewerage connection. To be effective, facilities must be correctly constructed and properly maintained.

Defined by: WHO and UNICEF.

**Poverty gap of population living with less than USD 1 a day (% of poverty line):**

Mean shortfall from the poverty line (counting the non-poor as having zero shortfall), expressed as percentage of the poverty line. This measure reflects the depth of poverty as well as its incidence.

Defined by: World Bank.

**Primary school enrolment ratio (net, %):**

Number of children enrolled in primary school who belong to the age group that officially corresponds to primary schooling, as percentage of the total population of the same age group.

Defined by: UNESCO.

**Public education expenditure (% of GDP):**

Public spending on public education plus subsidies to private education at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, as percentage of Gross Domestic Product.

World Bank and OECD GDP estimates.

Defined by: World Bank.

**Public health expenditure (% of GDP):**

Recurrent and capital spending from government (central and local) budgets, external borrowings and grants (including donations from international agencies and non-governmental organisations), and social (or compulsory) health insurance funds, as percentage of Gross Domestic Product.

Defined by: World Bank.

**Scientists and engineers in research and development (per million people):**

People trained to work in any field of science who are engaged in professional R&D (research and development) activity, per million people. Most such jobs require completion of tertiary education.

Defined by: UNESCO.

**Seats in parliament held by women (% of seats):**

Seats held by women in a lower or single house or an upper house or senate, where relevant, as percentage of total seats.

Defined by: UN Statistics Division.

**Share of poorest quintile consumption (% of income or consumption):**

The share of the poorest quintile in national consumption/income is share of income or consumption that accrues to the poorest 20 percent of the population. Data on personal or household income or consumption come from nationally representative household surveys.

Defined by: UN Statistics Division.

**Telephone mainlines (per 1,000 people):**

Telephone lines connecting a customer's equipment to the public switched telephone network. Data are presented per 1,000 people for the entire country.

Defined by: International Telecommunication Union.

**Tertiary education enrolment ratio (gross, %):**

Ratio of total enrolment, regardless of age, to the population of the age group that officially corresponds to the level of education shown. Tertiary education, whether or not to an advanced research qualification, normally requires, as a minimum condition of admission, successful completion of education at secondary level.

Defined by: UNESCO.

**Total debt service (% of GNI):**

Sum of principal repayments and interest actually paid in foreign currency, goods, or services on long-term debt, interest paid on short-term debt, and repayments (repurchases and charges) to the IMF, as percentage of Gross National Income.

Defined by: World Bank.

**Tuberculosis (cases per 100,000 people):**

Total number of tuberculosis cases reported to the World Health Organization per 100,000 people. A tuberculosis case is defined as a patient in whom tuberculosis has been bacteriologically confirmed or diagnosed by a clinician.

Defined by: WHO.

**Tuberculosis immunized 1-year-old children (%):**

Percentage of children under one year of age who have received at least one dose of tuberculosis vaccine.

Defined by: UNICEF.

**Under-5 children malnutrition (weight for age, %):**

Percentage of children under five whose weight for age is less than minus two standard deviations from the median for the international reference population ages 0 to 59 months. The reference population adopted by the WHO in 1983 is based on children from the United States, who are assumed to be well nourished.

Defined by: WHO.

**Under-5 mortality (per 1,000 live births):**

Probability of dying between birth and exactly five years of age expressed per 1,000 live births.

Defined by: UNICEF.

**Undernourishment (%):**

Percentage of undernourished in the total population. Undernourishment is the result of food intake that is insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements continuously. The World Health Organisation recommended that the average person needs to take a minimum of 2300 Kcal per day to maintain body functions, health and normal activity. This global minimum requirement of calories is broken down into country-specific differentials that are a function of the age-specific structure and body mass of the population.

Defined by: FAO.

**Women aged 15-49 attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (%):**

Percentage of women aged 15-49 years attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses or midwives).

Defined by: UNICEF.

**Women in decision-making positions in government at ministerial level (% of total positions):**

Women as percentage of total decision-making positions in government. Data were provided by states based on their definition of national executive and may therefore include women serving as ministers and vice ministers and those holding other ministerial positions, including parliamentary secretaries.

Defined by: UNDP (Human Development Report 2004).

For initial data, the indicator is defined as "Women in government" at ministerial level and sub-ministerial level. Includes elected heads of state and governors of central banks.

Defined by: UNDP (Human Development Report 1997).

**Women wage employment in non-agricultural sector (% of total non-agricultural employees):**

Share of female workers in the non-agricultural sector expressed as percentage of total employment in the sector.

Defined by: UNDP.



# Compilation of articles on human rights mentioned in the statistics tables

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948.

### Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

### Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

### Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.  
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

### Article 26

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.  
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.  
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

### Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

## International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), 1965.

### Article 5

In compliance with the fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of this Convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights:

- The right to equal treatment before the tribunals and all other organs administering justice;
- The right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm, whether inflicted by government officials or by any individual group or institution;
- Political rights, in particular the right to participate in elections - to vote and to stand for election - on the basis of universal and equal suffrage, to take part in the Government as well as in the conduct of public affairs at any level and to have equal access to public service;
- Other civil rights, in particular:
  - The right to freedom of movement and residence within the border of the State;
  - The right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's country;
  - The right to nationality;
  - The right to marriage and choice of spouse;
  - The right to own property alone as well as in association with others;
  - The right to inherit;
  - The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
  - The right to freedom of opinion and expression;
  - The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association;
- Economic, social and cultural rights, in particular:
  - The rights to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration;
  - The right to form and join trade unions;
  - The right to housing;
  - The right to public health, medical care, social security and social services;

- The right to education and training;
- The right to equal participation in cultural activities;
- The right of access to any place or service intended for use by the general public, such as transport, hotels, restaurants, cafes, theatres and parks.

### Article 6

States Parties shall assure to everyone within their jurisdiction effective protection and remedies, through the competent national tribunals and other State institutions, against any acts of racial discrimination which violate his human rights and fundamental freedoms contrary to this Convention, as well as the right to seek from such tribunals just and adequate reparation or satisfaction for any damage suffered as a result of such discrimination.

## International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), 1966.

### Article 3

The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights set forth in the present Covenant.

### Article 7

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work which ensure, in particular:

- Remuneration which provides all workers, as a minimum, with:
    - Fair wages and equal remuneration for work of equal value without distinction of any kind, in particular women being guaranteed conditions of work not inferior to those enjoyed by men, with equal pay for equal work;
    - A decent living for themselves and their families in accordance with the provisions of the present Covenant;
  - Safe and healthy working conditions;
  - Equal opportunity for everyone to be promoted in his employment to an appropriate higher level, subject to no considerations other than those of seniority and competence;
- (...)

### Article 9

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to social security, including social insurance.

### Article 10

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that:  
(...)  
2. Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such period working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits.

### Article 11

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.  
2. The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:

- To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;
- Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

### Article 12

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.  
2. The steps to be taken by the States Parties to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for:

- The provision for the reduction of the stillbirth-rate and of infant mortality and for the healthy development of the child;
- The improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene;
- The prevention, treatment and control of epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases;
- The creation of conditions which would assure to all medical service and medical attention in the event of sickness.

### Article 13

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.  
2. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that, with a view to achieving the full realization of this right:

- Primary education shall be compulsory and available free to all;



(b) Secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational secondary education, shall be made generally available and accessible to all by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;

(c) Higher education shall be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of capacity, by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education;

(d) Fundamental education shall be encouraged or intensified as far as possible for those persons who have not received or completed the whole period of their primary education;

(e) The development of a system of schools at all levels shall be actively pursued, an adequate fellowship system shall be established, and the material conditions of teaching staff shall be continuously improved.

3. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities, which conform to such minimum educational standards as may be laid down or approved by the State and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

4. No part of this article shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principles set forth in paragraph 1 of this article and to the requirement that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

#### Article 14

Each State Party to the present Covenant which, at the time of becoming a Party, has not been able to secure in its metropolitan territory or other territories under its jurisdiction compulsory primary education, free of charge, undertakes, within two years, to work out and adopt a detailed plan of action for the progressive implementation, within a reasonable number of years, to be fixed in the plan, of the principle of compulsory education free of charge for all.

#### Article 15

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone:

(a) To take part in cultural life;

(b) To enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications;

(c) To benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

2. The steps to be taken by the States Parties to the present Covenant to achieve the full realization of this right shall include those necessary for the conservation, the development and the diffusion of science and culture.

3. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to respect the freedom indispensable for scientific research and creative activity.

4. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the benefits to be derived from the encouragement and development of international contacts and co-operation in the scientific and cultural fields.

### Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979.

#### Article 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(...)

(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

#### Article 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;

(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

#### Article 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;

(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;

(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;

(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;

(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;

(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;

(...)

#### Article 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;

(b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;

(c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;

(d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;

(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;

(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.

2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;

(b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;

(c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;

(d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

#### Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

#### Article 14

(...)

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:

(a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;

(b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;

(c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;

(d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter-alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;

(e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment;

(f) To participate in all community activities;

(g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;

(h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

### Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989.

#### Article 17

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

(a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;

(b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

(c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

(d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;

(e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

#### Article 24

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

- (a) To diminish infant and child mortality;
- (b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;
- (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;
- (d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;
- (e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;
- (f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

#### Article 25

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

#### Article 26

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.

2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

#### Article 27

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

(...)

#### Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

#### Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.



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## ■ ALBANIA

# Poverty in a prolonged transition



Albania remains one of the poorest countries in Europe despite progress with transition reforms initiated in the early 1990s after 45 years of communist rule, and its significant cumulative growth - among the highest of all transition economies.

Human Development Promotion Centre (HDPC)

Dr. Lindita Xhillari/Dr. Ylli Çabiri

### Economic growth - a success story

In 1991 Albania left behind 45 years of communism and set forth as a democratic country. After 14 years of transition the country has a stabilized market economy that has grown significantly. However it remains one of the poorest countries in Europe and its GDP per capita in 2003 represented only 6.5% of the European Union (EU) average.<sup>1</sup> Albania has attracted only modest amounts of foreign direct investment (FDI) compared to other South-eastern European countries. At the end of 2004, cumulative FDI was approximately USD 1.3 billion. The informal sector makes up a large part of the economy with its contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) estimated at 25%.<sup>2</sup> Bank credit to the private sector is one of the lowest among transition economies. The Government's weak revenue collection system forces it to cut back on investment spending. Trade continues to be largely dominated by imports with the value of exports remaining at one-fifth the value of imports. In agricultural production, which is a key contributor to growth, this ratio is one to ten. As a result there are many concerns about the extent to which macro-economic measures have contributed to the real development of the country and the degree to which growth rates experienced to date will continue in the future.

Rapid economic growth, considered by the Government and by international institutions to be an impressive success model among the transition economies,<sup>3</sup> was the result of private sector-driven reforms initiated in 1991.<sup>4</sup> After a significant decline in production during the initial transition phase the economy grew by an average annual rate of 7%

to 8%.<sup>5</sup> The real GDP per capita increased from USD 680 in 1990 to approximately USD 1,938 in 2003. Inflation fell sharply from a monthly rate of 10% to 15% in 1992 (annual 120% to 180%) to an annual average rate of 6% in 1995. All agricultural land was distributed to farmers, the privatization of almost all state-owned enterprises was completed (at present a few strategic enterprises are in the process of being privatized), price controls were abolished, and trade and payment regimes were liberalized. Improved revenue collection and the application of a hard budget constraint consolidated the financial sector. As a result, the current account deficit decreased sharply from 60% of GDP in 1991 to 7.6% in 2003. The old socialist banking system has been totally transformed. The state-owned banks have been privatized and new private domestic and foreign banks have been licensed. In addition, the high volume of remittances (USD 400 million annually on average) is an important factor for economic growth.<sup>6</sup> In 2003 remittances constituted about 14% of GDP.

The positive trend which characterized the period after 1993 was reversed during 1997 as a result of the collapse of financial pyramid schemes which attracted large volumes of funds from private deposits, especially from remittances. However confidence in the economy was restored by the successful implementation of an ambitious stabilization programme which started in 1998. During the last five years, inflation has been kept under control at an annual average rate of 3.3%.

### “Surprised” by poverty

Albanians today enjoy more freedom and democracy and their hope is to shorten the transition period during which the country transforms itself from an emerging state to an EU member state. Albanian laws and regulations are increasingly being approximated to EU standards. However in an environment dominated by very low economic and social development levels, implementation remains problematic.

The poverty headcount rate in 2002 was 25.4% and average consumption was approximately ALL 7,800 (USD 79) per capita per month. When the poverty line is estimated at ALL 4,891 (USD 49.56)

per capita per month and the extreme poverty line at ALL 3,047 (USD 30.87) per capita per month, one quarter of Albanians are considered poor and about 5% of the population is estimated to be unable to meet basic food requirements. Poverty is higher in rural and especially in mountainous areas, at 29.6% and 44.5% respectively. This is mainly due to the limited incomes generated by small, fragmented<sup>7</sup> agriculture holdings (four to five plots per farm on average); an underdeveloped land market; very traditional methods of agricultural production; and poor transportation access to markets. Poverty is present throughout the country but the Northern regions are most affected with about 43% of the population in Dibra, 40% in Kukes, 37% in Lezha and 33% in the Shkodra region currently living below the poverty line.<sup>8</sup>

Unemployment is a chronic problem aggravated by the geographic concentration of businesses in the country and by their small size. In 2004 about 82.7% of all active enterprises were located in the capital Tirana and six other major districts. The remaining 17.3% were located in the other 29 districts. In addition about 84% of active enterprises are very small with only one employee.<sup>9</sup> The very optimistic figure of 14.65% unemployment<sup>10</sup> reported at the end of 2004 was calculated using the number of unemployed people in urban areas but it was meant to represent both the urban and rural workforce. In fact, the rural workforce, which represents about 46% of the total active population, is significantly underemployed. As a result, national unemployment is much higher than reported. Considering the size of the active labour force the average national unemployment rate corresponds to 47%, with this figure surpassing 50% in many districts. For example, in June 2004 the active labour force numbered 6,300 in the Dibra district while there were 3,517 registered unemployed job seekers in the same region. This corresponds to an unemployment

1 World Bank, *Albania-Sustaining Growth Beyond Transition*. 2004, p. 1.

2 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Tackling the policy challenge of dealing with informal economy in Albania*. 2004, p. 10.

3 The World Bank, *op cit*.

4 Albania inherited from the communist regime a very centralized and collectivized economy, the absence of ownership rights and a very strict price control regime.

5 The macroeconomic data refer to Instituti i Statistikës (INSTAT - Institute of Statistics), annual publications.

6 After 1990, more than one-fourth of the total population of the country emigrated mainly to Greece and Italy.

7 The average farm size is 1.1 hectares.

8 INSTAT, *A Profile of Poverty and Living Standards in Albania*. Tirana, 2004.

9 Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS), *Administrative and Regulatory Cost Survey*. 2004, p. 12.

10 National Employment Service, *Annual Report*. Tirana, 2004, p. 4.



rate of 56%.<sup>11</sup> Employment possibilities in these districts remain very limited due to the low state of development of the private sector.

Although women represent 51% of the economically active population, their participation in the labour market compared to men remains low. At the national level, the unemployment rate in 2003 was 18.5% for women and 12.9% for men. In almost all cities employment opportunities for women are approximately half that which exist for men. While women make up 40% of those employed in the central government administration, they represent only 24% of department heads, 9% of vice-ministers, 5% of ministers, and less than 6% of members of Parliament. No woman is the head of any parliamentary commission. In addition, women only represent 17% of business managers in the private sector.<sup>12</sup>

Various non-income dimensions of poverty and deprivation greatly aggravate the income poverty factors mentioned above. Access to basic services is very low especially in rural areas. At the national level, in 2002, 68% of the population had access to piped water inside their dwelling, but in rural areas the proportion was only 46%.<sup>13</sup>

The education system must continue to operate with run-down and often inadequate facilities, under-qualified teachers and outdated curricula. This situation has been further complicated by rural-urban migration and low teacher motivation. As a result the illiteracy rate in 2002 stood at about 10.3% (in the population aged 18 and above) when illiteracy had been completely eradicated during the communist regime. It is estimated that there is a "hidden" dropout rate of 10% in rural areas due to the practice of combining classes of different levels. Secondary school attendance rates vary drastically between urban and rural areas where the enrolment ratios are 48% and 22% respectively.

The quality and availability of health services is also very low and the sector suffers from poor infrastructure, lack of technology at all levels of care and low motivation of its qualified staff. Currently the health services operation cost per person is about USD 50 compared to the EU average of USD 1,900.

The transition experience shows that significant economic growth and impressive macro-economic indicators are not sufficient to improve income and ensure equity in human development

across the country. The very slow effects of the macro-economic growth approach in human development "surprised" the Government. Although poverty was evident since the beginning of transition, the first poverty reduction strategy<sup>14</sup> was drawn up only in 2001, ten years after the collapse of the communist regime. The recommendations of the national Millennium Development Goals (MDG) report<sup>15</sup> and the *Human Development Report*<sup>16</sup> further sensitized decision-makers and the general public to consider a more spatially-oriented approach to transition. Consequently a local development dimension began to be articulated in the National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSED) and the national MDG targets and indicators were disaggregated at a regional level.

### Financing development

The NSSED represents the principal programming document in Albania: it optimistically harmonizes priority interventions with some policy objectives and targets, considering both the MDGs and EU integration. Its aim is to alleviate poverty and to narrow the large economic and social gap between Albania and the EU. Some of the main objectives for 2015 include doubling the nominal GDP per capita; reducing by half the current rate of absolute poverty and eliminating extreme poverty; reaching an enrolment rate of 100% in basic education and 90% in secondary education; ensuring that children complete at least 13.5 years of education; and ensuring full access to better quality health services. Recent assessments show that there is a good chance that Albania will achieve these objectives. However in order for this to happen, improved policies, stronger institutions and additional local and international financial resources are required.<sup>17</sup>

In the absence of long-term expenditure programmes it is difficult to provide a cost estimate for achieving the above objectives. Nevertheless they represent important financial requirements. In the health sector, for instance, the share of annual financing by the state budget needs to be tripled in order to reach the actual average level of financing in South-eastern European countries. These expenditures are conditioned to a substantial increase in state budget revenues through the removal of multiple administrative barriers to investments; the support of a pro-active private sector development strat-

egy export- and productivity-oriented; and the expansion of access to international trade through an increase in the quality and quantity of human capital. Additional international financing is also needed. The aspiration that Albania exceeds the threshold to qualify for international development agencies' resources by 2005 (based on the successful economic growth) seems too unrealistic and risks prolonging further the transition period. In turn, this will negatively impact the country's efforts to address the root causes of poverty, the achievement of the MDGs and integration with the EU. It is now almost certain that the longer the transition period continues and the greater Albania-EU disparities are, the greater the cost of EU integration will be.

The financial contribution of international donors continues to be essential to Albania's progress. However the quality of foreign aid is being taken into consideration less and less by Albanian authorities and international donors. At present there is evidence of overlapping interventions, while the efficiency of some programmes is questionable, and there is a clear tendency for priority to be given to technical assistance over development investment support programs. An effective donor coordination mechanism is also lacking. There is a large number of projects underway which are based on various aid policies and have different management approaches. This splinters assistance into multiple high-cost management units and bypasses administration. A large number of project management and project implementation units function in parallel with the local public administration. Very often central administration, local authorities, local and foreign non-governmental organizations, and donor agencies independently run parallel projects in the same location. There is a need for the Albanian authorities and international donors to coordinate their efforts and align them with NSSED priorities, and to better harmonize their financing with the State budget requirement at least for investment projects. They must also adopt a common results-based management approach and transfer project management responsibilities, step-by-step, to the local authorities. ■

11 Human Development Promotion Centre (HDPC), *Promoting Local Development through MDGs-Dibra Region*. Tirana, 2004, p. 18.

12 INSTAT, *Women and Men in Albania*. 2004, p. 12.

13 WHO-UNICEF, Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, [www.wssinfo.org/en/watquery.html](http://www.wssinfo.org/en/watquery.html).

14 In Albania this is named National Strategy for Social and Economic Development (NSSED)

15 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/HDPC. *The Albanian Response to the Millennium Development Goals*. Tirana, 2002, pp. 15 and 57.

16 UNDP/HDPC. *National Human Development Report 2002. Challenges of Local Governance and Regional Development*, Tirana, 2003, p. 38.

17 UNDP/HDPC (2002), *op cit*, p. 8.





## ■ ARGENTINA

# Structural consolidation of social exclusion



The economic growth registered since early 2003 and the increased spending on social policies have not managed to reverse the rise in poverty and extreme poverty, failing to return to 2001 pre-crisis levels. Nor were there any changes in the approach to state programmes, which appear to be aimed at appeasing social conflict rather than at equitable development.

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)

Jimena Garrote / Luis Ernesto Campos

The deterioration in advances in Argentina's social variables experienced an exponential growth within recent years until in 2002 it reached the maximum values ever observed. Subsequent reductions in poverty, extreme poverty and unemployment are diminishing, but it would appear that the country's poverty levels will not diminish to the point they had reached before the 2001 crisis.<sup>1</sup>

According to the National Census on Population, Households and Housing carried out in 2001, households with basic needs unmet represent 14.3%.<sup>2</sup> This includes households with at least one out of the following five characteristics: its members live in overcrowded conditions, lack basic housing or sanitation infrastructure, at least one child within the household does not attend school and the head of household has not completed third year of primary education. These characteristics, considered as structural poverty, contrast with 29.8% of households in a situation of income poverty,<sup>3</sup> that is to say, households that in spite of meeting infrastructure and basic education standards do not have sufficient income to cover the basic food basket needs. Therefore, in quantitative terms, the main problem related to poverty lies in a pattern of unequal distribution of wealth rather than in the lack of basic infrastructure levels.

### Children: the poor and the extremely poor

A differential analysis of the impact of poverty and extreme poverty on the basis of income allows a closer approach to the extant socio-economic crisis.

According to official data for the second semester of 2004, 40.2% of the population live below the poverty line and 15% are considered extremely

poor.<sup>4</sup> This situation particularly affects the north-east region, with 59.5% and 26.2% of people living below the poverty line and extreme poverty line respectively, and the northwest region with 53.4% and 21.4% respectively.<sup>5</sup>

The analysis of official statistics shows a differential impact of poverty and extreme poverty by age groups with the conclusion that most affected people are aged between 0 and 14. At the national level, 60% of boys and girls under 14 years old are poor and 26.5% are extremely poor. The situation is even more serious in the country's more backward regions. In the northeast, poverty and extreme poverty reach, respectively, 73.8% and 42% of children under 14, with peaks in Gran Resistencia (province of Chaco) and Concordia (province of Entre Ríos), where approximately 80% of boys and girls are poor, and almost half of them live in households with insufficient income to have access to a basic food basket.

Finally, in all these cases the levels of poverty and extreme poverty are slightly higher than those registered by official institutions before the 2001 crisis. This means that the period of economic growth experienced since early 2003 has not succeeded in returning the value of these variables to pre-December 2001 levels.

### More uncertain labour conditions

The contradiction between significant GDP growth levels and the persistence of high levels of poverty and extreme poverty is caused among other things by the evolution of labour conditions and, mainly, by the intensification of the process of wealth concentration.

In this sense, a few data on labour conditions are enough to point out that the economic process launched in early 2003 is insufficient to address the type of poverty which exists in the country.

TABLE 1

PERIOD	GENERAL LEVEL	UNEMPLOYMENT	
		Real Unemployment	Under-employment
01-2003	20.4	26.6	17.7
02-2003	17.8	23.0	17.8
03-2003	16.3	21.4	16.6
04-2003	14.5	19.7	16.3
01-2004	14.4	19.5	15.7
02-2004	14.8	19.1	15.2
03-2004	13.2	17.6	15.2
04-2004	12.1	16.2	14.3
01-2005	13.0	16.6	12.7

Source: INDEC, EPH. Real unemployment is calculated by including as unemployed those men and women benefiting from the "Heads of Household Programme" which grants a subsidy in exchange for community services.

Although unemployment and underemployment rates have decreased, they still remain very high, which operates as a pressure mechanism preventing any substantial improvement in the labour conditions of workers. At the same time, the tendency of this decrease is declining, which poses reasonable doubts about the medium-term sustainability of this process. Also, the evolution of the unemployment rate since early 2003 indicates that, after significant reductions, unemployment levels tended to become stable or decreased slightly by the end of that year, as shown in Table 1.

Unemployment levels affect young people more than women. The Permanent Survey on Households (EPH) indicates that the highest rate is of women under 29 years old (22.7%).<sup>6</sup> This figure does not include as unemployed those women under 29 years old who benefit from the Heads of Household Programme. If it is taken into account that approximately two-thirds of beneficiaries of the programme are women, the impact of unemployment on young women is even greater.

Finally, the persistence of high unemployment and sub-employment rates makes the real salary of workers fall well below the pre-crisis levels of December

1 In December 2001, after failed attempts to reactivate the economy, the IMF's denial to grant a new loan and the loss of investments, the Government established temporary restrictions to bank accounts. There were strong popular protests and President Fernando de la Rúa resigned.

2 National Institute for Statistics and Census (INDEC), 2001.

3 INDEC, Permanent Survey on Households (EPH), INDEC considers as extremely poor households those which lack sufficient resources to cover a food basket able to meet the minimum energy and protein requirements.

4 INDEC considers as extremely poor households which lack sufficient resources to cover a food basket able to meet the minimum energy and protein requirements.

5 INDEC, EPH. The most critical situation in terms of poverty and extreme poverty on the basis of income is evidenced in the provinces of Corrientes and Chaco (northeast region) and Jujuy and Santiago del Estero (northwest region), where income poverty levels stand at about 60% and extreme poverty reaches 30%nd semester of 2004. In October 2001, 28% of households were found in a situation of poverty on the basis of income.

6 INDEC, EPH, fourth quarter of 2004.



2001. Table 2 shows the evolution of both nominal and real salaries according to the worker's condition.

As can be observed, the process of income contraction has a stronger effect on workers in the informal sector, who account for 47.5% of total salaried workers.<sup>7</sup> In effect, only the real salary of registered workers in the private sector is at the levels of December 2001, while non-registered workers of both the private and public sector have lost 25% and 28% of their purchasing power respectively, apart from lacking both pension and health care coverage.

### Government policies against poverty

After the political-institutional crisis of December 2001, the State made a new attempt to develop and consolidate social policies aimed at reducing poverty and restraining the escalating social conflict. State intervention is implemented through the Unemployed Heads of Household Programme, the Family Plan for Social Inclusion and the "Manos a la Obra" (employment) Programme.

In 2002, the Heads of Household Programme established the provision of "non-remunerative" economic aid at ARS 150 (USD 52) for unemployed men and women with children under age 18, in exchange for services (joining formal education or participating in labour training courses or local productive projects or in community services). In May 2005, the programme had 1,512,614 beneficiaries.<sup>8</sup> In 2004, the Family Plan allocated up to USD 69.32 per month in urban areas to 210,806 mothers with three children or more.

The plan has been criticized for allocating insufficient amounts<sup>9</sup> and because a three-member household is granted exactly the same amount as a ten-member household. Moreover, a large part of the resources granted to beneficiaries are paradoxically used to pay for direct consumer taxes. There is no coordination between programmes and health and education services and some sectors were deliberately excluded. Also, the registration period for beneficiaries was closed in 2002<sup>10</sup> and currently there is no provision for new beneficiaries to join the programmes.

7 INDEC, EPH, first quarter of 2005.

8 Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security. [www.trabajo.gov.ar](http://www.trabajo.gov.ar)

9 In the second semester of 2004, the basic food basket for a five member household amounted to ARS 358 (USD 124), which evidences the insufficient character of the amount of ARS 150 allocated by the Head of Household Programme.

10 The imposition of a deadline to join the Unemployed Heads of Household Programme was taken to court under sponsorship of the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales. In such action, the Federal Social Security Court of First Instance ordered a precautionary measure aimed at ensuring that, while the process was underway, the family right to social inclusion, to a suitable standard of living and to social security of the applicant should be protected.

**TABLE 2**

<b>Index of nominal and real salaries, by worker's condition.</b>									
Last day of month values. December 2001 = 100.									
MONTH	GENERAL LEVEL		PRIVATE SECTOR				PUBLIC SECTOR		CPI
	Nominal	Real	REGISTERED		NON REGISTERED		Nominal	Real	
			Nominal	Real	Nominal	Real			
Jan-02	99.61	97.38	99.67	97.43	99.17	96.95	99.81	97.57	102.30
Jun-02	99.55	76.29	100.54	77.05	96.31	73.81	100.04	76.66	130.49
Dec-02	107.45	76.23	116.86	82.91	94.12	66.77	100.56	71.34	140.95
Jun-03	115.70	80.43	130.54	90.75	94.68	65.82	104.82	72.87	143.85
Dec-03	120.42	82.42	135.32	92.62	104.23	71.34	106.23	72.71	146.11
Jun-04	127.97	84.78	146.96	97.36	108.12	71.63	109.35	72.44	150.94
Oct-04	130.51	84.90	149.18	97.04	113.42	73.78	110.58	71.93	153.73
Jan-05	136.48	86.76	158.34	100.65	117.41	74.63	112.52	71.53	157.31

Source: Institute of Studies and Training, Argentine Workers Central, based on the EPH.

In 2003 the Ministry of Social Development promoted the "Manos a la Obra" Programme in order to generate processes of social inclusion through micro-entrepreneurships, thus turning unemployed people into micro-entrepreneurs without ensuring the sustainability of small enterprises. This way, the State's intervention in redesigning social relationships can contribute to modifying the position of individuals in the relation between capital and labour, in such a way that (formerly unemployed) workers are turned into (micro) entrepreneurs. This is the logic implicit in the programme, whose key supplement is the Family Plan, which ensures that women and their children can reproduce the labour force within the household.

In the case of the Family Plan, although it has a distributive dimension (resources are allocated to households headed by women), the action demanded as counter-payment affects the way in which poor women are acknowledged since they are asked to prove that they send their children to school and that they undergo health checks. Since this counter-payment is a behavioural demand, proposed as an incentive to develop certain practices and at the same time is an essential condition for participating in the plan, it can be inferred that those who design the plan consider that women in these sectors are careless towards their children and thereby it is necessary to force them to take basic care actions. In the eyes of society, these women should be monitored in terms of the treatment towards their own children.

Meanwhile, the increase in budgetary resources allocated to the State's social policy has not been translated into a significant change with regards to the logic of social intervention, reproducing therefore the poverty cycles characteristic of policies implemented in the 1990s.

### Conclusion

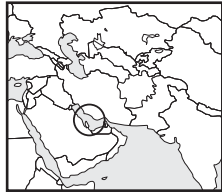
The extent of Argentina's social crisis, reflected in the analysis of the main social variables, as well as its duration in time, confront us with situations whose effects will be felt by future generations. The State should carry out urgent actions to avoid the consolidation of poverty reproduction cycles.

Although the effects of the economic recovery initiated in early 2003 have brought about an improvement of the main social indicators, they have failed to reduce the levels of poverty, extreme poverty and unemployment to rates registered prior to the crisis of December 2001.

At the same time, the process of wealth concentration has intensified further, consolidating a profoundly unequal and unfair society, where public policies seem to be guided more by the need to appease social conflict while sustaining minimum levels of survival, than by the development of inclusive policies directed towards full development. ■

## ■ BAHRAIN

# Rights acknowledged, changes pending



Advances towards recognition of women's rights are still not accompanied by significant social changes such as women's participation in electoral processes or relevant positions. In addition, the Government has not taken steps against income distribution inequity even though poverty is on the rise and unemployment - which mainly affects women - could reach 35% in 2015.

### The Bahraini Human Rights Society (BHRS)

In early 2005 the Bahraini Supreme Council for Women (SCW) issued the *Report of the Kingdom of Bahrain on the Follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action*. The Report was published when the SCW launched the Strategy on the Advancement and Integration of Bahraini Women. However none of the government ministries or agencies has issued a report on the implementation of the Copenhagen Summit or the Millennium Development Goals.

Since the 2001 Reform Project there is a better climate for government policy assessment, regardless of the controversy about it. Within a reasonable atmosphere of freedom of expression and association, relative transparency of official information and the cooperation between the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), it is now possible to properly assess the Government's performance.

Apart from the Reform Project, no event has been organized by any official agency or NGO to review Bahrain's performance on the implementation of both the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) programmes of action and resolutions. However some events will be organized by civil society organizations (CSOs) around the third Arab Human Development Report (TARHD)<sup>1</sup> since the publication received substantial media coverage.

The focus of attention on the TARHD could demonstrate the Arab obsession with politics, and in particular economic and social issues. However contradictory it may be, concerns about development, poverty, marginalization, and women's issues are not treated seriously within the context of socio-economic policy. Nor are there any credible or official vital statistics or indicators on the poverty line, population groups by income, or the per capita share of unsatisfied basic needs.

This might explain why it is very difficult to measure Bahrain's accomplishments regarding both the Copenhagen and Beijing programmes of action. In this analysis we will compile information taken from various sources including the Government, research

centres, academics and NGOs. Apart from empirical measurements, we will also rely on journalistic reports.

We will examine selected indicators for Beijing and Copenhagen simultaneously. The official *Report of the Kingdom of Bahrain on the Follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action* accounts for both the accomplishments and the obstacles of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. We will examine the Report and other government sources using an objective and critical methodology. In addition we will refer to some official documents and research work not only relevant to Beijing but also to Copenhagen.

### Poverty and the poverty of women

The Report is an account of the official welfare and social policies which address poverty reduction and the improvement of living standards, including the policies designed for women. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index, Bahrain ranks 40th worldwide in 2003, and experienced an increase in gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (in PPP USD) from USD 16,060 in 2001 to USD 17,170 in 2002.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile a study by the National Studies Centre<sup>3</sup> in 2002 established the poverty line at BHD 337/month (USD 894) while 53% of Bahrainis employed in the private sector earn less than BHD 200/month (USD 530). According to the study, the average family size is six people and 16% of the population live below the poverty line.

The large difference between official GDP per capita and actual GDP per capita is due to the income gap between the small number of wealthy people and the large number of poor, the absence of comprehensive social insurance including unemployment insurance, the State's relinquishment of responsibility to provide basic services such as housing, and inadequate poverty alleviation policy.

Since the 1980s, there have been UNDP plans in Bahrain to address poverty and to encourage small-scale projects. Education and training, health, welfare, unemployment, marginalization and family policy have helped counter poverty and vitalize productive work rather than charity. The civil society sector (women's

societies, charity funds, etc.) has also collaborated with the Government and the UNDP in programmes such as Microstart<sup>4</sup> and craft production.

### Public programmes

The government-run Bahrain Development Bank and the Bahrain United Nations Industrial Development Organization project for entrepreneurs have helped launch several small industrial businesses. The Ministry of Labour established the Institute of Vocational Training and financed training projects in areas such as hospitality services and the beauty sector.

The Mackenzie Plan<sup>5</sup> to reform the labour market proposes a gradual tax on the employment of foreign workers in order to make employment of locals more attractive and to finance a fund which could be used for training locals and supporting the unemployed.

In order to address the increasing number of poor families and alleviate their current meagre assistance, the Government increased funding allocated to families with monthly incomes less than BHD 150 (USD 400) from BHD 6 million (USD 16 million) in 2003 to BHD 20 million (USD 53 million) for 2005.<sup>6</sup>

### More poverty and more income concentration

Nevertheless, the number and the percentage of poor people have increased. The number of unemployed, especially women, is alarming and is expected to increase from its current level of 16% to 35% in 2015, unless a policy shift is made.<sup>7</sup>

His Highness The Crown Prince, sheikh Salman bin Hamad Alkhalifa raised the alarm in his speech on 22 September 2004, in a seminar on Reforming the Labour Market, when he said "I am concerned that the economic boom which our country will witness in the coming years will bypass the ordinary Bahraini". During this seminar a plan by Mackenzie

1 This is the third report in a four part series written by an independent group of Arab scholars, and sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development Organizations.

2 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2004*, 2004.

3 Hameed Gafar, "Workforce and standard of living in Bahrain". National Studies Center, Manama, Bahrain, 2005.

4 MicroStart Project for Development of Micro-finance Sectors in Bahrain. [www.undp.org/bh/undp/default.asp?nc=7055&id=60](http://www.undp.org/bh/undp/default.asp?nc=7055&id=60)

5 Economic Development Board. "Reforming the Labour Market". Manama, Bahrain, September 2004.

6 The Parliament, minutes of meetings, statement by the Minister of Social affairs, April 2005.

7 Economic Development Board, *op cit*.



on the current and future labour market was unveiled.<sup>8</sup> It warned that current poverty, inappropriate jobs and youth unemployment, will worsen if profound and conclusive reform is not initiated.

The plan set out the need for wider reform of the economy and of the educational/training system. This is considered to be more difficult than reforming the labour market. Although implementing the Mackenzie Plan may reduce the rate of unemployment, and thus partially reduce poverty, there are doubts concerning the total eradication of poverty. This is because the Bahraini economy is characterized by contrasting factors. It is dominated by the State because the business and government elite in Bahrain are inseparable and many of the major enterprises are family-owned. As a result, basic government policy favours businesses over the population's well-being. And in the absence of corporate and personal income taxes, the redistribution of gross national product to ensure social justice is not foreseeable. Furthermore, more and more small and medium-sized businesses at present are being crushed by big business.

A privatization programme of government enterprises was launched in 2002. Among the businesses privatized were public transport, public sanitation and the Port of Mina Salman. More government services and enterprises will be privatized and more economic activities will be open up to foreign competition in accordance with World Trade Organization rules. This will worsen unemployment problems, at least in the short run.

## The integration of women

### *Reservations about Beijing and Copenhagen*

The empowerment of women and their integration into different aspects of society such as politics, economy, state, sport, education, culture, and civil society are integral objectives of both the Beijing and Copenhagen programmes of action.

The Government has reservations about both. The implementation the Beijing and Copenhagen programmes of action acquired strong momentum after the initiation of the basic document of the Reform Project (The National Action Charter). The document stipulates the equal political rights of all citizens (males and females), and eliminates the ambiguity of the 1973 Constitution which had been used as pretext for the denial of women's political rights. The 2002 Bahrain Constitution declares men and women to be equal. The regulating municipal and parliamentary elections clearly stipulate equal rights in voting and candidacy.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

### *Amendments for equal rights*

The establishment of the Supreme Council for Women headed by Her Highness Sabika Alkhalifam, His Majesty's wife, has been fundamental in the advancement and empowerment of women. The well-financed SCW embarked on a project for the empowerment of women in fields such as political participation and business engagement. The SCW acts as a watchdog on equal opportunities and women's rights, evaluating the performance of the different government ministries and agencies. As a result of their work, laws on public housing and public service regulations were amended to qualify women for similar rights as men. The SCW is a driving force behind the Family Code legislation which faces strong religious opposition.

### *Limited opportunities*

The incorporation of women into the labour market has steadily increased in both the public sector where women represented 43% and in the private sector where they had 26% participation in 2004.<sup>9</sup> However we must take into consideration that foreign workers represent 68% of the total labour force, and women only represent 15%. Also, women on average get lower pay than men in both the public and private sector. Women are ill-represented on the boards of corporations and family-owned businesses, and occupy few executive or senior posts. They are denied the opportunity to be judges, and are scarcely employed in the judiciary, public prosecution, defence security and foreign affairs jobs.

Despite the affirmation of women's political rights, no woman has been voted into any of the municipal councils or the House of Representatives, and only six of the forty members in the Alshura (appointed) Council are women. This reflects the masculine bias of society, which echoes the religious establishment's long-established policy of marginalizing women. In 2005 two women were appointed to ministerial positions: Dr. Fatama Albolishi to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Dr. Nada Hafad to the Ministry of Health. Meanwhile the only female ambassador, Ms Hya Alkhalifa, resigned from her post.

In political society more women are being elected to the leadership of political organizations. The same is true in CSOs such as trade unions, professional associations and other public societies especially youth organizations.

There have not been many advances with regards to anti-discrimination, anti-repression, wom-

en's empowerment or women's integration legislation. Some members of Parliament brought forward a proposal to issue special anti-discrimination legislation, which included discrimination against women in its definition, but the motion failed. The Family Code Law is stalled at the level of the legislative committee of Parliament due to threats from the religious establishment. There is also a proposal before Parliament on violence against women.<sup>10</sup>

Amnesty International chose Bahrain to launch and coordinate its campaign on combating violence against women in the Arabian Peninsula countries (Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain Qatar, Emirates, Oman and Yemen).<sup>11</sup> A coalition was formed among CSOs to implement the plan of action. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia has decided to hold a conference in Kuwait in June 2006 on violence against women in the region.

In general there is popular awareness of women's rights (especially among women) and determination to secure these rights. Social policy indulges women's rights but there are many obstacles that must be overcome in order to eradicate discrimination and fully integrate women. ■

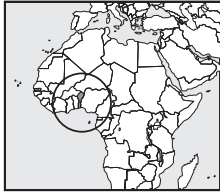
<sup>9</sup> National Bureau of Information, National Statistics, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 2005.

<sup>10</sup> The Parliament, Annual Record, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Amnesty International, "Our Destiny in Our Hand", London, 2004.

## BENIN

# Pressing objectives



National authorities and citizen organizations in Benin agree that without strong and lasting economic growth a significant reduction in poverty levels cannot be achieved. This African country is far from attaining the objectives stipulated five years ago in the Millennium Development Goals.

### Social Watch Benin

The year 2005 is crucial for civil society organizations (CSOs), since ten years have passed since both the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995). This year's agenda includes a follow-up not only of these two very important events, but also of the progress to date regarding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which should be accomplished by 2015.

At these conferences, world leaders and the international community committed themselves to finding ways to eradicate poverty and make gender equity a reality. This is why this MDG progress report for Benin has been written from the vantage point of the United Nations General Assembly Special Summit on the Millennium Development Goals to be held in September 2005 which will focus on these two problems.

The MDG campaign in Benin falls under a long-term vision called Benin 2005 or the "Alafia Scenario", both of which were outlined using a participative process undertaken by the Long-Term Perspectives National Studies programme.

Stemming from this orientation, the Government drafted a programme for medium term action (2001-2006) called the Second Government Action Programme. Another plan, known as the Strategic Document for Poverty Reduction (SDPR), was drafted to address problems requiring immediate attention in 2003-2005. This second plan, which is the framework par excellence for the implementation of the MDGs, is a global strategy to counter poverty that integrates all development dimensions without ignoring the essential role of women in the development process. The document states that without strong and lasting economic growth, a significant reduction of poverty cannot be achieved.

In July 2005 Benin presented its first official MDG report. The poverty and gender inequity situation is still alarming, and the report's conclusions - confirmed by civil society - raise doubts about the possibility of Benin achieving the objectives by 2015.

### Poverty fighting actions

The Government of Benin initiated a participative consultation mechanism, which included the participation of civil society. This process allowed for a

poverty diagnosis and an identification of the priorities for how to reduce it in order to meet the MDGs in the framework of the SCPR mentioned above.

During the last trimester of 2003 Benin implemented various policies including the preparation and execution of the results based budget, the application of sector development programmes, the improvement of the regulatory and institutional framework of the public contracting system and economic liberalization through the privatization of some public enterprises.

There was some progress in strengthening the capacity of the poorest people to participate in productive and decision-making processes. Likewise, access to credit and savings institutions, as well as the development of community infrastructure, have improved.

These efforts, however, have been insufficient since they have had no striking impact on poverty, which has worsened. Between 1990 and 2003, the gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate hovered around 5%, but in 2004 it decreased to 3.2%, due to a downturn in economic activity.<sup>1</sup> The slowdown resulted from commercial restrictions imposed by Nigeria on certain products exported by Benin and the consequent decline in the performance of Benin's Autonomous Port of Cotonou, as well as competition from the Port of Lomé in neighbouring Togo. The serious cotton crisis must be added to this context since cotton is Benin's main export product. Poor governance and persistent corruption also played a key role in the decline.

The economy in Benin is far from having reached the real growth rate of 7% which is considered necessary for a significant and lasting reduction in poverty. It is also far from having its economic growth distributed in an equitable and reasonable manner. Almost 30% of the country's population of 6.77 million is poor. Half of the country's inhabitants are women and half are under the age of 16.

There are disparities within the country resulting in inequalities between the diverse social groups, as well as gender-related discrimination and development disparity between regions. Poverty is greater in rural than urban areas, although it has also in-

creased in the latter and affects mostly young people. Local governments do not have the financial resources required to reduce poverty. Households with an uneducated household head are the poorest and mostly situated in the rural sector. In general, poverty affects more women than men.

Almost half of the population is still unable to satisfy its basic needs such as education, health, safe drinking water and food.<sup>2</sup> The literacy rate of people over 15 years old is 38.9%. Malnutrition affects 16% of the population and 23% of children under 5 years old are underweight for their age. Additionally, trained staff are only present at 66% of childbirths. The country allocates only 2.1% of its GDP to health care services.<sup>3</sup>

### Civil society proposals

Civil society proposes the following:

- production diversification to reduce the country's dependence on cotton,
- increasing budgetary allocations to essential community infrastructure and basic social services,
- the consideration of women's needs, especially with regards to their access to land and credit, in order to value and measure their economic contribution to the preservation, transformation and commercialization of agricultural products,
- the promotion of good governance and public access to all the information related to economic priorities,
- improving the capabilities, impartiality, and efficiency of existing institutional mechanisms put into place to follow-up on MDG progress, especially the Social Change Monitor (Observatoire pour le Changement Social) and the National Commission for Development and the fight against Poverty
- the establishment of departmental and community bodies to monitor the MDG campaign.

1 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. "African Economic Outlook 2004/2005: Country Studies. Benin", 2005, [www.oecd.org/document/6/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_15162846\\_34862854\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/6/0,2340,en_2649_15162846_34862854_1_1_1_1_00.html)

2 *Ibid.*

3 United Nations Development Programme. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*. 2004.



### *Organized civil society*

Benin has a very active and organized civil society which is involved in the fight against poverty, and carries out MDG advocacy, awareness-raising and lobbying campaigns. In the course of these actions citizen organizations have denounced situations that go against the objective of poverty reduction, contributed to the fight against corruption and heightened awareness among the population.

Nevertheless, the efforts of CSOs are impeded by weak participation in the national consensus framework set up by the Government. This does not permit that the objective of increasing participation possibilities for the poor in the productive and decision making processes be reached.

CSOs do not have free access to all information relevant to national economic management including how ministerial budgets are prepared and executed and how ministerial spending is controlled; programmes on public service privatization; the regulatory and institutional framework for public contracting; the involvement of local populations in community development; and the transparency of national statistics apparatus. CSOs are also impeded by weak institutional capacity for analysis when the above data is made available and an inability to formulate specialized and pertinent criticism for the proposal of coherent, lasting and efficient alternatives.

The promotion of monitoring by citizens must become a priority for the Government, for Parliament and for members of Parliament dedicated to development topics.

### *Gender inequity*

Advances have been noted in the legal framework for the defence of women's rights as well as their promotion. Some examples are:

- The Code for the Individual and the Family which came into effect in August 2003.
- The adoption in March 2003 of a law on sexual and reproductive health.
- The adoption, also in March 2003, of a law prohibiting female genital mutilation, which establishes fines and prison sentences of six months to three years for violators (rising to five years if the woman is a minor and to ten years if the woman dies as a result of the mutilation).
- A penal code project to combat sexual harassment.
- A draft law on the prevention of child trafficking.
- The application by Parliament of the Additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, on the rights of African women. This document was adopted on 11 July 2003 by member countries of the African Union.
- The diffusion by women's NGOs of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all

Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was ratified by Benin in March 1992.

- The strengthening of institutional mechanisms for the promotion of women.

However the above mentioned advances have not reduced poverty affecting women, nor have they raised women's participation in decision-making processes. The resources allocated by the State for the Beijing Platform for Action are insufficient and institutional structures have not managed to carry out concrete actions due to a lack of means and strategies.

Consequently, gender inequity still exists in various areas. Women's political representation and presence in hierarchical positions is very low. There are only five women out of a total of 83 members of Parliament; four women among 21 cabinet ministers; one among seven members of the Constitutional Court; two women members of the Economic and Social Advisory Council out of 30; one mayor and one political party leader. There are no women ambassadors. As an exception to the rule there are two women in very important positions - one serves as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Justice and another on the directorate of the Constitutional Court.

The gross enrolment rate, which includes the total number of children enrolled in primary school over the total number of school-age children, is 78.1% for girls and 110.46% for boys.

### *Violence against women*

The prejudices and stereotypes which serve as the basis for discrimination against women are very conspicuous, and few women report the violence to which they are subjected daily. There are no specific laws which punish violence against women in the home, in the family, or in society as a whole. The persistence of inequalities is frequently tolerated by the State and society, who observe in silence under the false cover of religious arguments, tradition and customs.

### *Civil society participation*

The contribution of civil society has been noteworthy. Pressure and advocacy from the sector resulted in the Code of the Individual and the Family being brought to vote and approved. More generally the work of these groups has improved the legal and institutional framework for the promotion and defence of women's rights.

The NGOs participating in these campaigns have experienced concrete success in the diffusion of the texts of laws and international instruments for the promotion of equity, and the training, awareness raising and education of women and people working in the legal sector. At the same time, they have denounced attempts to violate women's rights and offered support to defend these rights.

These organizations have integrated implementation, control and monitoring of women's rights policy into the heart of state-owned and non state-owned mechanisms. Lastly, their contribution to these topics has resulted in legislative reforms favouring the juridical status of women.

### *Conclusion*

Only political will can put into practice the institutional reforms which have been approved. This can only be achieved though the combined efforts of the Government and its legislative and judicial branches, with civil society working as a willing partner. ■



## ■ BOLIVIA

# Demands for participation in decisions and economic benefits



Implementation of neoliberal programmes has thwarted hopes and increased poverty and social inequality in Bolivia. The focal point of the social mobilizations of 2003 and 2005 was to demand reforms to economic policy and representative democracy which would formally include social participation for development purposes and ensure a fairer distribution of benefits arising from the exploitation of natural resources.

Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Laboral y Agrario (CEDLA)

Ten years have passed since 186 governments committed themselves at the UN Copenhagen Summit to promote social development. Based on the rhetoric of "poverty relief", these commitments left nothing but unfulfilled hopes. The discourse on equity turned into structural adjustment, liberalization of markets and the resulting impact of increased poverty and inequity.

In Bolivia, the neoliberal creed of structural adjustment programmes attacked the structure of state capitalism on all flanks and laid the basis for a free-market economy. This resulted in huge social costs while the main problems of the country's economy are still to be solved.

### How to weaken the State

The reform of the State was aimed at excluding the State itself from all economic activity and changing its roles; and introducing strong fiscal vulnerability and high social and financial costs, which at present are the main threats to the country's economic and political stability.

The shutting down or privatization of state companies and the high costs incurred in the process led to the loss of sources of income, which placed the State in a permanent situation of insolvency and fiscal deficit. Between 1980 and 1986, 77% of common public revenues came from state companies, falling to 23% in the last decade.<sup>1</sup>

In order to reduce the deficit, cuts were made to resources allocated to social needs (health, education, housing, etc.). This undermined the universal coverage of many public services and paved the way to their privatization.

Also, a severe tax reform was implemented in 1987, which has not yet been completed. Taxes became the main source of state revenues (54% of all revenues), through a regressive policy that taxes low income more heavily than high income. In the last five years, 72% of tax collection came from consumers and 28% from companies. Contributions from the main five privatized companies turned out

to be minimal, since they only declare 5% average annual profit.<sup>2</sup>

The expenses of reforms suggested by international financial institutions were increased. The privatization of the pension system, for example, represented 60% of fiscal deficit in 2003,<sup>3</sup> even when these figures were not in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections.

Furthermore, the increase in public deficit led to higher external indebtedness. Between 2000 and 2003, in its capacity as a heavily indebted poor country, Bolivia incurred a new debt of USD 2.23 billion, which added to the internal debt places fiscal sustainability at risk and limits the flexibility of public expenditure.

In 2004 the external debt amounted to USD 7.07 billion (88% of GDP) and its service represented USD 758 million, equivalent to 134% of average public investment in the last four years.<sup>4</sup>

### Trade openness, imported agricultural products

Following the tendency of the Washington Consensus (regarded as the paradigm of neoliberal policies in the 1980s and early 1990s), successive Bolivian governments imposed the liberalization of markets and opened up the market for trade.

This brought disastrous results to the production structure and the economy. The national industry is extremely weak and initially leaned on state protectionist policies. From 1985 it faced strong competition from imported products, under the assumption that the opening up of trade would bring about its transformation upon the arrival of capital and technology.

Twenty years of this adventure have passed and the situation of Bolivian industry proves that the policies were wrong, and the sector now shows increasing signs of regression. It still has a limited participation in the country's economy, representing 17% of GDP and contributing a meagre 15% to national exports.

At the same time, industrial activity is still fo-

cused on the production of consumer goods, which accounts for 60%, while 37% is engaged in intermediate goods and 2% in capital goods. What is worse, poor industrial productivity remains tied to the growing participation of small economic units which employ less than 10 workers, accounting for 95% of production units within the sector and absorbing 49.5% of employment.<sup>5</sup>

State production enterprises, which in the late 1980s represented about 3%, have disappeared, while private enterprises fell from 36% to only 26% at the end of the 1990s, and informal enterprises, which in the late 1980s represented 61%, reached 73% in the 1990s.<sup>6</sup>

Faced with this extreme opening up of the market, businessmen sought to reduce labour costs by imposing false competitiveness which has had huge social costs without solving the problem of poor technological investment.

The rural economy, main provider of consumer goods for a domestic market of 3.1 million people (37.7% of the country's population),<sup>7</sup> was also undermined by trade openness and remained on the brink of bankruptcy in many of its sectors. Agricultural production reduced its offer of many products, including main crops like potatoes, cassava, onions and rice. This reduction was covered by foreign offer, with annual imports of agricultural products increasing ten-fold during the neoliberal period as of 1985.<sup>8</sup>

The steady extermination of rural production resulted in an emptying of the countryside, particularly the Altiplano (high plateau) region, leading to emigration towards urban areas and neighbouring countries.

### Schizophrenic privatization

Privatization of state companies, promoted by the discourse of "capitalization", was the hardest blow to the national economy and the State. The transfer of state property and economic surplus to foreign

1 CEDLA. "Impuestos a los ingresos: Un fácil recurso para un Estado insolvente". *Boletín Control Ciudadano*. No 5. September 2003, p. 2. [http://cedla.org/boletin/lista\\_especific.php?tipo\\_boletin=8](http://cedla.org/boletin/lista_especific.php?tipo_boletin=8)

2 CEDLA. "Análisis comparativo del Presupuesto General de la Nación 2000-2005". January 2005. [http://cedla.org/pub/lista\\_especific.php?tipo\\_publicacion=10](http://cedla.org/pub/lista_especific.php?tipo_publicacion=10)

3 Espada, Juan Luis. "La vieja sujeción de la política fiscal". In *Economía y sociedad boliviana después de octubre de 2003*. Documento de coyuntura No 9. CEDLA, 2004, pp. 13-19.

4 CEDLA (2005), *op cit*.

5 Escóbar, Silvia and Lourdes Montero. *La industria en su laberinto. Reestructuración productiva y competitividad en Bolivia*. La Paz: CEDLA, 2003.

6 *Ibid*.

7 National Institute of Statistics. "Population and Housing Census 2001". [www.ine.gov.bo](http://www.ine.gov.bo)

8 Pérez, Mamerto. *Apertura comercial y sector agrícola campesino. La otra cara de la pobreza del campesino andino*. La Paz: CEDLA, 2003.





investors was aggravated by its failure to bring new revenue into the State's coffers owing to the form of association adopted between the State and foreign capital.

Foreign capitalists invested an amount similar to the initial capital in exchange for more than 51% of shares plus the management of the privatized companies, while the amount of initial capital, in the form of shares, was handed over to the companies managing the pension funds of Bolivian citizens, who became the beneficiaries of the companies' future dividends.

Thus privatization adopted a schizophrenic character as it went in two different directions. On the one hand, the economy was supported by the domestic market and specific sectors of the market, made up of technologically backward medium-sized or informal enterprises with low levels of productivity and products aimed at a market of extremely low purchasing power, but with a strong demand for workforce.

On the other hand, the economy consisted of very large companies, with high productivity and the latest technology, catering to external markets of high purchasing power or domestic monopolies granted by the State, loosely linked to the rest of the economy, barely linked to the rest of the economy, with the added disadvantage of a very low workforce demand.

This dichotomy can be noticed in the vast differences in productivity. While in 1997 the average productivity (measured in constant 1990 BOB per worker) in agriculture, industry and construction, stood at BOB 2, BOB 8.7 and BOB 3.9 respectively, the productivity of sectors with considerable participation of foreign capital such as mining or quarry extraction, electricity and water, and financial entities, stood at BOB 31.3, BOB 38.1 and BOB 31.4, respectively.<sup>9</sup>

The great importance given to the hydrocarbons industry (in particular the exploitation of natural gas) reintroduces the establishment of pockets within a backward economy, with weak links to the rest of the country's economy, a positive but irrelevant effect on social conditions (employment or salaries) and a debatable impact on state finances.

### What about social development?

The implementation of policies imposed by multilateral financial institutions caused a drastic change in employment and labour conditions, characterized by job insecurity.

The following conditions stand out in urban employment: reduced state participation (from 25% to 12% of total workers between 1985 and 1995 respectively),<sup>10</sup> stagnation of private sector employment and uncontrolled growth of the informal sector.

Although labour conditions deteriorated, giving rise to a latent labour flexibility, the General Labour Law was not modified. Government after government allowed private businesses to increase their

profits, violating the rights acquired by workers, first by liberalizing the labour market and then by reforming parts of different sectoral regulations.

In addition to the reduction of salaries, the cancellation of collateral social benefits, the extension of the working day and the increase in temporary employment, the social security system was privatized leaving thousands of workers without the protection of a pension scheme.

These changes led to a process of increased poverty and social inequality to the extent that today, according to the national poverty line, 64.3% of the population are poor (53.5% in urban areas and 82% in rural areas) and the inequality of income distribution is evidenced by the fact that the wealthiest 20% of the population receive 57.9% of total labour income, while the poorest 20% only earn 3.15% of the total.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to this, and according to our estimates, the unemployment rate increased in the cities over the last five years. In 2001, the unemployment rate was 10.3%; in 2002 it was 11.7%; in 2003 it was 12.3%; in 2004 it was 11.6%; and the estimate for 2005 is 10.7%. For its part, the World Bank calculates this rate at 5% for 2001.

The informal sector still maintains a large share of the workforce (approximately 60% of the economically active population),<sup>12</sup> with worse levels in the quality of jobs, which turns the ratio between unemployment and sub-employment into a time bomb for the country's level of social conflict.

### Social mobilization: the demands

On 12 and 13 February 2003, popular protests and a mutiny of the police forces in La Paz and the adjacent city of El Alto against the implementation of a new tax on salaries were repressed by the Government of President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada with a death toll of 30.

In the week of 10-17 October, workers, peasants and inhabitants of El Alto and La Paz mobilized to complain against the sale of natural gas to the United States through a Chilean port demanding the return to the State of gas fields and their exploitation. The demonstration ended in a massacre in which 80 people were killed and several hundreds were injured. The popular uprising led to the resignation of Sánchez de Lozada, who was succeeded by Vice-President Carlos Mesa.

Political instability did not come to an end with Mesa as president. In spite of a governmental agenda that attempted to rescue the social demands proposed in October 2003, Mesa's government worsened the polarization within Bolivian society. The almost 20 months of his administration can be summarized as follows:

- A referendum was held on the hydrocarbons policy. It consisted in five confusing questions that instead of bringing the debate to an end left the fundamental demand on the recovery of hydrocarbons for the State unsolved.
- The approval - through a long, closed and confusing process - of a new Hydrocarbons Law by the Bolivian Congress and later its promulgation by the Executive Power<sup>13</sup> did not manage to stop the demand for nationalization of large sectors of the population, which intensified protests and ended up requesting the resignation of President Mesa, with road blockades and fences surrounding the government building.
- Regional demands for autonomy intensified in the departments of Santa Cruz, in the east, and Tarija, in the south, where most natural gas reserves are found. This led to polarization between these demands and those made by social movements in the west, which called for the nationalization of natural gas and the organization of an assembly to write a new constitution.

All this culminated in the resignation of President Carlos Mesa on 6 June 2005. His place was taken by the then President of the Supreme Court of Justice, Eduardo Rodríguez Veltzé, whose main agenda is focused on calling general elections for the end of 2005.

The popular uprisings in 2003 and 2005 mark the end of a historical period characterized by at least three phenomena: the crisis of the economic model, the re-composition of social forces and the crisis of the democratic and representative State. Although it involves voting, democracy does not ensure spaces to channel people's demands and participation. These phenomena cannot be understood without making reference to the imposition of the neoliberal model in the economic, social and political areas.

(Continued on page 254)

9 Arze, Carlos. "Ajuste neoliberal y mercado de trabajo en Bolivia". Global Policy Network, 2001. www.gpn.org

10 *Ibid.*

11 INE, www.ine.gov.bo; CEDLA, "Dossier de estadísticas de empleo, condiciones laborales y dimensiones de género", 2004, <http://cedla.org/pub/slideshow/inicio.htm>. According to the World Bank the Gini coefficient increased from 0.52 to 0.61 between 1985 and 2003. World Bank. *Country Assistance Strategy 2004*, p. 2.

12 CEDLA, *ibid.*

13 According to this new law, the property of hydrocarbons is not recovered in all steps of the production chain as nationalization demands requested. It only imposes a 32% Direct Tax on Hydrocarbons, which would supplement the already existing 18% of royalties, reaching 50%. However, "the government proposed a mixed regime of royalties and taxes: 18% of royalties and a 32% Complementary Tax on Hydrocarbons (ICH). This tax would be imposed gradually over time according to the production level for each field (from 5% to 36%, in the case of natural gas), it would also be paid per field and not per company and, finally, it could be credited against the Company Profit Tax. Due to the high levels of production existing within the scale, many smaller fields would not be paying the ICH; besides, tax crediting would cause the Company Profit Tax never to be paid on account of being, logically, lower than the ICH. Thus, in this case 18 plus 32 would not be 50%". Arze, Carlos and Pablo Poveda. *La nueva Ley de Hidrocarburos*. Documento de coyuntura Nº 10. CEDLA, 2005, pp. 4-5.

## ■ BRAZIL

# Equity postponed



Social policies are still subject to economic logic, and although President Lula's government has encouraged civil society to participate in their construction, the big question is how to overcome inequality without making significant changes in the dominant neoliberal system. The priority given to fiscal adjustment practically obliterates even the intention of creating equity in Brazil.

### Brazilian Social Watch Reference Group

Guacira César de Oliveira / Iara Pietricovsky<sup>1</sup>

In 1995 the Brazilian Government assumed several commitments to fight poverty and social exclusion at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, as well as at the IV World Conference on Women in Beijing.

The Social Watch Report<sup>2</sup> (Brazilian edition) presented an evaluation of social development in the five years following these conferences. It raised the following questions, among others: to what extent can we actually assert that in this five-year period social policies were not merely "residual and subsidiary" to economic policy? To what extent have those policies not boiled down to distributing consolation prizes to the losers of the new order?

The premise of the report was that social development could not be subjected to the market. The authors warned against how increased valorization of markets in the 1990s led to the belief that the market is capable of resolving social issues, and that struggling against its logic and imposition was a useless effort.

International conferences like Copenhagen and Beijing put forward another vision: markets are not blind bearers of solutions, but mere instruments created by societies to organize their productive lives. Lessa and Cardim affirm that "markets are instruments, not ends in themselves."<sup>3</sup> Using markets as the regulating basis of relations is a mystification sponsored by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other multilateral institutions. In fact the market discriminates, assigns privileges, and excludes human beings from the benefits that it occasionally produces.

Formulating public policies in the spirit of Copenhagen and Beijing means reaching beyond markets. It implies reflecting on social development as a goal of economic progress, and abandoning the belief that social development is a natural corollary of economic development separate from the implementation political democracy.

Lessa and Cardim conclude that a positive agenda for a new State requires a firm commitment to social development, and a new perception of the role of public policies and their connection to organized civil society. This means radicalizing democracy and strengthening the State in order to exercise its moderating role, as well as expanding participatory democracy.

During the 1990s the State adjusted itself to capital globalization under the hegemony of the United States of America. The objective of this type of globalization was to build the country's capacities to support international capital competitiveness, to the detriment of its function of fostering domestic development. Privatization caused the transfer of state assets to private corporations, that is, from the public sphere to the market, a shift that hit at the heart of the State. In other words, public assets collectively built by Brazilian society were privately appropriated, in most cases increasing the assets of multinational corporations.<sup>4</sup>

The 2000 Social Watch Report (Brazilian edition) analyzed the perpetuation of inequality in the Brazilian context. Starting with a colonial history marked by slavery and patrimonialism,<sup>5</sup> Brazil's socio-economic inequality continues to exclude a significant proportion of the population from social, cultural, economic, technological and scientific benefits. After looking into the macroeconomic policy and sectoral policies related to universal rights, such as education, health, and race and gender dimensions, the report states: "The central conclusion of what was discussed here is irrefutable:

the Brazilian government has not honoured Copenhagen's essential commitment. Despite the implementation of important sectoral programmes, affected by the adverse economic conjuncture and by restraints imposed by the IMF agreement, not even the most Panglossian evaluator would fail to notice that social policies continued to be subordinated to the logic of economic policy."<sup>6</sup>

### The Lula Era

Amidst great expectations, Luís Inácio Lula da Silva assumed power in 2003 with strong popular support and an explicit demand from the people for a change in the country's course. During the first two years of his term social movements withheld their criticism and tried to understand the trends and clashes of the various political and economic forces. However after two years' observation it is clear that the Lula Government has opted to continue implementing his predecessors' model of macroeconomic policy. This model subordinates social policies to economic policy while at the same time, paradoxically, encouraging organized civil society to participate more actively in the design of public policies. However it is not clear how one can change such deep-seated patterns of inequality without altering economic policy. This is the challenge: to have a system in which access to universal policies is ensured to all people.

Brazil's inequality is a complex matrix shaped by class, race, ethnicity, and gender dimensions. Public policies have been cut back because public expenditures were redirected to fiscal adjustment. This logic was initiated by the Fernando Collor de Mello Government (1990-1992). It permeated the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration (1995-2002) and lives on now in the Lula Government. Although the current administration created two special secretariats at ministerial level to apply a cross-cutting approach to gender and racial-ethnic perspectives in all public policy, the priority assigned to fiscal adjustment all but nullifies these agencies. One might ask if peripheral national states actually have the autonomy to discuss their policies in order to fight historical inequalities and inequalities created and aggravated by the logic of the dominant neo-liberal system.

1 Guacira César de Oliveira, sociologist and member of the Feminist Center for Studies and Advisory Services (CFEMEA) collective leadership. Iara Pietricovsky, anthropologist and member of the Institute for Socioeconomic Studies (INESC) collective managing board. Both are members of the Brazilian Social Watch Reference Group. The report was translated into English by Jones de Freitas and edited by Phil Courneyeur.

2 Kerstenetzky, Célia Lessa and Fernando J. Cardim Carvalho. "Até que ponto o Brasil honrou os compromissos?", in *Social Watch, No. 4*, Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Econômicas (IBASE), Rio de Janeiro, 2000.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Faleiros, Vicente "A Era FHC e o Governo Lula: Transição?", INESC, 2004. See also Prado, Luiz Carlos and Leonardo Weller. "The implicit agenda of a conservative patrimonial reform", in *Social Watch Report 2003. The Poor and the Market*. Montevideo: ITEM, 2003, p. 100.

5 Patrimonialism: a traditional political system in which government is personal, and government administration is an extension of the ruler. The individual national leader controls the political and economic life of the country, and personal relationships with the leader play a crucial role in amassing personal wealth.

6 Lessa Kerstenetzky and Cardim Carvalho, *op cit.*

In a recent report issued by the Budget and Financial Overseeing Consulting Services of the House of Representatives,<sup>7</sup> we can see the country's budgetary strangulation resulting from various economic adjustment plans implemented to allay the fears of the international financial system. The report states that in the last ten years (1995-2004) the country has achieved significant success in fighting inflation, not only through fiscal measures, but also due to a tight monetary policy in which high interest rates have played a crucial role. However this policy also had a strong impact on budgetary expenses and on nominal public deficit. To this high-interest policy, one should add the generation of a primary surplus of 4.25% of GDP. These economic policy options have caused budgetary strangulation and made it impossible to invest and implement public policy to comply with the international agreements signed at UN-sponsored world conferences.

### Public debt

According to abovementioned report, the federal Government spent USD 267.89 billion (in December 2004 values) on debt servicing from 1995 to 2004. This amount is equivalent in real values (and for the same period) to:

- 4.5 times total investments made in the country
- 5.7 times total expenditure on public security
- 10 times total social security expenses
- 3 times total spending on education
- 43% of the estimated GDP in 2004

Expenditures with debt interest and charges, and the net debt of the federal Government and Central Bank more than doubled, increasing from 12.9% of the GDP in December 1994 to 32.43% in 2004, despite extraordinary payments of interest and amortizations with funds from privatizations carried out in this period.<sup>8</sup>

### Salary inequality

During the same period the average real income of workers fell 21% and the average monthly unemployment rate increased 31%.<sup>9</sup>

The complexity of the inequality issue and the need to address it in all of its dimensions become evident when data is disaggregated and analyzed by race and gender. In 1993 white people earned on average 3.6 minimum wages while black people received 1.7, a difference of 111.7%. Ten years later, there was little change: white people earned 3.9 minimum wages on average, and black people 1.93.

7 *Evolução dos Juros, da Inflação e de Indicadores Sociais nos últimos Dez Anos - 1995/2004* - in Estudo Técnico (Technical Study) No. 01/2005. Financial Overseeing Consulting Services of the House of Representatives. Brasília, February 2005.

8 Between 1991 and 2002, USD 70.8 billion were raised with privatizations in the telecommunication, steelwork, petrochemical, and electricity sectors, among others.

9 Fundação Sistema Estadual de Análise de Dados (SEADE) and Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Sócio-Econômicos (DIEESE) - Pesquisas de Emprego e Desemprego (PED).

TABLE 1

Income concentration indicators				
YEAR	INCOME SHARE OF THE POOREST 20% (% OF TOTAL INCOME)	INCOME SHARE OF THE RICHEST 10% (% OF TOTAL INCOME)	INCOME INEQUALITY-GINI INDEX	POVERTY: PROPORTION OF PEOPLE LIVING BELOW THE POVERTY LINE (% OF TOTAL POPULATION)
1995	2,31	47,85	0,601	35,08
1996	2,16	47,52	0,602	34,72
1997	2,21	47,67	0,602	35,18
1998	2,31	47,80	0,600	33,98
1999	2,41	47,27	0,594	35,26
2000	n/d	n/d	n/d	n/d
2001	2,32	47,45	0,596	35,13
2002	2,52	47,02	0,589	31,28

Source: Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada (IPEA). Prepared by the Financial Overseeing Consulting Services of the House of Representatives.

Therefore the average wage difference between whites and blacks was still 102% despite the efforts made by Afro-descendants in education. In this period black community members managed to increase their average number of years of schooling from 4.5 to 6.<sup>10</sup> However black people have not been able to reap benefits in proportion to these efforts, nor to close the historical gap of having on average two years less schooling than the white population.

An intersectional analysis of gender and race dimensions using the same data reveals that women workers earn on average half of what male workers do, that the income of a white woman is twice a black woman's earnings, and that white male workers earn 3.8 times the wage of black women workers.<sup>11</sup>

There was no significant shift in income distribution during the period, as shown by analyzing the share of total income of the richest 10% and the poorest 20%. The Gini index reflects this picture (see Table 1).

Wage earners' income, both total average monthly real earnings and the total wage earnings as a share of GDP, decreased during this period. The average real income of wage earners also fell 21% in the 1995-2004 period.<sup>12</sup> In relative terms, the total remuneration of workers as a share of the GDP also decreased 7% in the same period according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics.

Unemployment has remained at an extremely high level since 1995. For example, in the São Paulo metropolitan region, the average monthly unemployment rate increased from 13.16% in 1995 to 18.82% in 2004,<sup>13</sup> while per capita GDP rose 3% during the 1995-2003 period (from USD 2,742 to USD 2,824).

### Income concentration

The share of income appropriated by the poorest 20% and the richest 10% of the population underwent small variations during the period. The share

of the poorest 20% grew from 2.31% to 2.52% of total income, while the proportion of the richest 10% fell from 47.85% to 47.02%.

The absence of substantial changes in the appropriation of total income by these two social layers indicates that the significant reduction of inflation in the period (the annual average inflation in these ten years was 9% compared to 1,024% in the previous decade) was not sufficient to improve income distribution in the country. The stability of the Gini index around 0.6 during the whole period confirms this observation.

### Adjustment priority

Brazil spent much more in 2004 than in 1995 on debt amortization (454.79% more), and debt interest and charges (443.59% more) than on investment (229.95% more). Resources and public policies were not directed to overcoming inequalities and eradicating poverty. Government guidelines led to fiscal adjustment and increasingly moved away from the commitments assumed Copenhagen and Beijing, which were grounded on the ethical and political framework of human rights, and still represent a victory over the neo-liberal perspective. The Government does however prioritize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since these goals, merely constitute the social face of the adjustment and commercial integration policies implemented with the funds and political will of the more powerful countries in the international arena.

The MDGs do not touch on the foundation of economic-productive-technical development. This type of development is unsustainable in socio-environmental terms, concentrates wealth and power, generates poverty and exclusion, and promotes inequalities within societies and between nations. Maintaining this model and its institutions and pursuing goals which tolerate the exclusion of so many people from leading a decent life is to deny the universality of human rights. Clearly this was not the road for development that the Copenhagen and Beijing conferences set out to build. ■

10 Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílio (PNAD) 1994 and PNAD 2004.

11 IBGE, PNAD 2004.

12 SEADE and DIEESE, *op cit*.

13 *Ibid*.

## ■ BULGARIA

# A painful transition



Neoliberal policies led to a deterioration of the social safety net, impoverished the population further and did not encourage civil and social dialogue. Two years before its full membership in the European Union (EU), Bulgaria needs stronger and more balanced economic and social policies, elaborated and implemented in the framework of genuine civil participation.

Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation  
Bulgarian-European Partnership Association

The stabilization of poverty and a deficit of democratic governance characterize Bulgaria only two years before its full integration into the European Union (EU) scheduled for 2007. Neoliberal policies applied by earlier governments (1997-2001 and 2001-2005) led to a complete failure of social programmes, impoverished the population further, and did not encourage civil and social dialogue. The Government which took power in mid-2005 will apparently not make any changes to the neoliberal model of economic and social development the previous Governments opted for.

### Liberalization and unemployment

Further economic restructuring and liberalization from 2000 led to the sale of important public assets, such as most of the fossil-fuel power stations. Privatization of this kind has had a high social cost exemplified in the loss of thousands of jobs. At present less than half the population participate in the labour market. Economic effectiveness decreased by seven points over the last 10 years. The economic active population rate is alarming when compared to the EU: in 2003, for the EU-15 it was 71.4%, for the EU-25 it was 72.4%, and for Bulgaria, only 40%. The number of unemployed people doubled during the last ten years and at the end of 2003 reached more than 400,000 people.

Other negative trends and characteristics of the economy include the liberalization of key sectors and branches of the economy, such as transportation and telecommunications, maintaining a high share of the grey economy, and keeping low investment in new and high technologies. The GDP growth for 2004 was 5.7%, far from the 8%-10% target.

### Poverty and income erosion

Poverty cannot be measured only in terms of income: it expresses itself in an inadequate standard of living, in the absence of possibilities to satisfy basic needs and in limitations to living in dignity. Seventy per cent of the population have still been unable to come to grips with the unprecedented level of poverty which has had such a negative effect on their motivation to work as well as on their profes-

sional and cultural development. Poverty degrades the scale of values of the population and generates aggression, negativism and disappointment, which in turn affect younger generations.

As a result of the restrictive policy of all transition governments, and especially of the last two governments, we can verify a continuous erosion of real income. In 2004 real income represented 47.7% in terms of the minimum salary and 50.3% in terms of the average salary compared to 1990. According to figures from 2003, Bulgaria has the lowest income among the countries of Eastern Europe EUR 140 (USD 172) compared to the Czech Republic, EUR 527 (USD 647); Estonia, EUR 455 (USD 559); Hungary, EUR 528 (USD 648); Latvia, EUR 298 (USD 366); Lithuania, EUR 338 (USD 415); Poland EUR 476 (USD 584); Slovenia, EUR 1,073 (USD 1,317); and Romania, EUR 170 (USD 209).

For the period 2001-2004 the average salary increased by 25.6%, while prices increased as follows: telephone 40%, electricity 95%, heating 40%, medicines 70%. Today every second Bulgarian has to make a choice between buying food and paying bills. According the Confederation of Labour, in order to survive, one person needs BGL 465 (USD 310). At the end of 2004, the income of 447,000 Bulgarians was between BGL 120 and 150 (USD 80-100) per month. During 2004 the cost of living increased by 7.3% and the share in non-alimentary goods and services increased 2.8 times.

### The working poor

With procedural tricks and ineffective programmes which remained only on paper, like the one called "From social assistance to employment", the Government managed to lower the level of unemployment from 17.46% in January 2003 to 11.88% in November 2004. The employment created through these programmes is not sustainable and does not constitute "real" employment. The other employment deficit in Bulgaria is the syndrome of the "working poor", by which workers do not receive their salaries on a regular basis and there are no real mechanisms for guaranteeing the payment of wages. The remuneration that more than half of employed people receive is clearly insufficient to ensure a decent living. For example, in 2004, 57% of all employed workers paid social security on a gross remuneration equal to BGL 240 (USD 160). This results in the phenom-

enon of the "working poor", which was not tackled by the previous Government, to continue without a solution, despite the Government's promises.

Another indicator for increased insecurity in the labour market is the widening of the age bracket in which women and men are at risk of not finding work. In 2001 women were most at risk between the ages of 45 and 59 and men between 55 and 63. In 2003 the respective figures were 32-59 for women and 40-65 for men.

### A deteriorating social safety net

The deterioration of social standards resulted in the deterioration of demographic trends. The population of Bulgaria is progressively decreasing. For the ten years following 1992 it decreased by 600,000 people. An additional drop in population of 700,000 inhabitants (9%) is expected by 2010. Negative population growth (-0.89%), sustained migration of the younger generation and a high mortality rate due to diseases (14.3 per 1,000) for 2002 are the consequence of the serious economic and social situation. According to the National Statistics Institute, the average life expectancy is also decreasing: from 75.1 years in 1990 to 72.1 in 2003. This is a further sign of an inoperative health system.

The main risk factors for health are poverty and marginalization; long-term unemployment; the low income of 90% of the population; the unhealthy way of life, which includes unbalanced and unsafe food; and unhealthy working conditions.

### More women are poor

Poverty also has serious gender connotations. It affects women to a larger extent and in a different way for several reasons: women in the labour force are more affected by liberalization, privatization and the flexibilization of labour. It impacts on their job conditions and especially on their salaries. In order to ensure the survival of their families, many women are ready to accept any job under any job conditions. The liberalization of public services impacts both employed and unemployed women, in particular women heads of households.

The increase in the number of women-headed households, 65% of whom live in absolute poverty, is a gender issue. According to United Nations Development Programme sources, these households are poorer than male-headed households. Despite



the Government's poverty alleviation strategies, poverty continues to affect women, increasingly so with age. Three times as many women aged 60-65 years are poorer than men in the same age bracket. Poverty also affects the large ethnic minorities of Turks, Bulgarian Muslims and Roma people, women again being more vulnerable than men, with over 50% unemployment.

According to the research report of the Women's Alliance for Development and the Agency for Social Analysis<sup>1</sup>, women above 50 years of age are the group most at risk of poverty. About half of women who live alone are poor. Psychological aspects of poverty, as well as its material base, are important. In this regard, 45% of women above 50 perceive themselves as poor, while two thirds of Roma women, and 47% of Turkish women, feel they are poor. At an individual level, this is expressed by feelings of marginalization, helplessness, low self-esteem and dependency. These women tend to live from day to day, without plans for the future. In general, resignation is the dominant response of Bulgarian women and Bulgarians to their poverty.

### Lack of civil and social dialogue

In this context, there has been a deficit of civil and social dialogue which began in 1990. For this dialogue to take place a dose of goodwill to improve institutional capacity is needed. For the Government, the concept of civil and social dialogue is seen as a way of imposing its policies rather than a way of developing a system for respecting trade unions and non-governmental organizations and for taking into account the different opinions in civil society. Despite the Government's promises, the institutions for social dialogue and real negotiations under the format of tripartite cooperation, which are regulated in the Labour Code, have been totally neglected. The National Council on Tripartite Cooperation, which existed as a consultation body, was deliberately abolished by the previous Government and was turned into a mere function of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

### A bleak future

In this new framework, issues such as the income policy and remuneration are not discussed because they are subject to negotiation with international financial institutions. Other issues that were taken out of the tripartite dialogue are electricity and heating prices, communication services and healthcare services. Even institutions for social and civil dialogue like the Social-Economic Council, which are more or less in place, do not function.

Bulgaria desperately needs stronger and more

balanced economic and social policies, elaborated and implemented in the framework of a genuine civil and social dialogue. Given the trends registered during the last years of the transition, it does not seem likely that this balance will be achieved.

The recent national elections showed that people want a clear change. But Parliament is dominated by the same political forces that defined the development of the country during the last four years. The scant majority obtained by the Bulgarian Socialist Party obliges it to form a coalition government with other political forces, namely, the forces which have governed the country since the transition. The EU and international agencies exert pressure for the creation of a stable government and their main condition is that Bulgaria preserve the neoliberal paradigm which has governed its economic and social development over the last few years. In practice this means further deterioration of living standards in the years leading to EU accession.

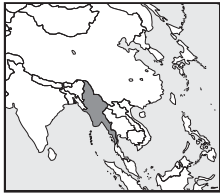
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<sup>1</sup> *Women, Labour and Globalisation*- Women's Alliance of Development and Agency for Social Analyses, 2003.

## BURMA

# No rule of law



The lack of rule of law since 1962 is the main obstacle in the struggle for equity and against poverty. Under these circumstances, corruption and bribery are every-day facts that hinder socioeconomic development. High unemployment rates among women have forced many of them into prostitution while others are victims of sex trafficking.

### The Burma Lawyers' Council

Rule of law essentially guarantees equality of all individuals in society on the basis of the principle that every person is equal before the law. In societies where the rule of law is exercised, people have the opportunity to seek equal protection whenever any rights violations occur. The lack of rule of law is a major cause of poverty in Burma. Since equal protection for all citizens under the law is ignored, the transparency, accountability and good governance which underpin individual and societal development have not existed in Burma since the 1962 military coup.

In the aftermath of the second military coup in 1988 the lawless situation deteriorated further. Following the 30 May 2003 Depayin Massacre which was perpetrated with complete impunity,<sup>1</sup> the situation of the country worsened. The authorities continue to enjoy absolute impunity for all violations of political and economic rights and rule of law is denied throughout the country resulting in the collapse of individual economic life and leading to general poverty.

Under the military government, Burmese Army commanders act as warlords in rural areas where they order the village headmen and local authorities as they wish. The commanders and troops of the army are the main cause of the lawlessness and violations of rule of law in the country. Although many government departments and the authorities have stopped using forced labour, the commanders and troops of the army still continue the practice to secure people to work as porters in offensive operations and security guards along the main roads.

The behaviour of the army has provoked local village headmen and members of the village militia forces to contribute to the lawless situation in rural areas. If they receive orders from army commanders, headmen show their own power in the village by abusing local people.

<sup>1</sup> This massacre involved the assassination of leaders, members and sympathizers of the opposition National League for Democracy, and can be considered a crime against humanity, since it was committed in a planned, systematic manner and directed against a specific civilian population.

### Corruption at all levels

Corruption among authorities is quite common. The income received by authorities in addition to their regular salaries is known as "outside money". Authorities at all levels of government take bribes from businesses and professionals.

There is evidence that the Commander of Southeast Command, Maj. Gen. Thura Myint Aung was involved in a widespread corruption scandal in which he took bribe money from medical doctors wanting to operate private clinics in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State.<sup>2</sup>

The judiciary in Burma is no longer the highest institution which enforces the rule of law, since it is subservient to the ruling military authorities. If they were not supplemented by bribes, the official salaries that the police and judiciary receive are not enough to survive on. Corruption has damaged all levels of the country's justice system and repeatedly results in unfair trials.

### Rule of law and the open market economy

The rule of law is key to achieving an open market economy since it guarantees equal opportunities for all individual citizens, prohibits corrupt practices by authorities, and protects businesses from the abuse of local powers. Direct foreign investors are increasingly becoming disheartened with the lack of rule of law since business opportunities can only be obtained from the authorities and problems which arise during the course of doing business can only be resolved with bribe money. The unlawful confiscation in 1998 of a joint venture between Singapore-based company Yaung Chi Oo Trading, and the regime's Ministry of Industry is just one example of the difficult business environment in Burma.

In spite of the fact that an open market economic system functions superficially, Burma's circumstances do not facilitate its further development. Citizens do not have equal rights to engage in economic enterprises. Business licenses are mainly issued to those who can pay bribe money. When entrepreneurs encounter problems with the authorities there is no independent judiciary to rely on. The problematic legal and socioeconomic background

<sup>2</sup> Rahmonnya. Human Rights & Media for all Communities. "Lawlessness in Rural Areas", 4 May 2005, [www.rahmonnya.org/report.php](http://www.rahmonnya.org/report.php)

complicates not only the question of judicial protection, but also the right to own private property. Additionally in order to keep the voice of the democratic opposition silent, the regime strictly controls the media. Currently the media is neither accountable to the public nor able to persuade the regime to pursue the development of a market economy. It never criticizes the authorities' mismanagement, nor does it denounce their corrupt practices. And it does not exercise the free flow of information which usually underpins market economies. The country's economy has been negatively affected by the absence of a market economy, which promotes market enhancing activities and the flow of information and technical knowledge between companies.

A skilful and efficient work force is essential for any market economy to function. Burma's formal education system lags far behind other Southeast Asian countries, so it cannot produce the qualified managers, technicians and academics required to develop an open market economy which would allow it to compete in the global market. Due to unjust laws which strictly prohibit the formation and functioning of independent organizations, independent trade unions which usually focus on promoting workers technical knowledge do not exist. Consequently the economy must function without a skilful and efficient work force. This situation does not facilitate its development nor does it create employment opportunities for the general public in order to provide them with enough money to live.

### Cheap labour, lack of social security and poverty

Cheap labour remains the main incentive for foreign investors to work in Burma, as well as in neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. Manual labourers in Burma earn very low incomes of less than one dollar per day. The regime does not provide any protection to workers, particularly when they are unfairly treated by companies, whether foreign or national. Even worse, the regime itself exploits workers by forcing them to work without remuneration. However, despite poverty being an underlying issue, the ruling regime does not publicly address it as a priority issue, and it is yet to implement a poverty alleviation programme. Introducing such a programme would be



an admission that the regime's inefficiencies and mismanagement have led to the malfunctioning of Burma's economy, an area once known as "the rice bowl of Asia".

### Information technology

As the free flow of information is strictly prohibited by the regime, the positive effects of information technology and doing business through the Internet have not materialized. Universities and research centres are not well connected and do not have contact with their international counterparts, which means learning processes in these institutions have not been enhanced by advances in information technology. Since the arrival of new information and knowledge from the outside world through interactive media is severely limited, creative idea generation in enterprises, manufacturing and trade, as well as at the level of the individual citizen, is not sufficiently developed.

### Foreign companies

On the one hand foreign companies can help transfer technology and provide locals with employment opportunities. On the other hand, foreign companies can ignore this technological aspect while they knowingly or unknowingly conspire with the regime, violating human rights as they carry out their so-called development projects. This second option has characterized foreign enterprise participation since 1988, as no code of conduct exists which promotes the sustainability of local efforts and the protection of environmental and human rights. The regime does not have the ideas or experience to deal with foreign enterprises in a way which strengthens the national economy. The mismanagement and abuses of the ruling regime cause people to suffer from economic hardship and widespread hunger, and have led to the collapse of economic and social life in Burma.

### Depletion of natural resources

Natural resources, forests and fisheries in particular, are severely depleted. Forest depletion is taking place for two reasons. First, and in order to increase the GDP, the regime grants licenses to timber companies without paying enough attention to forest sustainability and protection of the environment. Secondly, ethnic armed resistance groups seek funds for their revolutionary activities by selling timber across the border. In the fishery industry, foreign fishing ships equipped with advanced technologies can catch large amounts of fish within a short period. The local people's right to food is denied since they can no longer catch enough fish with their traditional fishing boats and nets. The depletion of natural resources has become one of the major reasons for the aggravation of poverty. Forest depletion in the state of Kachin led to a huge flood in July 2004, larger than any flood experienced in the last 50 years, in which the local people lost their homes and livelihood.

### Common property rights

The concept of common property rights with regard to natural resources is never raised in Burmese society. Public participation in the management of natural resources is only in the hands of the ruling authorities or of the domestic or foreign private sector. It is not beneficial for society when managerial power over natural resources is distributed in this way, since abuses can take place at any time. National natural resource exploitation regulation is required to resolve this issue and it should be based on the concept of common property rights with the aim to protect the interests of society and alleviate poverty. International monitoring of the environmental situation in Burma may also be required since environmental degradation affects not only the country in which it occurs in the short term but also the whole world in the long term.

### The role of UN agencies

While the military regime ignores the Copenhagen agreement,<sup>3</sup> some UN agencies, mainly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), disregard the 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development. So as not to be expelled from the country, they focus more on maintaining good relations with the State Peace and Democracy Council (SPDC), than on encouraging participation in development projects which might lead to the emergence of independent civil society organizations. As a result it is questionable whether their programmes are helping lay the foundation for long-term development or simply making a contribution to alleviating poverty to some extent.

### Analysis of poverty from a gender perspective

#### *Livelihood and the sex industry*

Income in rural areas is earned by selling consumer goods and *chai* (illegal lottery tickets), trading, dress-making, mat-knotting, plant growing and rice harvesting. However there are large numbers of unemployed women, many of whom enter Thailand illegally to find work in the fishing, construction and sex industries. Selling sex is culturally unacceptable in Burma, but due to deteriorating economic conditions, low wages and unemployment, women from different communities and classes have become sex workers in order to survive.

Many women in the war conflict zone have also fled their homes and illegally migrated to Thailand in the face of rape, arbitrary arrest, summary execution and forced labour. Women are deceived by (often female) traffickers into believing that they will have a good job in Thailand, but are then forced into prostitution, resulting in the massive spread of HIV/AIDS. At the same time, there are cases of young female university students, who wishing to obtain a degree, voluntarily work in the sex trade to finance their education. Other unemployed women who remain in their native areas have no choice but to earn a living

through prostitution. The root cause of prostitution is family poverty directly related to a lack of equal economic rights for women and is perpetuated by the military regime - the same regime which ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Although women face wage discrimination for equal work, the regime has never pledged to abolish this discrimination in the workplace. While a man earns MMK 500 (USD 0.69) per day in construction work, a woman receives only MMK 400 (USD 0.55) per day. Women also do not have the right to the same employment opportunities as men since employers tend to select men. Only when they are unable to get the desired number of employees do they hire women.

Additionally, state authorities and Burmese Army commanders are also involved in the sex trade and prostitution. Since the brothel business is illegal in Burma, brothel owners must pay bribes to authorities and army commanders for permission to operate or involve them as shareholders. In some cases, the authorities or army commanders also operate brothels for extra income.

#### *Domestic violence*

Eighty percent of families face domestic violence. Unemployment, lack of income and high commodity prices, as well as the basic structural differences between men and women lead to fights between the sexes in almost all families. It is generally the women who suffer more from beating and torture at the hands of their husbands. In comparison to rural village populations, families in urban areas face more domestic violence.

#### *Domestic work*

Burmese women who work as domestic workers in Thailand are at risk of being raped by their employers. The employers' wives turn a blind eye although they are aware of their husbands' sexual exploitation. Some hire domestic workers lest their husbands go to the brothels. Since the victims are usually illegal workers, they do not offer any resistance in order to avoid being handed over to the police.

#### *Childbirth and medical attention*

Many times people cannot afford to pay for hospital births or are unable to travel the distance to a hospital or clinic. Medical treatment costs are very expensive, and if the mothers want to have an anaesthetic, they must pay more than MMK 1,000 (USD 1.40). Patients often have to bribe doctors and nurses in order to get good treatment while in hospital. Pregnant women also have difficulty reaching clinics and getting treatment in remote areas due to poor seasonal road conditions. Also, the trip can become dangerous when Burmese soldiers are met along the way. This is another reason why some pregnant women prefer the services of midwives to deliver their babies.<sup>4</sup> ■

4 Rahmonnya. Human Rights & Media for all Communities. "Livelihoods and Sex Industries", December 2003 and March 2004, [www.rehmonnya.org/report.php](http://www.rehmonnya.org/report.php)

3 World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 1995.

## ■ CANADA

# Divided and distracted: regionalism as an obstacle to reducing poverty and inequality



Canada's political agenda is increasingly marked by regional differences. The focus on decentralization and tightly controlled growth in government spending has resulted in more privatization of public goods, intensification of inequality, and heightened federal-provincial rancour. Genuine progress on poverty reduction or gender equality requires committed federal-provincial unity of purpose. The new dynamic unleashed by a minority federal government could lead to either greater inter-governmental cooperation or further balkanization.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Armine Yalnizyan

For the past 15 years, Canada has set ambitious goals aimed at improving the lives of the most vulnerable. In 1989, the House of Commons unanimously agreed to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000. In 1995, Canada adopted the Beijing and Copenhagen Platforms for Action to reduce poverty and enhance women's equality. In 2000, the federal Government endorsed the Millennium Development Goals.

However little progress has been made. This has spurred social justice groups, including Social Watch, to launch campaigns urging more state action, such as the Make Poverty History campaign.

In Canada, social progress is shaped by the Constitution. It sets out how revenues are raised for public purposes (a largely shared federal-provincial responsibility) and who is responsible for programs to meet such objectives (primarily the provinces). But government spending and regulation has been scaled back over the last two decades, leaving economic growth and markets with a stronger role in shaping social change.

Unlike previous periods of sustained economic and labour market growth, income inequality has not declined.<sup>1</sup> The rate of child poverty is higher than it was in 1989, when the target was first set to eliminate it.<sup>2</sup> Poverty rates have risen fastest among recent immigrants which is the very group that Canada's future depends on.<sup>3</sup>

Inequality is also emerging in access to basic services such as affordable housing, education, childcare and health care due to a combination of supply shortages and rapidly rising costs.

This paper examines why, despite unparalleled economic and fiscal capacity, Canada has failed to make serious progress in the fight against poverty and inequality. It shows how a commitment to "small

government" feeds regionalism and inequality, and how economic growth alone cannot reduce poverty and inequality, or improve access to basic needs and services.

### "Small government" feeds inequality

Federal spending as a share of the economy shrank dramatically after the mid-1990s, from 16% of the economy in 1993-94 to 11% in 2000-01. It has not risen above the 12% mark since, well below the historic averages in the post-World War II context.<sup>4</sup> If current budgetary policy prevails, it will remain so for the foreseeable future which would be an unprecedented occurrence in federal fiscal history.

In 1995, the federal Government unleashed a plan to eliminate the budgetary deficit through massive cuts in federal spending. Not all programs were cut in this period.

The most radical changes were to unemployment insurance, training, transportation and regional development; and federal transfers to the provinces for health care, housing, social assistance, homecare, childcare, welfare services including legal aid, and settlement services for immigrants.<sup>5</sup>

The cuts were particularly severe for those already most vulnerable. Given their situation in the distribution of income, women were doubly jeopardized. For example:

- Only 38% of unemployed workers receive benefits - down from over 75% in the early 1990s. Only three out of every ten women who lose their jobs today are eligible for benefits, due to rules that place workers with shorter or irregular hours at a disadvantage.<sup>6</sup>
- Most of the 1.7 million households living on less than USD 16,393 a year are precariously housed: they do not own their home and spend

more than 30% of their income on rent. Female-headed households dominate this category. An estimated 250,000 people will be homeless this year, a number that continues to rise as housing costs increase.<sup>7</sup>

A comparison of budgets and public accounts shows that the federal books were balanced years ahead of schedule. In three years, structural deficits - which had dogged federal budgets since 1971 - were transformed into structural surpluses.

This raises doubts that the depth of spending cuts was necessary, and begs the question: did the most vulnerable households suffer needlessly?

Budgetary surpluses could have been used to redress this difficult era. Some spending areas were restored and some expanded. But cuts to programs for the most vulnerable populations have not been reversed. Income supports for children increased, but not for families which receive welfare, although the purchasing power of welfare fell dramatically due to cuts and/or inflation. The unemployed saw no improvement to benefits and there is still no national housing program.

Despite billions in new spending, there was the fiscal room to do much more. Instead the lion's share of the opportunity afforded by the surplus was devoted to tax cuts and debt reduction.

By cutting supports for the least affluent and then redirecting newly created surpluses to others, the past decade reinforced and accelerated inequality between the rich and the poor, between regions, and between men and women.

### Economic growth does not guarantee better access to the basics

Since the early 1990s, the Government has been singularly focused on economic growth. To achieve growth, it has dramatically limited its own role and focused on "competitiveness" by aggressively reducing tax rates. The economy has indeed grown, and rapidly.

1 Statistics Canada, *Income in Canada 2003*, Catalogue No 75202-XIE, Ottawa, 2005.

2 Campaign 2000, "One Million Too Many: 2004 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada", 2004, [www.campaign2000.ca/rc/](http://www.campaign2000.ca/rc/)

3 Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, 8 October 2003 and 25 April 2005, [www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo/](http://www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo/)

4 Department of Finance Canada, *Fiscal Reference Tables 2004*. Ottawa: October 2004.

5 Department of Finance Canada, *Budget in Brief*, Ottawa: February 1995, p. 9; and *Getting Government Right: Program Review: Overview*, Budget 1995 Fact Sheet No 6, Ottawa: February 1995.

6 Canadian Labour Congress, *Falling Unemployment Insurance Protection for Canada's Unemployed*, Ottawa: March 2003.

7 Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *2001 Census Housing Series*, table 2, Socio-Economic Series 03-017. Ottawa: September 2003; Government of Canada, Standing Committee on Finance, *Canada: People, Places, Priorities. Report of the Pre-Budget Consultations*. Ottawa: November 2002.

Between 1997 and 2003, Canada was the fastest growing economy in the advanced industrial nations (G7<sup>8</sup>). The United States of America has more recently overtaken that position.

Gross domestic product is now USD 1.07 trillion, which represents a growth of 67% from 1994 to 2004 (55% in inflation-adjusted terms).<sup>9</sup> Canadians generate over half a trillion dollars more every year than a decade ago, providing huge potential for improving access to the basics. However since part of the recipe for growth was to devolve and privatize public programs, it has become more difficult to set and meet key national priorities - including women's equality and the reduction of poverty.

Downloading and offloading responsibility for public provisions generated structural surpluses at the federal level. Provinces struggled with budgetary deficits due to a combination of less federal support and their own engagement with the "tax competitiveness" agenda. This environment made it difficult to maintain, let alone improve, access to public provisions. Although every jurisdiction is now experiencing economic growth, the new goal is to get more revenue from the federal surplus.

Even with new funding, there is no consistent thrust or pressure to use these resources to reduce poverty or advance women's equality. Provinces, regions and cities have starkly different fiscal capacities and political willingness to focus on policies such as housing, childcare, settlement services for immigrants, and access to legal aid. Some would prefer to cut taxes or pay off debt. In summary, a vastly larger economy failed to yield widespread improvements to the basic social safety net.

### Tax policy is a more costly and less effective way to achieve social goals

From 1997 to 2004 the federal Government spent USD 124.6 billion on tax cuts which is its biggest initiative in the surplus era. With the exception of the enrichment of the Canada Child Tax Benefit which accounted for less than 10% of the cuts, those at the lowest end of the income spectrum saw little benefit from this policy thrust.

The fiscalization of social policy occurred as programs cut in the deficit era were replaced by tax credits and exemptions in the surplus era.

- Health services were underfunded or delisted from public insurance; now some of these out-of-pocket costs are eligible for tax credits.
- Cuts to post-secondary education and the deregulation of fees have doubled and tripled tuition costs, but tax credits for these expenses have increased.
- There is still no national childcare program, but increased federal transfers for these purposes enabled some jurisdictions to provide tax rebates for receipted childcare arrangements.

8 USA, UK, Japan, Germany, Italy, Canada, France.

9 Statistics Canada. [www.statcan.ca/start.html](http://www.statcan.ca/start.html)

None of these measures reached the poor, the 32% of tax filers who have insufficient incomes to be taxable and consequently can receive no benefit from the changes.<sup>10</sup> Another recent tax reform, described as particularly helpful for low and middle income Canadians, raises the threshold at which federal income taxes start being applied. In 2000 the threshold was USD 5,845. By 2009 it will be USD 8,197. Raising the taxable threshold is costly - over USD 5.7 billion in the next five years which is more than enough to ensure affordable housing for all.

There are 5.5 million people with incomes of USD 8,197 or less (24% of all tax filers) and most are women. Most do not pay taxes, so they do not benefit from this reform. The costs arise from the small decreases every one of the 15.5 million people who pay income taxes will see. These reductions will take about 1.7 million more people off the tax rolls. By 2009 an estimated 37.4% of tax filers will pay no income tax.

While some hail this as progress, some wonder: at what point does the balance between taxpayers and non-taxpayers become politically unsustainable? Will it be 40% of the population? Half? Raising the tax threshold is not a cost-effective way to benefit the poor. However it may be an effective way to fuel demand for more spending constraints and tax relief by those still paying the bills, whose numbers are ever dwindling.

### Commitments to developing nations remain inadequate

Canada gives proportionately less international assistance today than it did in the early 1990s during a time of deep economic recession. This is embarrassing for the only nation in the G8<sup>11</sup> who has enjoyed budgetary surpluses for the last eight years, and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Funding for official development assistance (ODA) was cut from 0.45% of national income in the mid 1990s to 0.22% by 2001, a far cry from the 0.7% target set by the UN in 1969, ironically by former Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson. In 2003, the federal budget set out a plan to double ODA by 2010, or 8% a year. Today, the budget for international assistance, USD 2.5 billion represents 0.26% of the economy. Officials estimate it would take another USD 33.6 billion over the next 10 years to meet the 0.7% target by 2015.<sup>12</sup> At current rates of growth it would take until 2027. Despite mounting pressure, there is no commitment to a specific timetable to meet the goal. The Government argues that meeting the target has been made more difficult because the economy is growing so well - a rather feeble rich man's response.

Amendments to Budget 2005 found another USD 409 million for ODA over the next two years. The fed-

10 Data in this section are from Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Income Statistics (various years).

11 G7 and Russia.

12 LeBlanc, Daniel, Campbell Clark and Jan Wong. *Leaders Deaf to Live 8 Call*, The Globe and Mail, 4 July 2005, p. A1.

eral social democratic party offered support to the fragile minority Government on condition of meeting this and other social goals. This new political reality may affect future policy and budgetary priorities. The 2005 International Policy Statement will tighten the focus of aid on a smaller number of countries. Aid to sub-Saharan Africa will be doubled by 2008-09. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) figures show that about half of Canadian aid was tied to Canadian products and services in 2003. The OECD average for tied aid is 6.8%.<sup>13</sup>

There have been some modest improvements. Canada removed all tariffs and quotas on imports from 49 least developed countries (LDCs) in 2003, with the exception of dairy products, poultry and eggs. Imports from LDCs doubled between 2001 and 2003.<sup>14</sup> Quotas on textiles and clothing were removed on January 1, 2005. Canada was also the first producing country to amend its drug patent law in May 2004 and its Food and Drugs Act in May 2005 to permit export of affordable drugs for AIDS and other diseases.

Canada provided leadership in 1999 as the first nation to fully cancel the bilateral debts owed by the 14 poorest countries once they completed their obligations under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.<sup>15</sup> To date these nations have had CAD156 million (USD 128 million) of debt cancelled with Canada, and USD 266 million in interest charges waived. Another USD 311 million in outstanding debt is expected to be cancelled over the next two years. Canada will also forgive USD 467 million in debt owed by Iraq, not based on HIPC conditionality, by 2008-09. When it comes to multilateral debt Canada has been a follower. The Government now supports full cancellation of multilateral debt for the 18 countries that have completed the HIPC process. It has pushed for equality of treatment for poor countries beyond HIPC.

(Continued on page 254)

13 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Statistical Annex of the 2004 Development Cooperation Report*, "Table 23, Tying Status of ODA by Individual DAC Members, 2003". Paris: 2004.

14 Canadian imports from LDCs grew four-fold from 1995 to 2004, almost doubling, from USD 441 million to USD 900 million between 2001 and 2003 alone. Calculated from Industry Canada's *Trade On Line* website. ([http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc\\_mrkti/tst/engdoc/tr\\_homep.html](http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/sc_mrkti/tst/engdoc/tr_homep.html)) which uses the latest data from Statistics Canada. Methodology was confirmed by Industry Canada.

15 The HIPC initiative was launched in 1996 and sets out conditions for external debt relief based on World Bank and IMF approval of plans for economic reform and poverty reduction.

## CHILE

# Less poverty, more inequality



Government policies for gender equity are proceeding slowly, and women are still poorly represented in the labour market and in public and decision-making positions. At the same time, inequality in income distribution generates social segmentation and frustration even though poverty has decreased.

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### Slow progress in gender equity

The changes taking place in Chilean society at the start of the 21st century have created both opportunities and obstacles for women's development and gender equity.<sup>2</sup>

Civil society organizations (CSOs) played an active role in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, where they raised subjects that were not on the official agendas and, through pressure and lobbying, were able to influence the resolutions adopted. The importance of this contribution was recognized in the Beijing Platform for Action that gave civil society the mandate to become actively involved in its implementation and monitoring, even though it is not binding.

Some progress has been made towards fulfilling the gender commitments through the design and implementation of specific policies, but there still are many agreements to be honoured and plans to be incorporated. Follow-up and evaluation mechanisms are needed to enable citizens to demand that government authorities account for their actions.<sup>3</sup>

The concept of equal opportunities has filtered into some strata of society, but institutional progress is slow, and there is still a wide gap between it and the changes resulting from new social practices. Gender equity has hardly been assimilated into the state culture; it is still weak in programmes and institutions and resources are not forthcoming. There are different obstacles to putting legal dispositions into practice, to extending the coverage and intensifying the social programmes that are already in operation; and to incorporating the gender dimen-

sion into policies and the management of government bodies. Stereotyped patterns of behaviour and social images about the role of women still persist; and they condition the political will of those who formulate and implement laws and public policies.<sup>4</sup>

### Barriers to economic autonomy

The last census (2002) showed that only 35.6% of the economically active female population were in the labour force.<sup>5</sup> The vast majority of women are excluded, and this not only has an economic impact on households but also makes women dependent and subordinate in domestic life, particularly in the realm of power relationships.

According to the 2003 National Socio-economic Survey (CASEN), the mean income of urban women was only 77.2% that of men.<sup>6</sup> The same survey (2000 edition) showed that the more years of schooling that a person has, the wider the pay gap between men and women in the same job. A woman with three years of study or less earns 18.6% less than a man in the same situation, but a woman with 13 or more years of training makes 35.7% less than a man at the same level.<sup>7</sup> Besides this, the provision of maternity benefits laid down in the Labour Code only operates for a limited sector of workers.

### Sexual and reproductive health

Unlike other countries in the region, sexual and reproductive rights in Chile are not recognized legally or in the constitution.<sup>8</sup> As a consequence, access to information, education and sexual and reproductive health services is very limited. Different types of contraception - emergency methods in particular - are difficult to obtain. The same applies to male or female sterilization in the public health system.<sup>9</sup>

After the Beijing Conference there was some progress in legislation and a law was passed that

guarantees young pregnant women or young mothers the right to remain in school. This was crucial since pregnancy and maternity are the main reasons why adolescent girls drop out of education.<sup>10</sup>

### Women in decision-making

The number of women in high positions in the executive and legislative branches of government, in regional and local government and in political parties has been increasing steadily. In 1990 there were 283 women in such positions in the whole country; fifteen years later this figure has more than doubled to 620. This is still not enough considering that the total number of executive posts in these positions in 2005 was 3,116. In other words only 19.9% of government positions are occupied by women.<sup>11</sup> They are also unequally represented in terms of the kind and the quality of positions that they do occupy. There are more women in less powerful positions, which can be seen from the high proportion of women in local councils, in regional government, and in under-secretary roles in the executive branch, in contrast to the smaller proportion among governors, mayors and ministers.

The increase in women's participation in politics is greater in positions they have been appointed to in the executive branch than in elective positions. The degree of women's participation in the executive branch varies: in 2005, 17% of ministerial cabinet posts and 27% under-secretary posts are held by women; and in Parliament they make up 5% of the Senate and 13% of the House of Representatives. In local government women account for 12% of mayors and 21% of councillors.<sup>12</sup>

1 The Centre of Studies for Women's Development (CEDEM) is part of the Women's Initiative Group and the Latin American Red Puentes in Entrepreneurial Social Responsibility.

2 Caro, Pamela and Alejandra Valdés. *Control ciudadano en educación y género. Monitoreo de acuerdos internacionales*. Santiago de Chile: CEDEM, 2000.

3 Valdés, Teresa, Ana María Muñoz and Alina Donoso. *1995-2003: ¿Han avanzado las mujeres? Índice de compromiso cumplido latinoamericano*. Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences/Chile, United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2005, p. 8.

4 La Morada Corporation (Coordination). *Informe sombra CEDAW 2003*. Santiago de Chile, 2003, p. 13.

5 Caro, Pamela, Catalina de la Cruz et al. *Responsabilidad social empresarial y género: Problemáticas que enfrentan las mujeres en el campo laboral*. Red Puentes, 2004, p. 3

6 Valdés, Teresa, *op cit*, p. 32.

7 Caro, Pamela (2004), *op cit*.

8 There is a bill about sexual and reproductive rights, but it has been held up in parliamentary procedures.

9 La Morada Corporation, *op cit*, p. 119.

10 Maturana, Camila. *El monitoreo como práctica de control ciudadano. Monitoreo del programa de acción de la Conferencia Internacional sobre Población y Desarrollo, Cairo, 1994*. Chile: Foro-Red of Health and Sexual and Reproductive Rights, 2004.

11 Hardy, Clarisa. "Mujeres y poder". *El mostrador*, 8 March 2005. Based on data from ongoing research at the Chile 21 Foundation about labour participation and women's policy in Chile.

12 *Ibid*.





## Challenges

Progress towards parity between the number of men and women in power will make for a progressive redistribution of social and political power and will oblige institutions to confront the ethical and political dimensions of democracy as a system of relations and of representation.

If women are to be fully incorporated into productive work, equal opportunities will have to be created, but this will require more child-care infrastructure and greater task sharing in the home. In addition, the country should move towards implementing a policy of equal pay.

The Beijing Platform for Action is still a goal to aim for, but it is no less important to ratify the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.<sup>13</sup>

## Two Chiles in one

Chile has become a paradigm case among Latin American countries and emerging economies due to its excellent macro-economic indicators: it has low inflation, it is a low-risk country, in the last 15 years the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average annual rate of around 5.5%, the tax system works, it is at the head of international rankings for economic freedom, and its institutional and political system is favourable to foreign investment.

But behind this solid facade the economy has a very different face. Today the country is fragmented and there are huge inequalities in the distribution of power and opportunity, and therefore of income as well. In spite of the modernization that has been taking place, people have become distrustful and discontent.

In Chile there are no serious problems of malnutrition nor are there diseases like malaria or tuberculosis; almost everybody has access to basic services, and less than 2% of the population live on less than one dollar per day.

## Less poverty

An assessment of poverty by international standards indicates that Chile has made good progress. In 1990, 38.6% of Chileans were living below the poverty line<sup>14</sup> but in 2003 the figure was only 18.8%, or roughly 3 million people. In the same period the rate of extreme

poverty fell from 12.9% to 4.7%. Although the situation has improved, these percentages mean that there are still more than 720,000 men and women living in a situation of extreme poverty.<sup>15</sup>

One big government initiative to combat extreme poverty is the Chile Solidario plan, which provides aid for the 225,000 poorest families in the country. The aim is to provide everyone with basic capabilities, guarantee social, economic and cultural rights, set up an integrated loans system, combine assistance and promotion, and intervene more to help families and individuals.

The health system has just undergone reforms aimed at ensuring quality, access and financial protection in dealing with the 56 illnesses that are related to the highest mortality rates in the country. In housing there is the Chile Barrio programme, whose objective is to do away with slum dwellings throughout the country.

## A hidden malaise

Nevertheless the country suffers from another chronic illness, which a large sector of the political establishment has always hidden from the public. In the last few months it has come to the fore due to the pressure generated by several international reports. This illness is inequality. It dates back to over two centuries ago, when the country's assets were divided in an inequitable way when its upper classes gained control of the bulk of the wealth of the country, and influenced political decisions and the way institutions were created. Today the results are plain to see: the main economic groups control around 80% of production in the country.<sup>16</sup>

In Chile there has always been a pattern of cultural inequality that both tacitly and explicitly classifies people into Class A and Class B. Access to social services and to democratic rights is entirely separate and totally different for the two classes.

The unequal distribution of power and the way that institutions work perpetuate this division. One result of this is that income is distributed very unequally. According to the UNDP *Human Development Report 2004*, when it comes to income distribution Chile is among the worst ten countries for which data is available. The richest 10% of the people possess 41.2% of total income, while the poorest 10% only receive 1.2%. This gap is 35 times wider today than it was in 1990.

Besides this, per capita income in a household in the poorest 10% of the population is the equivalent of USD 25 per month, while in a household in the richest decile the monthly income per person is USD 1,282. In 60% of households monthly income per capita is below USD 160, which amounts to USD 5.3 a day, which is rather low for a country whose GDP in 2004 (adjusted by purchasing power parity) was USD 11,000 per person.

## Social fragmentation

These extreme levels of inequality mean that the poor feel even poorer, creating problems of anomie, distrust and a lack of social cohesion. One of the symptoms of this is a rise in delinquency rates: in 2003 and 2004, one in three Chileans was the victim of a crime.<sup>17</sup>

The World Bank has said that,<sup>18</sup> besides being negative in itself, a high level of inequality makes it more difficult to reduce poverty and slows down a country's economic growth. It is this factor and not ethical considerations or questions of social justice that have only recently led Chile to start tackling the problem.

Different educational, health and labour market systems which are completely sealed off from each other and that respond to each individual's purchasing power are another dimension of inequality. Most public policies are not having a real impact on poor people because they come up against this cultural and institutional barrier. This is why there are two countries in one. This situation will not change until the root causes of inequality are addressed in a real way, beyond any promises made during electoral campaigns. ■

13 Chile ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1989, but it still has not ratified the Optional Protocol, the instrument that sets up mechanisms to make the rights laid down in the Convention legally binding.

14 In Chile the poverty line is set at USD 72.8 per month in urban areas and USD 49.1 in rural areas. The indigence (extreme poverty) line is USD 36.4 and USD 28.1 per month respectively.

15 Ministry of Planning and Cooperation, CASEN 2003 Series, Vol. 1: "Pobreza, Distribución del Ingreso e Impacto Distributivo del Gasto Social".

16 Terram Foundation, 29 August 2004, [www.terram.cl](http://www.terram.cl)

17 Government of Chile. "Encuesta Nacional Urbana de Seguridad Ciudadana", April 2004, [www.interior.gov.cl](http://www.interior.gov.cl)

18 World Bank. *Desigualdad en América Latina y el Caribe: ¿Ruptura con la Historia?*, 2003.

## COLOMBIA

# Rising poverty and gender inequity



Poverty has been increasing in Colombia in recent years and it affects women more than men. The Government is aware of this, but its strategies have been inadequate because its problems are so huge. Unless the Government adopts a policy to redistribute income, and unless the traditional roles of men and women are re-defined, it will be impossible to move towards the Millennium Goals.

### Corporación Región<sup>1</sup>

Worldwide it is evident that a development concept which uses the market as the sole regulator is contradictory. At the same time as scientific and technological progress enables us to improve the quality and prolongation of human life, this model excludes nearly half the inhabitants of the planet from the benefits of development.

Colombia is no exception to this. Its market-oriented system gives priority to economic growth and low inflation, but the social protection network is weak and there is no policy to re-distribute income to help the least-protected sectors of the population. They consequently become more vulnerable.

Poverty is on the rise and it is so widespread, so serious and so heterogeneous that it is setting more and more limits on the lives of millions of people and making the poor even poorer. But it does not affect everyone in the same way; its impact are greater on women than on men, and this gap makes for a vicious cycle that can only be broken if basic changes are made to the structures and foundations that sustain the current development model.

### Recent poverty

According to the Research for Development Centre at the National University of Colombia, economic volatility in the last decade has hurt the most vulnerable sectors of the population, a fact reflected in the worsening of social indicators such as the levels of poverty.<sup>2</sup>

Recent poverty<sup>3</sup> is a big problem. It has been caused by a fall in income due to the deterioration of the country's productive base, by the exodus from rural areas, by de-industrialization, by changes in the way labour is contracted, by an increase in the

number of independent workers and by longer working hours in poorly paid jobs.

In 2004 there was a debate in the country about poverty indicators and the way that different state institutions measure poverty. It is generally recognized that more than half the population are poor.<sup>4</sup> The National Planning Department (the main government body that designs and implements economic policy), using a poverty line measure, has estimated poverty at 52.6%, while the General Comptroller of the Nation estimates the figure at 66.3%.

Poverty is on the rise. In the table below two calculations of a basket of basic products were compared over time using the Quality of Life Survey for 1997 and 2003. In this period the value of the new basket rose from 55% to 66%, and was higher than the value of the old basket, which increased from 51% to 56%.

TABLE 1

Poverty lines according to baskets		
	1997	2003
<b>OLD BASKET</b>		
Poverty line	COP* 105.795	COP 185.118
Poverty line	51,1%	56,6%
<b>NEW BASKET</b>		
Poverty line	COP 122.629	COP 234.622
Poverty line	55,8%	66,3%

\* Colombian pesos

Source: Contraloría General de la República Report, 2005.

One of the factors that underlies poverty is income distribution inequality. In Colombia the Gini<sup>5</sup> coefficient is 0.563, the second highest in the region, exceeded only by Brazil. Income in the richest 10% of homes is 30 times higher than income in the poorest 10%.<sup>6</sup>

Inequality in income distribution is linked to limitations on access to different kinds of assets. A striking example is that land ownership is concentrated in very few hands. This has been accentuated by the armed conflict in which peasants' rights to ownership and property are disregarded and they are forced to leave their homes and land.<sup>7</sup> This has worsened land distribution: in areas affected by the conflict, land ownership concentration, as measured by the Gini, is 0.81.<sup>8</sup>

Income and wealth are very unevenly distributed in Colombia, and this has become an obstacle to reducing poverty. There is a vicious cycle that goes on and on: less access to assets makes for lower income; low pay and unemployment make for less purchasing power; and lower demand in the market makes it harder to create new jobs and expand the productive sector.

### Women poorer than men

Studies in Colombia take little account of the gender perspective.

One example is that when poverty is measured by income, gender inequalities are not registered because the system does not take account of the fact that income is unequally distributed within households depending on the members' sex and age.<sup>9</sup> Thus in households that are considered not to be poor there may be women who are poor because they do not have their own source of income, since resources are inequitably distributed in the nuclear family.

When analyzing the different effects that poverty has on the lives of men and women, we should take into account the cultural factors that assign different social roles and functions to the sexes. It has to be stressed that there are power relations involved, and these can be seen in exclusion, inequality and discrimination in the job market and unpaid work, in physical and symbolic violence against women, and in the fact that men's work and time is valued more than women's.

1 This report was written by Lina Correa (lawyer), José Fernando Gutiérrez (economist), Rubén Fernández (degree in education, master in education and human development), Jorge Bernal (philosopher, specialist in social policy) and Rocío Jiménez (psychologist, master in development).

2 Development Research Centre. *Bien-estar: macroeconomía y pobreza. Informe de coyuntura 2004*. Bogotá, p. 21.

3 *Ibid.* Poverty is an indication of the extent to which Colombians have lost purchasing power in recent years. Between 1997 and 2003 the total number of poor people rose by 7.4 million.

4 Bonilla, Ricardo. "Bienestar, macroeconomía y pobreza" in *Revista Economía Colombiana*. No. 306. January-February 2005. Bogotá: Contraloría General de la República, p. 97.

5 This index is based on the accumulated distribution of income, and ranges from the poorest individual or home in the country to the richest. A value of zero means that income is equally distributed and that the poorest person has the same income as the richest, while a value of 1 means that all income in the economy goes to the richest person (or household) and that nobody else has any income at all.

6 Contraloría General de la República. *Evaluación de la política social 2003*. Bogotá, March 2004, p. 46.

7 According to estimates by the Human Rights and Displacement Advisory Board (CODHES), in the last two decades more than 3 million people in Colombia have been forced off their land. [www.codhes.org.co/cifra/GraficoTendencias1985\\_2005.jpg](http://www.codhes.org.co/cifra/GraficoTendencias1985_2005.jpg)

8 Research for Development Centre, *op cit*. p. 11.

9 Arriagada, Irma. "Dimensiones de la pobreza y políticas desde una perspectiva de género". *Revista de la Comisión Económica para América Latina (CEPAL)*. Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, April 2005, p. 101.





There are structural and intermediate causes of women's vulnerability to poverty.<sup>10</sup> The former have to do with the sexual division of work whereby the reproductive (private) role is assigned to women and the productive (public) role is assigned to men. The latter factors include the lack of opportunities that stems from the sexual division of work which limits women's access to productive property, to remunerated work, to education and training, and also to playing a part in political, economic and social decisions.

Human development indicators show that Colombia has lost a lot of ground. The country fell from 47<sup>th</sup> in the world in 1997 to 73<sup>rd</sup> in 2004,<sup>11</sup> and is now classified as a medium-developed country. Although life expectancy increased by approximately five years in the 1990s and enrolment rates in schools also increased, incomes have gone down dramatically. Gross domestic product (GDP) per capital decreased from USD 2,662 in 1997 to USD 2,086 in 2004, a fall of 21.6%.<sup>12</sup>

Besides this, Colombia has also slipped back according to the Gender-related development index: the country fell from 40<sup>th</sup> in the ranking in 1997 to 59<sup>th</sup> in 2004.

The unemployment rate for women has remained two points above that for men. The employment situation has improved recently, but the rate for men improved more than for women. Between the first quarter of 2001 and the same period in 2005 unemployment among men fell by 19.7% but among women it fell only 9.8%.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, there are social spheres in which changes in the roles of men and women are becoming apparent. Nowadays more women are opting for traditionally male careers, like engineering and agronomy, although a high percentage remain in what are traditionally women's jobs. Almost all pre-school teachers are women but less than a quarter of university teachers are, which indicates a clear difference in the salaries paid.<sup>14</sup>

## Government strategies

The Government set up a board to propose solutions and design a strategy to reduce poverty and inequality. It is already clear that, at the present rhythm of development, it will not be possible to reach the Millennium Goals, since this would require a very high annual growth rate and a big reduction in inequality.

However, the Government has resolved to make a start with the following poverty reduction targets:

- Reduce the number of people living in poverty to 28.5%, taking the 1991 poverty line figure of 53.8% as a base.
- Reduce the number of people in extreme poverty or indigence to 8.8%, taking the 1991 figure of 20.4% as a base.<sup>15</sup>

These targets are based on the assumption that economic growth will be 4% in 2005, 6% in 2006, and 6% per year thereafter. The Government also has plans to implement two strategies:

- Assistance to enable poor people to construct and protect their own assets, which means access to ownership of land and housing, to education and to credit, and also to develop mechanisms and institutions to protect human capital and the assets accumulated by households.
- Welfare coverage, including the social security system (health, pensions, work risk insurance, labour training, employability and family social assistance) and a social support network.<sup>16</sup>

In 1995 a National Women's Equity Board was set up to design government policy in this area, but in 1999 this was changed to the Presidential Advisory Council for Women's Equity. This was a step back because the old organization had more administrative and budgetary autonomy, and was better able to have an impact on how State policy was made.

What stands out at present is the 2003 National Gender Equity Agreement, which was promoted by the Presidency as a State commitment to equity between men and women and is actually being put into practice. There is also a Gender Affairs Monitoring Office, which has been in operation since 2004.

The Government recognizes that there is still discrimination, mainly in the employment area, participation in electoral positions and in violence against women.<sup>17</sup> In addition, important efforts are being made by the National Statistics Administration Department and the United Nations Development Programme to bring the gender perspective into statistical analyses,<sup>18</sup> and progress can be seen in the indicators that capture heads of households, and salary differences in seven cities.

Although some steps towards parity have been taken, the country is still far from making any real progress as regards changing traditional perceptions of men's and women's roles, and this constitutes a fundamental obstacle to achieving equity.<sup>19</sup>

## A long way to go

Despite the efforts that have been made in the last 30 years to benefit women and bring them into the development process so as to improve their conditions of life, the position that they are assigned in society has still not changed, and very little progress has been made towards gender equity.<sup>20</sup>

Men tend to be inflexible and reluctant to look after children or share housework, so "...women's workload is tripled, which means that development and modernization can reinforce sexual discrimination instead of reducing it."<sup>21</sup>

The Government's strategy to reach the first Millennium Development Goal - to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger - is weak. It is built around allocating subsidies efficiently so as to avoid resources going to sectors that do not really need them, but there is no plan to tackle the very serious inequality in the country by implementing an income redistribution policy. Nor are there plans for other necessary reforms like bringing in a progressive system of taxation (which would tax higher incomes at a higher rate), reducing the high cost of financial services, or guaranteeing access to credit.

What is needed to fight poverty and gender inequity is an "equity policy plan" which would, in the short term, set up a comprehensive social security network in the framework of a poverty reduction strategy that is much more all-embracing than the Government's current plan.

This plan would have to go hand in hand with sustainable economic growth and a job creation policy, access to education and health services, providing food for people in extreme poverty, public services and housing, labour training, and a solid programme of public works. Only in this way can real progress be made.

It is also necessary to make a commitment to promote women's capacities and really move towards gender equity through fundamental changes in public and private life. ■

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13 Author's calculations based on DANE statistics.

14 Jiménez, Rocío. "Las Mujeres al margen del desarrollo". *Universitas Científica*. Medellín: Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB), February 2004, p. 22.

15 National Economic and Social Policy Board. "Metas y estrategias de Colombia para el logro de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio-2015", 14 March 2005, [www.dnp.gov.co](http://www.dnp.gov.co)

16 *Ibid.*

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20 Jiménez, *op cit.*

21 Sen, Amartya. *Desarrollo como libertad*. Editorial Planeta, 1999, p. 242.

## ■ COSTA RICA

# The Millennium Goals need a caring State



Red Costarricense de Control Ciudadano<sup>1</sup>

### From commitments to fulfilment

In this new millennium it is clear to the whole world that there is a huge gap between the commitments made by governments in the ambit of the United Nations and the degree to which these have been fulfilled. These commitments were made in the 1990s and in 2000 at summits and world conferences on a variety of important subjects like the environment, population, development, and women's rights. After lengthy debate, governments gave their word that they would take measures to comply with these agreements and implement the plans of action that were formulated at these meetings.

However in many parts of the world there is a silent war in progress, which is getting worse with every day that passes and is quite simply ethically unacceptable. Nearly half the people on the planet are living on less than two dollars a day, millions are dying from hunger and preventable diseases, and millions are living in precarious housing and do not have access to education or drinking water. And this depressing list of woes goes on and on.

Instead of trying to help, the rich countries are acting in a way that just makes the situation worse. They have reduced official development assistance and they are pursuing economic policies that cannot lead to adequate solutions to the problems of the thousands of millions of people all over the world who are living in poverty.

With this in mind, how should we understand the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that were set by the United Nations in 2000? What do they mean in relation to the plans of action that were agreed at world summits? Have the MDGs replaced the commitments made at the 1992 World Environment Summit? Or those made at the Fourth World Women's Conference? Will the MDGs be taken as a minimum agenda for action in the rich countries? Civil society

Economic policies based on structural adjustment programmes have increased poverty, social exclusion and environmental damage and further concentrated wealth. These problems will only be overcome by a democratic State that fosters citizen participation to help it face the challenges of globalization in a way that does not worsen social inequality.

organizations regard the MDGs as an opportunity to give new life to the "forgotten" resolutions from other summit meetings by ranking them in an eight-point plan for fulfilling commitments made in the 1990s.

### Poor results from plans to help the poor

The MDGs apply to countries all over the world, and in Costa Rica one of the main declared goals is to reduce poverty. But this will not be possible unless there is genuine political will on the part of the State, the political parties, the mass media and the church. These actors will have to support and promote public policies in education, health and employment that take into account the social sectors that are most vulnerable to poverty like women, children and indigenous communities.

If State policies are to be effectively implemented all public institutions will have to be strengthened. That is to say, there will have to be permanent sources of financing, trained technical and professional staff, legal and political mechanisms to monitor the workings of the public sector so as to combat corruption, and citizens themselves will have to become involved on a large scale in following-up and monitoring how these policies are implemented. There will also have to be a genuine policy of decentralization to make public institutions more politically and financially autonomous to enable them to manage the different regions and sectors of the country more efficiently.

Since 1994 successive governments in Costa Rica have drawn up plans to combat poverty, "Sixteen Priority Communities",<sup>2</sup> "The Welfare Triangle"<sup>3</sup> and the "New Life Plan".<sup>4</sup> But what exactly has actually been happening as regards poverty in the country?

In 2005, 23.5% of Costa Ricans are living in poverty and 7.1% are in extreme poverty. Those who suffer most are children and adolescents, older adults, women and indigenous people. According

to the United Nations Development Programme,<sup>5</sup> in 2001, 22% of the population were below the poverty line and 9.5% were living on less than two dollars a day. Over the last 25 years income poverty in the country has not been reduced: since 1980 it has remained at around 20% of households.

### Economic growth without well-being for all

Since the 1980s Costa Rica's economic policy has been geared to macroeconomic stability. The strategy has been to promote exports of non-traditional products, to open up to imports and to attract investment (in 2002 Costa Rica received more foreign investment than any other Latin American country).

Over the last ten years this policy of opening up the economy has led to economic growth, but for the bulk of the population this growth has not been accompanied by any improvement in social or cultural well being.

Quite the contrary - in fact, the gaps between rich and poor have got wider, and sizeable sectors of the population have been completely excluded from the benefits of growth. The best that can be said is that poverty has not got any worse. Between 1990 and 2004 jobs were lost in the agricultural sector and unemployment increased, more people sank into the informal economy and the gap between low and high incomes widened.

What is needed is a change in development strategy. The aim should be to promote domestic growth, to develop productive chains inside the country so as to generate wealth that would stay in Costa Rica and thus allow the benefits of economic development to be more evenly distributed. The State should undertake this redistribution and thus return to its real democratic role. It should implement a progressive tax structure whereby higher incomes would be taxed at a higher rate, it should make public spending more equitable, and it should adopt employment and production policies that are fair and are based on what is good for society as a whole.

From this perspective, the State must set goals that are in line with the capacity and the historical development of the country. Extreme poverty must be eliminated before 2015 and the rate of poverty must be halved, taking 1994 and not 1990 as the base year for the calculations. The chances of

1 This article is a summary of the conclusions from a workshop (2 and 3 February 2005) in which the Government's report on progress towards the MDGs was analyzed. It was written jointly by Silvia Lara (sociologist), Beatriz Castro (union representative), Luisa Paz (journalist), Ana Felicia Torres (anthropologist and coordinator of the Gender and Democracy Programme of the Alforja Centre for Studies and Publications (CEP Alforja), and Mario Céspedes, Nieves Argudo and Carlos Pentzke, who are all members of the CEP Alforja.

2 Initiated during the Presidency of José María Figueres Olsen (1994-1998) and run by the First Lady, Josette Altmann Borbón. The programme concentrated on the most deprived communities.

3 Programme initiated under the Miguel Ángel Rodríguez government (1998-2002) which promoted a union of the community, local governments and central government institutions to combat poverty.

4 The "National Plan to Overcome Poverty and to Develop Human Capacities: Plan Vida Nueva 2002-2006" was designed in 2002, at the start of the present administration under Abel Pacheco.

5 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Rights Report 2004*.

achieving these objectives depend on how much the State invests in formulating policies in vital areas like education, health and employment.

### Education for equity

If girls and adolescents are to have a decent life in society it is vitally important for them to receive education as a right. In the case of Costa Rica, attaining this goal means not only that there should be full primary education coverage that includes girls and adolescents, but also public policies that embody a holistic conception of education as a right should be adopted and followed-up. Education must be of good quality and untainted by any gender discrimination, it must include free pre-school and basic education, and it must promote respect for human rights and diversity. The people also have a right to sex education, and women have a right to technical education without gender discrimination.

Both the overall concept and the policies that are implemented will have to take account of the fact that while infant and adolescent girls have the right to full education, in practice this is jeopardized by several factors: they have to do the housework, they are exploited in the sex trade, the birth rate among adolescents is high, and child pregnancy is another problem.

### Health and the freedom to choose

There are other difficulties in the sphere of health care, such as care for pregnant mothers and newborn babies. This is in a critical situation in Costa Rica because the public health institutions are starved of funds and because there is no public debate in the country about sexual or reproductive rights. Once this question is discussed, it should lead to sex education in the curriculum, which would go a long way towards reducing the number of unwanted teenage pregnancies.

In 2000,<sup>6</sup> maternal mortality stood at 43 per 100,000 live births. According to the national system for evaluating maternal mortality, 80% of maternal deaths in 2000 were due to causes that were avoidable. The analysis shows that, in the country as a whole, the quality of pre-natal and childbirth attention is below standard.

In order for the overall quality of life to be improved, health has to be the number one priority. Adequate resources must be allocated, and campaigns and specific prevention programmes in areas like sexual and reproductive health are needed. It is important for these health programmes to be framed in a policy of gender equity.

### The recipe of labour flexibility

One of the effects of a neo-liberal political and economic system is the increasing flexibilization of labour relations. This is happening because the business sector, in an effort to reduce costs, is pressing for less and less regulation in the labour market so they can be free to contract and dismiss workers in accordance with the changing demands of their

business, and they are lobbying for the relaxation or even abolition of prevailing labour laws. Needless to say, this infringes the rights of workers.

When we analyze the ways in which flexibility in labour relations works in Costa Rica and the other countries in Central America we find that:

- Labour flexibility is promoted by business sectors so that they can reduce their labour costs as much as possible and increase the volume of production.
- In ordinary work business and entrepreneurial sectors are operating in a flexible way in violation of existing labour laws that govern working hours, pay, overtime, holidays, maternity rights and other social guarantees that are laid down in the labour relation laws in the constitution of each country.
- This flexibility is supported by judges, who interpret labour laws in such a way as to minimize their impact, and by the technical and administrative staff in charge of ensuring that labour laws are complied with.
- The free trade regime promotes and champions flexibility as the "recipe" for solving the unemployment problem in Central American countries.
- The various kinds of flexibility have a negative impact on the labour and human rights of the working population in that workers' incomes are falling and their job security and the quality of employment are deteriorating, and the overall result is more poverty and social inequality.

The driving force behind greater labour flexibility is neo-liberalism, and the visible and proven results are that precarious and unstable employment is increasing, social inequality and poverty are getting worse, and women are being excluded more and more from jobs that are well-paid and that require better qualifications.

### Conclusion

If poverty is to be eliminated the State must be strengthened, and society must be caring and committed to developing in such a way that the benefits can be shared by all. Free trade treaties, like the one planned for 2005 between Central America, the Dominican Republic and the United States, presents us with the model of a society based on competition and in which the only survivors will be transnational companies and those sectors of the Costa Rican economy that have managed to accumulate capital by exploiting the work of many Costa Rican men and women.

This free trade treaty will create a situation in which relatively few people will have opportunities. It will set the country on the road to a society in which more people are excluded, and in which foreign investment is not connected to the local economic and commercial fabric, and this will exacerbate inequalities between different regions.

Big changes have taken place in the internal structure and in the functions of the State. A lot of these changes were accelerated as a result of the

structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s that characterized the new conditions in the world economy. These new conditions wrought radical changes in the role the State had previously played in national economies as protector of key sectors like agriculture and industry. The consequences of these changes have been increased poverty and social exclusion, a greater concentration of wealth in a few hands, and increased environmental damage.

Poor countries, Central America in general and Costa Rica in particular, find themselves at a crossroads: there is struggle in progress in which the relationship between the State and society is in danger of being replaced by a relationship between the market and society. On the one hand there is a trend towards increased trade opening, this is causing far-reaching changes in the productive structure of the country, and if the Free Trade Treaty mentioned above is signed it will be another step in this direction. On the other hand, social movements are trying to find alternative ways for the country and for the region as a whole to go forward, ways that will preserve and strengthen the State as the guardian and protector of the people, and bring about a new dynamic in its relation to society.

If the MDGs are to be attained what is needed is a new kind of State, a democratic State that will be able to provide the country with the necessary goods and services that will enable it to meet the challenges of globalization without greater ruptures in society or increased poverty. What is needed is a State that is agile and innovative, that can strengthen regional and municipal institutions, and genuinely support and serve a society that is committed to the development of an inclusive society. This State will have to foster democratic planning and a role for civil society in budget planning, and it will have to provide public services that are accessible to the whole population. It will also have to invest in infrastructure and make sure that women, children and young people receive equitable treatment. That is to say, the goal of the State must be to build a country in which all the men and all the women in Costa Rica can lead decent lives. ■

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6 UNDP, *op cit*.

## ■ ECUADOR

# Oil prosperity and citizen poverty



Citizen mobilizations that ended with the overthrowing of President Lucio Gutiérrez in April 2005 expressed people's rejection of an economic policy that did little to distribute Ecuador's substantial income equitably following the rise in oil prices which, paradoxically, increased the country's external debt. The new Government has expressed its intention of giving priority to the needs of the most vulnerable sectors. If this takes shape, progress could be made towards social inclusion.

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Martha Moncada / Juana Sotomayor

Ecuador's insertion in the international market has been characterized by the export of raw materials. The economic model that prevailed was based on the intensive exploitation of natural resources and although attempts were made to diversify exports, the inflow of foreign currency since the 1970s has concentrated on oil activities.

In the period 1995-2004, the contribution from oil to the General Budget averaged 34.5%.<sup>1</sup> In 2005, this contribution is estimated at 23%.<sup>2</sup> In order to increase the influx of foreign currency, the State intensified the exploitation of oil and the construction of a new pipeline.

### An order of priorities contrary to people's rights

In strict adherence to neoliberal principles and in clear agreement with the economic, commercial, social and political tendencies of the 1980s and early 1990s and the so-called "Washington Consensus", state policy gave priority to the payment of external and internal debts rather than fulfilling constitutional obligations regarding people's fundamental rights.

In recent years, different international factors determined an unprecedented rise in oil prices, causing more income to flow into the public coffers than was optimistically expected. In 2003 the estimated price per barrel for the national budget was USD 18. However increased revenues amounted to USD 74.6 million, with an average price of USD 25.66 per barrel.<sup>3</sup> In 2004, the price estimated for the budget was USD 18 and the average price received was USD 32.<sup>4</sup>

The underestimation of oil prices cannot be regarded as the result of poor economic forecasts. On the contrary, the decision to set up the national budget without taking into account the rising trend

in hydrocarbon's international prices reveals a clear intention to give priority to debt payment and other types of expenditures unrelated to social services.

With the surplus obtained through the rise in prices, the State created the Oil Stabilization Fund aimed at financing national policies (10%), building the Amazonian road network (35%) and assisting the provinces of Esmeraldas, Loja, Carchi, El Oro and Galápagos (10%). The remaining 40% makes up the Fund for Stabilization, Social and Productive Investment and Reduction of Public Indebtedness (FEIREP), whose resources were allocated to repurchase public debt (70%) and to the creation of an oil revenue stabilization fund (20%), leaving barely 10% to spend on social investment.

The rise in oil volumes and prices, has not prevented poverty from intensifying. Most of the population regards the minimum fulfilment of rights such as housing, access to quality public health care, universal and free education and food security as something illusory and unattainable.

Data from Ecuador's Integrated System of Social Indicators regarding consumption indicate that 61.3% of the population face poverty conditions. Of these, 31.9% live in indigence with significant differences between urban and rural areas, where there are different types of material deficiencies as well as wider gaps among indigenous and Afro-descendant groups than among the *mestizo* population.

According to the Human Development Index, the country has experienced regression. While in 1999 Ecuador ranked 69<sup>th</sup> out of 175 countries of the world with available data, in 2003 it fell to 97<sup>th</sup> place and ranked 100<sup>th</sup> in 2004.<sup>5</sup>

The disproportionate and differentiated impact of deterioration of living conditions is still more critical in vulnerable sectors, among which the following stand out: indigenous people, children and adolescents, women and the elderly. No systematic or appropriate effort has been made in the country to gather information reflecting gender inequalities, thus failing to acknowledge the commitments undertaken at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and other human rights international instruments.

However, research carried out by social organizations and some state agencies warn about negative impacts of a particularly serious nature for women.

Illiteracy affects almost 10 in 100 women, while it affects 7% of men,<sup>6</sup> and differences are still more significant in rural areas. In 2003, female sub-employment was 50% compared to 25% for men, while unemployment rates were 11% and 6.5%, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

The exclusion and discriminatory practices suffered by women are found in the inferior salaries they earn compared to men for performing similar activities.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, there tends to be more job uncertainty among women, who also experience limitations in the exercise of rights related to maternity and reproductive health. Many activities women engage in fall into the category of unpaid labour.

In terms of ownership, only 68% of women heads of household own their houses or are paying for them. The increasing number of women heads of household, a phenomenon caused either by the emigration of their partners or by a higher number of divorces, and the differentiated impacts suffered by this group affect the whole of society, particularly boys, girls and the elderly in their care.<sup>9</sup>

### The narrowness of social policies

In view of the high-risk situation of most groups in the country, the Government has been totally inequitable in its implementation of public policies, both fiscal and social. Besides, it has shown no political will to face traditional forms of discrimination based on age and gender. Different estimates<sup>10</sup> indicate

1 Central Bank of Ecuador. *Información estadística mensual*. Nº 1836, Quito, 28 February 2005.

2 "El gasto de 2005 con más fondos". *El Comercio*. 1 December 2004, [www.elcomercio.com](http://www.elcomercio.com)

3 Secretaría Técnica del Observatorio de la Política Fiscal (OPF). Boletín Nº 8, Quito, March 2004.

4 Secretaría Técnica del OPF. Boletín Nº 19, Quito, February 2005.

5 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 1999*; *Human Development Report 2003*; *Human Development Report 2004*.

6 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004*.

7 Larrea Maldonado, Carlos. *Pobreza, Dolarización y Crisis en el Ecuador*. Quito: Ediciones Abya-Yala, 2004.

8 Consejo Nacional de las Mujeres. *Beijing +10, Los Derechos Humanos de las mujeres ecuatorianas 10 años después*. Quito, 2005. In 2003, in urban areas, the average monthly income earned by women was USD 167, while that earned by men reached USD 249. The situation is even more serious in rural areas where women earn USD 126 per month compared to the average monthly USD 192 earned by men, while the household food basket amounts to approximately USD 350.

9 *ibid.*

10 Badillo, Daniel. "La inversión social pública ecuatoriana en el contexto latinoamericano". *Ajuste con Rostro Humano*. Nº 8. Quito: UNICEF, 2001; Sistema Integrado de Indicadores Sociales del Ecuador; OPF.



that the social public investment in the country is one of the lowest rates with respect to other countries in the region, which barely accounted for 4.5% of the GDP in 2003.

Notwithstanding the increased availability of tax revenues from oil exports and the process of poverty intensification, fiscal policy continued to cut funds allocated to social investment to such extent that the country has not managed to recover the levels of more than a decade ago. In 1992, social investment accounted for 5.2% of GDP. Eleven years ago, in 1981, it amounted to 6.3%.<sup>11</sup>

In the international context, Ecuadorian people, mostly distributed among the under-25 age group, are allocated very limited funds for the fulfilment of basic needs such as 10 years of free universal schooling; access to health services with priority given to pregnant women, children under-5 years old and the elderly; basic sanitation; housing and employment. State investment in health barely reached USD 16 a year per person in 2001, the lowest among the 18 countries in the region, forcing households to directly take on 48.6% of the total expense.<sup>12</sup>

Also, in 2001 Ecuador invested only USD 45 per capita, surpassing only Nicaragua in the region, which invested USD 28. The outcome of low investment was that by 2004 about 700,000 boys, girls and adolescents aged between 6 and 17 were denied access to the education system.<sup>13</sup> Although this information is not broken down by sex, girls are the most likely to be excluded from school.

Apart from allocating next to nothing to social investment, state programmes following impositions by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have typically provided quick assistance style solutions and have failed to build capacities and opportunities as well as to promote sustainability. Essential aspects such as gender, rural character, age or culture have not been taken into account in the programmes' design and implementation.

State interventions are aimed at temporarily alleviating basic deficiencies such as the lack or insufficient amount of food among pregnant women and very young children. In other cases, such policies have consisted in a limited transfer of funds to people living in extreme poverty situations. An example of this is the so-called "solidarity bonus" which, under a public charity approach, does not allow recipients to overcome their appalling living conditions. How are these people to overcome poverty if they receive USD 15 a month for being women heads of household or USD 11 for being elderly?

11 Technical Secretariat OPF. *Cartilla educativa sobre macroeconomía*, Nº 2, Quito, June 2004.

12 Technical Secretariat OPF. *Cartilla educativa sobre macroeconomía*, Nº 7, Quito, January 2005.

13 Technical Secretariat OPF. *Cartilla educativa sobre macroeconomía*, Nº 6, Quito, October 2004.

The intervention of the State in social areas has shown no intention of affecting poverty structural causes and has given little or no importance to inequity in the country's distribution of wealth. While 20% of the population holds 58% of wealth, at the other end, the poorest 20% only has access to 3.3%.<sup>14</sup> Besides, no efforts have been made in favour of the productive reactivation of small farmers and peasants, who are responsible for domestic food supply, or to improve people's health and educational situation.

In this context, it is difficult to anticipate whether the economic, social and cultural rights stipulated in the Constitution are as a matter of fact ensured. If an order of priorities considering the achievement of macroeconomic goals in the first place is maintained, it will not even be possible to reach the Millennium Development Goals approved by the UN in 2000, which beyond their limitations in terms of human rights, represent minimal chances for improvement for most part of the population.

### Is it possible to redirect priorities?

If in times of prosperity, with high oil prices, poverty continues to intensify and external debt payment has priority over social public policies, when then could changes be expected?

The paradoxical thing about the economic model is that it demonstrates that overcoming poverty and ensuring Ecuadorians the full exercise of rights are not directly proportional to the increased availability of economic resources. While this statement does not fail to acknowledge the importance of the economic dimension in achieving development, it does challenge a linear and causal relationship between increased income and improvement of people's quality of life, within a context where the most vulnerable groups lack the effective power to have incidence on tax and budgetary decisions which could make a true difference when it comes to ensuring their economic and social rights.

The Ecuadorian case is eloquent in this respect. Although in the last 35 years the country received large amounts of foreign currency for oil sales, this has not been reflected in the people's living conditions. Paradoxically, the rise in public revenues during the so-called "oil boom" (1972-1982) unleashed an unusual process of external indebtedness.

The country's high degree of social polarization and the lack of capacity of civil society in terms of organization, incidence and participation in decision-making regarding public policies, are elements that limited discussion on a new order of priorities that, among other things, would subordinate external debt payment to the solution of problems affecting most part of the population.

14 UNDP (2004), *op cit*.

In a context of increasing trade liberalization, the possibility of placing national production at profitable positions in the international market will depend, apart from the quality of export goods, on the possibility of having access to competitive factors. Unfortunately, since Ecuador has higher inflation rates compared to the international context as well as internal interest rates that are not very attractive for investment, the possibility to reduce costs lies almost exclusively on salary reduction, labour flexibility, the resulting loss of benefits by workers and increasingly precarious jobs, including the growing labour market insertion of children, young people, peasant and indigenous women in the area of production and services.

On the other hand, the marked economic liberalization threatens to increase inequity levels and to deprive traditional groups of people - living in areas were nowadays export-directed activities are being carried out - of their survival means.

The country's current political scenario, brought about by the overthrow of President Lucio Gutiérrez in April 2005 following an unusual mobilization of citizens claiming the restoration and enforcement of democratic mechanisms as the basis for a new relationship with power structures, could turn out to be appropriate to welcome people's demands to review the way in which surplus from oil exports is being channelled into the FEIREP.

The present Economy Minister, Rafael Correa, proposes to allocate 40% of resources of this Fund to economic reactivation, particularly of peasants and small farmers, 30% to social investment, 10% to science and technology and 20% as contingency. This intention is a change in priorities regarding investment and allocation of state resources in favour of the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

If this proposal was turned into a reality, a path would be opened to advance towards the fulfilment of the social and cultural rights of all Ecuadorians and especially of those groups traditionally excluded because of their gender, age and ethnicity. Likewise, it could lay the basis to move from the focalization and disarticulation of state actions to the universalization of social policies, thus overcoming the restrictive character of inconsistent solutions that prevent the poorest groups from finding a way out of the evil cycle of poverty. ■

## ■ EGYPT

# The many faces of inequality



Although estimates are disputed and the figures of national and international agencies do not agree, the prevalence of poverty in Egypt cannot be disputed. Whether it is the large number of people who seek shelter in cemeteries, or the shocking number of children employed in the cotton industry, the symptoms of impoverishment are everywhere. At the same time, women are not being allowed to play an active role in society, as made evident by literacy and active employment rates.

National Association for Human Rights and Development

Amir Salem

It is easy to use national income as a human welfare indicator but it is difficult to measure human development since the criteria do not depend on economic growth and national income standards but rather on how resources are used and whether they are dedicated to developing weapons or producing food. In other words, are resources used to build palaces or to provide clean water?<sup>1</sup>

According to the Human Development Index, Egypt is a medium human development country ranking 120<sup>th</sup> among 177 countries with a score of 0.653 in 2002 which suggests that the country's use of resources should be re-evaluated.<sup>2</sup>

### Poverty

The 2004 Human Development Report (HDR) states that 3.1% of the total population lives on less than USD 1 per day.<sup>3</sup> That is roughly 2.2 million people. By the USD 2 per day measure the poverty rate increases to 43.9% or 30.9 million people. As real incomes have declined recently, the number of people living on less than 1 USD per day has risen dramatically.

The HDR also indicates income distribution inequality. The richest 20% of the population receive 43.6% of national income while the poorest 20% only get 8.6%. This is indicative of poor income distribution and the concentration of wealth.

Government and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) poverty and social development figures do not always agree.

The 2004 Egyptian HDR by the National Planning Institute states that 16.75%, or 11.8 million people, are living under the poverty line.<sup>4</sup> The report also says that approximately 6.8 million citizens do not have access to health services, that 4.1

million have no access to piped water and that there are almost 2.1 million illiterate Egyptians. Meanwhile the UNDP reports that there are only 2.1 million without access to improved water sources and that illiteracy affects as much as 44.4% of the adult (15 years +) population or 31.3 million people.<sup>5</sup>

Poverty is more severe in some regions of the country than others. In 2003 in Upper Egypt 35.2% of the population were considered poor and this rate stood at 58.1% in Assiut.<sup>6</sup> The poverty rate in Upper Egypt had been estimated at 30% in 1999-2000 compared to the 17% national average, and GDP growth was only 2.8% compared to the national rate of 6.8%.<sup>7</sup>

### Unemployment, pensions and services

Other indicators, such as the unemployment rate and the number of pensioners and informal workers, also provide insight into the poverty situation. The Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS) and the Labour Force Sample Survey estimated the number of unemployed at 2 million in 2002.<sup>8</sup> The International Labour Organization publishes a much higher figure. They calculate that 11 million Egyptians are unemployed.<sup>9</sup> Additionally 7.6 million people work in the informal sector.<sup>10</sup> Pensioners and beneficiaries of the various insurance systems must also be considered since they feel most the effects of inflation, and the deteriorating quality of education and health services. Between 1990 and 2002, the consumer price index rose by 135%.<sup>11</sup>

The Minister of Social Affairs Aminah Hamzah Mahmoud Al-Guindi says that there are one million families who receive the social insurance pension of EGP 50 (USD 8.72) each month.<sup>12</sup> If the average

family is made up of four people, then 4 million people have a monthly income of 2 dollars. This abject poverty is one of the reasons why wages need to be linked to the prices of certain commodities and services.

The deterioration of free education and health services contributes to the deterioration of the labour force, while causing poverty to increase and spread. According to the UNDP, in 2001 the Government spent only 1.9% of its GDP on public health services, or roughly USD 153 per person.<sup>13</sup> There are no recent UNDP figures for education expenditures but the 2004 Egypt HDR says that in 2001-2002 the Government spent 5.2% of GDP on this service.<sup>14</sup>

### Living with the dead

The International Fund for Agricultural Development has stressed that there are 48 million poor Egyptians living in 109 informal areas. The Fund reports that they are suffering from hunger and disease, and are deprived of food, shelter, education, and adequate health care. According to the report, poverty slices across the country and is increasing daily.

A comparison of the results of the 1986 and 1996 population censuses reveals that in Cairo alone roughly two million people live in squatter settlements or slums. In Egypt's urban centres such as Cairo, Giza and Alexandria around 4.5 million people, or 17.6% of the nation's urban population, live in marginalized areas. More than half a million live in slums in the governorates of Fayyum, Minya and Qena in Upper Egypt. These areas were and still are the breeding ground of violence, delinquency and crime. When we consider that many towns and villages are not connected to the public water and sewage networks, other dimensions of poverty and unequal access to services come to light.

A report by CAPMAS states that 12 million Egyptians have no shelter and are forced to live in cemeteries, shacks, garages, mosques and under staircases. It estimates that in Cairo alone, 1.5 million people live in cemeteries. When cemeteries were built in Egypt, the custom was to build a small one or two room house with a bathroom in order to allow people to visit their deceased loved ones more often. With increased housing problems, people

1 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in today's diverse world*, 2004a, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 UNDP; The Institute of National Planning. "Egypt Human Development Report 2004", 2004b, [www.undp.org/eg/publications/HDP-2004-E%20.pdf](http://www.undp.org/eg/publications/HDP-2004-E%20.pdf)

5 UNDP (2004a), *op cit.*

6 UNDP (2004b), *op cit.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 Global Policy Network. "GPN global labour market database: Egypt". October 2003, [www.gpn.org/data/egypt/egypt-data.pdf](http://www.gpn.org/data/egypt/egypt-data.pdf)

9 International Labour Organization. "Laborstat Internet", <http://laborsta.ilo.org>

10 *Al-Ahram*. 25 April 2005, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2005/739/index.htm>

11 Globalis. [http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/indicator\\_detail.cfm?IndicatorID=152&Country=EG](http://globalis.gvu.unu.edu/indicator_detail.cfm?IndicatorID=152&Country=EG)

12 Mariz Tadros. *Al-Ahram*. "Leviatán revisited". 21-27 September 2000.

13 UNDP (2004a), *op cit.*

14 UNDP (2004b), *op cit.*



started to live in these structures permanently.<sup>15</sup> The report also states that outlaws are using the cemeteries for criminal activities. It adds that there are approximately 1,032 informally built areas in the governorates.

### Children at work, not at play

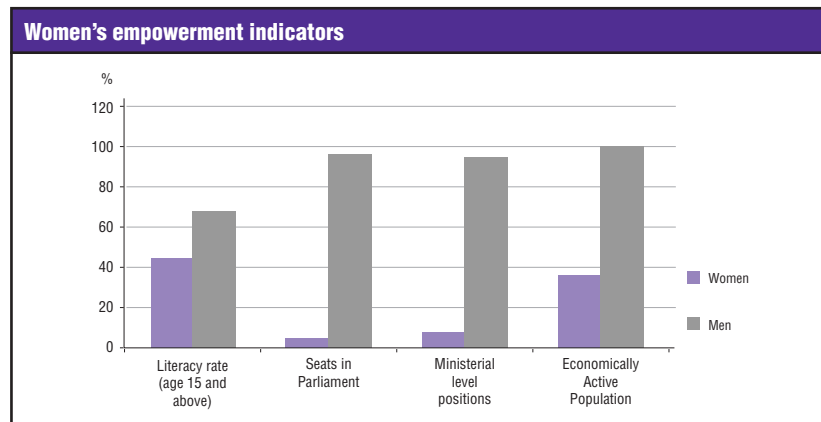
Undernourishment among children is brought to light by indicators such as the proportion of under-height children. The UNDP estimates that 21% of children under the age of 5 are below the average height for their age.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, around 52% of schoolchildren are reported to suffer from anaemia while roughly 20% have vitamin and protein deficiencies.<sup>17</sup>

Child labour exists in Egypt as it does in other countries with similar socioeconomic conditions. UNICEF figures estimate that 6% of children aged 5-14 years old work.<sup>18</sup> A 1999 survey of girls and boys in Cairo showed that on average they work no less than nine hours per day and for more than six days a week, even exceeding the working hours of adults. The survey also brought to light that these children are working informally without working cards or health certificates, and therefore have no legal protection. Roughly one third of the children surveyed suffered from maltreatment and violence at the hands of their employers and work supervisors.

A 2001 national survey conducted by CAPMAS in cooperation with the National Motherhood and Childhood Council used a 20,000 household sample and was based on the procedural definition of child labour as "any economic activity done by a child belonging to the age group 6-14 during the past three months preceding the survey." The survey estimated that there were 2,786,000 children working at that time and that 83% of them were living in rural areas. By gender, 73% of working children were male and 27% female. The national survey also indicated that 28.4% of the child labourers had permanent work. Children who only work during summer vacation represented 54.1% of child workers. Roughly 74% of working children were paid for their labour and 64% were engaged in agricultural activities. They also worked in craft-making (14%), commercial activities (11%), services (9%) and industrial activities (2%). The study also states that the work exposed children to health hazards and rights violations.

The cotton industry is notorious for its employment of children. A 2001 study by Human Rights Watch, states that each year over one million children between the ages of 7 and 12 years old are employed in the cotton fields, although the mini-

CHART 1



mum age for this work is 12 years old. The children's task is to manually remove cotton leaf worm infestations. They work 11 hours a day, 7 days a week and they face maltreatment by their supervisor as well as exposure to pesticides.<sup>19</sup>

Street children are another symptom of poverty with an estimated 150,000 street children in Cairo alone. A rapid situation assessment carried out by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in cooperation with UNICEF and the World Food Programme collected data on these children in Cairo and Alexandria. This first study of its kind estimated that 66% of street children consumed substances of abuse on a regular basis including glue, cannabis, hashish, solvents and tablets. The assessment exposed that 70% of these children had dropped out of school and 30% had never attended school. Another worrying finding was that 80% of the street children were exposed to real or constant threats of violence, be it from employers, community members or peers.<sup>20</sup>

### Women

Egypt's Gender-related Development Index ranking and score make it clear that gender inequality is still prevalent in the country. In 2002 Egypt ranked 99<sup>th</sup> out of 144 positions with a value of 0.634. The index measures the 3 basic dimensions of human development - a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living - but then adjusts these dimensions for existing inequalities between men and women.<sup>21</sup>

Partially due to an increase in the use of contraception by married women, fertility rates are declining. Women now experience 3.3 births on average as compared to 5.7 births in the 1970s. An estimated 56% of married women aged 25-49 use

some form of birth control. Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births stands at 84.<sup>22</sup>

Women continue to face discrimination, as illustrated by education and economic participation indicators. Only 43.6% of women aged 15 and above are literate compared to 67.2% of men in the same age group. The female economic activity rate remains low, with only 35.7% of woman above 15 years of age working. The majority, that is to say 54%, work in the service sector and only a very small proportion, 7%, work in industry. In 2002, women's estimated annual income was USD 1963 compared to USD 5216 for men - a ratio of 0.38.<sup>23</sup>

There is low representation of women in governmental positions. Egyptian women only hold 3.6% of the seats in Parliament, and 6.1% of ministerial level positions in the Government. The Gender Empowerment Measure which takes into consideration economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making and power over economic resources ranked Egypt 75<sup>th</sup> out of the 78 countries included in its latest ranking.<sup>24</sup>

### Concluding remarks

The Economic Research and Studies Center at Cairo University has raised the issue of rising living costs and worsening living conditions. It argues that in the absence of state control, there is excessive importation, including the importation of agricultural products that are being produced in the country, and that this is harming both the economy and the consumers.

The spread of poverty is a reflection of the State's privatization policies. The slow adoption of legislation on unfair competition and monopolies, and the increased influence of foreign funding organizations have contributed to the spread of poverty and increased crime and violence. These negative social impacts are a result of the so-called economic reform. ■

15 UN Press Release. 3 May 2000, [www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nst/0/00B63216450B610D802568D6002C06F4?opendocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nst/0/00B63216450B610D802568D6002C06F4?opendocument)

16 UNDP (2004a), *op cit*.

17 UN World Food Programme. "Settling in to a stable life in Egypt's Upper Nile". 2005, [www.wfp.org/newsroom/in\\_depth/africa/egypt/040514\\_egypt.html](http://www.wfp.org/newsroom/in_depth/africa/egypt/040514_egypt.html)

18 UNICEF. Statistics, [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/egypt\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/egypt_statistics.html)

19 Human Rights Watch. *Underage & Unprotected: Child Labour in Egypt's Cotton Fields*. January 2001, [www.hrw.org/reports/2001/egypt](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/egypt).

20 UN Office on Drugs and Crime. "Hope for Street Children in Egypt". December 2001, [www.unodc.org/unodc/newsletter\\_2001-12-01\\_1\\_1\\_page007.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/newsletter_2001-12-01_1_1_page007.html)

21 UNDP (2004a), *op cit*.

22 *Ibid*.

23 *Ibid*.

24 *Ibid*.

## ■ EL SALVADOR

# Political will needed



Almost half the population of El Salvador lives in poverty but the new government programme to tackle this problem is underfunded, the economy is stagnant, the deficit is high and the country is heavily in debt. It will not be possible to meet the Millennium Development Goals unless measures are taken to create jobs, progressively reform the tax system, combat corruption, and increase investment in health, education and women's policies.

### Social Watch El Salvador

Jeannette Alvarado / Claudia Hernández / Rudy Romero  
Ángel Ibarra / Mario Paniagua<sup>1</sup>

The current situation in El Salvador is discouraging. Over half of the six million people in the country are poor, and at least two million have emigrated to escape a future of poverty.

The year 2004 will be remembered for sensational corruption scandals<sup>2</sup> and an increase in violent crime, with 10 homicides each day. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in 2003 the financial cost of violence was USD 1.7 billion - an amount equivalent to 11.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) and amounting to much more than was spent on health and education.

### Poverty: facts and promises

Between 1990 and 2001, the GDP grew at a rate of 4.4% and the level of poverty fell from 60% to 43%. However closer analysis shows that while the economy performed well during the first half of the decade and growth was above 6% per year,<sup>3</sup> in the second half GDP growth slowed down to only 1.7% in 2001 and 2.1% in 2002.

According to the UNDP, 43% of the population are poor and 19% live in absolute poverty. The situation is worse in rural areas, where these proportions rise to 56% and 29%, respectively.<sup>4</sup>

This precarious quality of life is directly connected to the unequal distribution of wealth, which is perpetuated by the Government's economic measures.

In 2002, the richest 20% of households received 58.3% of total income while the poorest 20% only received 2.4%.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the UNDP, remittances from abroad alleviate the impact of poverty by between 7% and 8%. In 2004 remittances amounted to USD 2.5 billion, USD 442.3 million more than in 2003.

At the United Nations Summit Against Hunger (2004), President Antonio Saca (who took office that same year) promised to reactivate the economy and reduce extreme poverty by 7%. The Government has spent heavily on publicity to promote its measures to combat poverty, but they have been inadequate and insufficient.

In 2004, government interventions to reduce poverty were geared to stimulating economic growth and attracting more foreign investment. The idea was that this would create jobs and improve social welfare. This turned out to be false: foreign investment was limited and of poor quality, and economic growth slowed even more.

In 2004 El Salvador's GDP grew by only 1.5%.<sup>6</sup> This is the smallest increase in the last five years and is below both the Latin American and Central American averages. According to the International Development Bank, in order for countries like El Salvador to attain an acceptable level of development their GDP should increase by at least 5% per year.

At the start of 2005 the Government launched a programme called "Opportunities" at a cost of USD 440 million. It includes a health fund, the so-called 2021 plan for education, the "Get Connected" programme to provide 90,000 computers to educational centres, a small credit programme, and the Solidarity Network. This last programme includes a USD 15 monthly subsidy for families living in absolute poverty on condition that they send their children to school and take them for medical check-ups. The plan will be implemented in the 33 poorest rural areas.

These initiatives are testimony to the inability of previous governments to make a positive impact on poverty alleviation. However they are still open to criticism, since in a family of five a benefit pay-

ment of USD 15 per month works out to only USD 0.1 per person per day, which is well below the indicator for relative poverty (USD 2 per day), not to mention the absolute poverty level (USD 1 per day).

According to the Ministry of Housing the Government's plan is backed by an initial sum of USD 1 million. This figure is very low especially when we consider that the fiscal deficit of USD 700 million will not be offset by revenues from the Presidency's tax reform since this will yield only USD 137 million. The situation looks even gloomier when we take into account that the country's foreign and domestic debts amount to 20% of the national budget. This exposes the Government's social plan as nothing but propaganda.

### Education: no funds and no state policy

The 2004 budget for education was 3% of GDP,<sup>7</sup> but this figure is insufficient.

The Presidential Commission for the Development of the Knowledge Society, which is under the Ministry of Education, has recommended that over the next ten years 6% of GDP should be allocated to education, assuming that the economy grows at an annual rate of 2.5%. This proposal coincides with the position of civil society organizations and primary teachers' unions. In order to pay for this increase sustained economic growth and a policy of progressive taxation will be needed. More importantly this increase requires the political will to make education a State priority, and not merely a government priority as proposed in the 2021 National Education Plan. The Plan involves honouring the commitments made in Dakar at the 2000 World Education Forum for an average of eleven years of schooling per person by 2021 and attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education. The Plan's weak point is clearly its financing.

The national average of years of schooling in El Salvador is five, but people in rural areas spend only three years at school on average. In 2004 the illiteracy rate was 26.8% in the countryside and 10% in urban areas. There are 836,695 people over ten years of age who cannot read or write. Women are worse off, since 18.3% of them are illiterate compared to 14.1% of

1 Members of various organizations linked to Social Watch El Salvador. We are grateful for support from César Villalona, Pedro Juan Hernández, Dina Sales, among others.

2 The biggest corruption case involved managers and directors from the National Administration of Potable Water and Sewers. Those who were charged include Mario Orellana, the ex-managing director, and Carlos Augusto Perla Parada, ex-president of the institution, who escaped to France. Both are accused of conspiracy in illegal business, and fraud involving public goods to the tune of USD 3 million.

3 Central Reserve Bank.

4 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano El Salvador 2003. Desafíos y opciones en tiempos de globalización*. San Salvador, 2003.

5 *Ibid.*

6 Central Reserve Bank. [www.bcr.gob.sv/publicaciones/main\\_comunicado72005.html](http://www.bcr.gob.sv/publicaciones/main_comunicado72005.html)

7 Inter-sectoral Association for Economic Development and Social Progress (CIDEP). "Columna Presupuesto Educativo 2004", 8 July 2005. [www.cidep.org.sv/columna%20presupuesto.htm](http://www.cidep.org.sv/columna%20presupuesto.htm)

men. The situation is even more serious in rural areas, where the illiteracy rate for women is 29%.<sup>8</sup>

Comparatively, in 2001 the literacy rate for those aged 15 years and above was 81.1%, which is slightly higher than the 78.1% average of countries with medium human development but 10% less than the average rate for Latin America and the Caribbean (89.2%).

### Health: more setbacks than progress

Progress in the health sphere has been marked by conflict and social mobilization opposing the privatization of the system. The Government has presented a "Proposal for Overall Health Reform" but the country is still waiting for a human rights-based health system that will benefit the whole population and allow the MDGs to be met.

The Government has not shown any willingness to invest in health. In 2004, investment in health was 3% of GDP, down from 3.6% in 2002.

In order to meet the under-5 child mortality rate goal of 15 per 1,000 live births by 2015, the current rate of 32 deaths per 1000 live births<sup>9</sup> needs to be reduced by more than half. The proportion of children under one year of age who were vaccinated against measles, mumps and rubella fell from 93% in 2002 to 84% in 2004,<sup>10</sup> putting children at greater risk of illness.

The overall malnutrition rate among children under 5 decreased from 11.2% in 1993 to 10.3% in 2002, but when it comes to infant malnutrition the ECLAC maintains that El Salvador will not reach its target.<sup>11</sup>

The rate of maternal mortality increased from 120 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1992 to 173 in 2003.<sup>12</sup> The State has still not announced what measures it intends to take to bring this rate down in order to achieve MDG 5.

The Government has pointed out that more births are taking place in hospitals, with an increase from 51% in 1993 to 69% in 2002.<sup>13</sup> It has not taken into account that the very poor receive less attention, and that there is a gap between urban areas, where 87.3% of births are in hospitals, and rural areas, where the figure is only 54%.

Women are still dying from complications arising during pregnancy, birth and postpartum, mainly because they live in remote areas that lack suitable transport services, where health workers are not available at night.

There is also the commitment to combat HIV/AIDS, but official figures show that the infection rate is on the rise. In 2000 the number of new cases

reported was 1,375 but in 2002 this figure rose to 1,597, and halfway through 2004 the total was already 1,027.<sup>14</sup> In 2002, HIV/AIDS was the tenth most common cause of hospital deaths.

Another health problem is the chronic shortage of medicine in the public health network. In the hospitals where the demand is greatest there is a shortage of up to 40% in basic medicines.<sup>15</sup> According to the media, the problem affects all public hospitals and health centres in the country, but only the National Children's Hospital has reported it.<sup>16</sup>

The Government is tackling health problems in a simplistic way, blaming them on a poor administration in order to justify privatization measures or the outsourcing of public services to private enterprises.

### Beijing: a pending task

The Government's report on the MDGs claims that progress has been made and that the indicators for education and literacy show that the targets have been reached. The report, however, does not inform that although more young girls enter the educational system they do not remain in it.

In the metropolitan area 35.4% of women complete more than thirteen years of study in contrast to 64.6% of the men.

The biggest challenge for gender equity is related to the participation of women in politics. In autonomous public bodies only 9.1% of managerial positions are held by women, in Parliament only 10.7% of representatives are women, and on municipal councils women only hold 6.5% of posts.<sup>17</sup> There is evidently a lack of political will to allow women to participate more in positions of power.

The Instituto Salvadoreño para el Desarrollo de la Mujer (Salvadorian Institute for Women's Development), the lead organization for gender policy, is allocated only 0.04% of the national budget, and women's organizations make up only 16.3% of its management board.<sup>18</sup>

All indicators show that gender inequalities persist and are serious. There are legislative instruments to tackle inequality, but they are not applied. All in all, commitment to the Beijing resolutions is still pending.

### Worsening environmental crisis

In 2004 priceless acquifers near the city of San Salvador were destroyed to make way for unnecessary infrastructure like shopping centres and urban developments. Projects for dams on the Torola and Lempa rivers have been given the green light at the expense of local village communities and the fact that these projects will restrict water access for large parts of the population.

The National Administration of Potable Water and Sewers has promoted a project called "Hidro 2009", but it is not a water management plan so much as a scheme to decentralize and privatize the service as part of a deal involving a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank.<sup>19</sup>

Problems such as managing water resources, organizing environmental protection, safeguarding biodiversity, providing food security and managing solid waste go unaddressed. Approval of the Civil Protection and Disaster Prevention and Mitigation bill and its funding is urgent. However the principal efforts must be concentrated on the eradication of poverty, a key factor in the country's vulnerability.

### Final evaluation

The Government's report on MDG progress<sup>20</sup> was not widely discussed, and there was little participation of civil society in its preparation. However the plan did include provisions for the follow-up mechanism proposed by civil society.

If the MDGs are to be attained, it is vitally important for the Government to implement measures to create sustainable and well paid jobs that are in line with international agreements. Also, there will have to be progressive fiscal reform, a campaign to eliminate corruption and tax evasion, and increased investment in health, education, and policies to support women. The distribution of wealth will have to become more balanced and national programmes must be created to monitor MDG progress.

With all this in mind, the Social Watch Network in El Salvador proposes the following measures:

- Publicize the MDGs widely to make people aware of their existence in order to mobilize citizens.
- Create a national pact which involves all sectors of society in the achievement of the MDGs.
- Design MDG follow-up mechanisms so as to facilitate planning, strategies, participation and consensus.
- Allocate the necessary financial resources from the national budget and from international assistance.
- Coordinate a social movement to mobilize thousands of people in the fight against poverty. ■

8 CIDEP. "El Balance Educativo 2003-2004", [www.cidep.org.sv/balance\\_educativo.pdf](http://www.cidep.org.sv/balance_educativo.pdf)

9 UNICEF. *Estado Mundial de la Infancia*, 2005.

10 Ministry of Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS). The data for 2004 corresponds to the coverage for 2003. [www.mspas.gob.sv](http://www.mspas.gob.sv)

11 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Social Programme for Latin America 2002-2003, [www.eclac.cl](http://www.eclac.cl)

12 Salvadorian Demographic Association. *Encuesta Nacional de Salud Familiar (FESAL 2002 - 2003)*.

13 *Ibid.*

14 MSPAS. "Situación de VIH/SIDA en El Salvador". [www.mspas.gob.sv](http://www.mspas.gob.sv)

15 *El Diario de Hoy* newspaper, 4 May 2005.

16 *El Diario de Hoy*, 23 March 2005; 3 May 2005.

17 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004*.

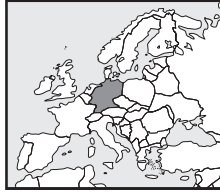
18 Legislative Assembly of the Republic of El Salvador. "Decree No. 644 - Law of the Salvadorian Institute for Women's Development", 1 March 1996, [www.asamblea.gob.sv/leyes/19960644.htm](http://www.asamblea.gob.sv/leyes/19960644.htm)

19 Project for "Reform of the Water Resources Sector and the Potable Water and Sewage Sub-sector" financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), known as IDB 1102, of May 1998.

20 UNDP and others. "EL Salvador. Primer informe de país. Avance de los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio 2004", May 2004, [www.pnud.org.sv/documentos/milenio\\_parte\\_I.pdf](http://www.pnud.org.sv/documentos/milenio_parte_I.pdf)

## GERMANY

# The Copenhagen goals are still far-off



The fact that Germany is one of the most industrialized countries in the world has not stopped it from experiencing uninterrupted growth in the number of people living at risk of poverty, a reduction in the purchasing power of its workers and greater inequalities in income distribution. Women continue to receive salaries 20% below those of men for equal work and development aid was stalled at 0.28% of gross national income in 2004.

Social Watch Germany  
Forum World Social Summit  
Uwe Kerkow

### The growing risk of poverty

"Profits rise sharply, wages stagnate" was the headline in a leading German daily newspaper in early 2005. The article went on to say that in 2004 alone, national income had risen by 3% to EUR 1.6 trillion (USD 2 trillion). However, there was a wide gap in the distribution of this income. While government hand-outs, wages and salaries have stagnated at EUR 1.13 trillion (USD 1.41 trillion), "there has been a substantial rise - 10.4% - in income generated from business activity and capital assets, now amounting to EUR 484 billion (USD 603 billion)".<sup>1</sup>

This news came as no surprise since a month earlier the federal Government had published a draft of its Second Poverty and Wealth Report, entitled *Living Situations in Germany*. The report revealed that the steady rise in the at-risk-of-poverty rate<sup>2</sup> between 1983 and 1998 continued during the 5-year period which followed. In 2003, 13.5% of German residents were at high risk of poverty, while the figure in 1998 was 12.1%.<sup>3</sup>

The report also highlights many of the weaknesses in social policy: the highest at-risk-of-poverty rates<sup>4</sup> affect children under the age of 15 (now 15%, compared with 13.8% in 1998), teenagers and young adults (19.1%, compared with 14.9% in 1998) and the unemployed (40.9%, compared with 33.1% in 1998). Single parents, mostly women, are also especially at risk; their at-risk-of-poverty rate has remained unchanged at 35.4% since 1998.

In light of the high rate of child poverty Jürgen Gohde, President of *Diakonisches Werk* the German Protestant Church's organization for welfare and

social work, called on the federal Government to adopt special measures in family policy while speaking at a press conference organized by Social Watch Germany on 11 March 2005. "The highest rate of dependence on social assistance is found among the under-threes", said Gohde,<sup>5</sup> which is why a "basic income for children" is urgently needed. Commitment 2 of the Copenhagen Declaration committed signatory states to "substantially reduce poverty in the shortest possible time". "In many areas", said Gohde, "we still have a long way to go to achieve the Copenhagen targets."

The main cause of the rising risk of poverty in Germany is the fact that more and more people are permanently dependent on government hand-outs.<sup>6</sup> Yet apart from the fact that fewer and fewer people have adequate employment, the increase of wage incomes also indicates a lack of financial balance. This is apparent when looking back at wage trends over recent years: in 2001, the German Trade Union Confederation calculated<sup>7</sup> that the purchasing power of workers had decreased "by an annual average of 0.7%" between 1991 and 2000. "In total, there has been a drop of 5.9% in purchasing power since 1991".<sup>8</sup>

### Indebted households

In light of this development it is hardly surprising that there is a widening gap in the distribution of the estimated EUR 5 trillion (USD 6.44 trillion) of private wealth in Germany. While households at the lower half of the scale "own less than 4% of total net wealth (...), the richest 10% of households own around 47%. The proportion owned by the top 10% rose by a good 2% by 2003 compared with 1998", the Second Poverty and Wealth Report notes.<sup>9</sup>

The growing inequality is apparent in the rising debt of many private households. The Second Poverty and Wealth Report commented that "the total number of over indebted private households rose by 13% between 1999 and 2002, from 2.77 million to 3.13 million."<sup>10</sup> Whereas 1,634 consumers declared themselves bankrupt in 1999, this figure had soared to 9,070 by 2001. In 2003, applications for formal certification of insolvency were received from 32,131 people.

### The gender gap

The at-risk-of-poverty rate for women rose from 13.3% to 14.4% between 1998 and 2002. It is no comfort to learn that the figures for men are now moving closer to those of women, since the percentage of men at-risk-of-poverty has also risen. While 13.3% of women and 10.7% of men were highly at risk of poverty in 1998, these figures had risen to 14.4% and 12.6% for women and men respectively four years later.<sup>11</sup>

Germany still has considerable ground to make up regarding the gender distribution of income. The metal industry union IG Metall refers to "progress at snail's pace". "If women's wages in West Germany continue to move into line with men's at the same rate as over the last 40 years, it will take another 40 years, at least, for women white-collar workers and far more than 70 years for women in manual jobs, to catch up with their male co-workers."<sup>12</sup> Averaged across all occupational groups, women are still paid 20% less than their male co-workers for doing the same work. For female engineers the difference amounts to 30.7%.

1 Süddeutsche Zeitung, 14 January 2005, p. 19.

2 "[Living Situations in Germany. The Federal Government's Second Poverty and Wealth Report], draft of 14. December 2004. Unfortunately, the report does not measure relative poverty; instead, using complex stochastic methods, it calculates the number of people at risk of becoming relatively poor. This shows that the risk of poverty is especially high for people who have less than 60% of the average household disposable income.

3 Ibid, p.15.

4 Ibid, p. 17.

5 The press conference marked the tenth anniversary of the Copenhagen Declaration adopted at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.

6 "Lebenslagen in Deutschland", op cit, p. 54. In 1980, the figure was less than 1 million people; in 1990, it was just under 2 million, and has stood at around 3 million since 2000, including 2 million German citizens.

7 "Zur Einkommensentwicklung in Deutschland: Arbeitnehmerkaufkraft seit 1991 stetig gesunken" "[Income trends in Germany: workers' purchasing power steadily falling since 1991]; DGB National Executive, 06/01, 18 September 2001, p. 5; www.igmetall.de/download/

8 Nor has it been possible to break this trend recently, as is apparent from the first paragraph of this report.

9 "Lebenslagen in Deutschland", op cit, p. 24.

10 Ibid, p. 26.

11 Ibid, p. 17.

12 IG Metall. www.igmetall.de/daten\_fakten\_grafiken/direkt/einkommen/index.html. On 3 March 2004, the Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt, Destatis) published the results of its 2003 comparison of the incomes of men and women. It states that the average income of women in 2003 was even 30% below the average income of men. www.eurofound.eu.int/2004/04/feature/de0404205f.html





## Unequal access to education

In recent years, major flaws have been identified in Germany's education system. In particular, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the quality of mathematics instruction only ranks in the middle of the OECD countries. Germany ranks below Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and Macao, and its mediocre performance has unleashed a public debate in the country.<sup>13</sup>

However a far greater scandal, in social policy terms, has largely been ignored: in virtually no other OECD country are educational results and the level of schooling (and university education) so dependent on parents' socio-economic status as in Germany.<sup>14</sup> The educational prospects of children from immigrant or socially disadvantaged families are far worse than those of children from better off families. According to the federal Government's Second Poverty and Wealth Report, 81% of children from families with higher socio-economic status achieved a level of education entitling them to attend college or university. The figure for children from population groups classified as having lower social status was just 11%.<sup>15</sup> University fees are now being introduced in a number of federal states, a move which is likely to further widen these inequalities.

## Homelessness

One glimmer of light in an otherwise gloomy socio-political overview of trends in recent years is the sharp decrease in homelessness. In 1998, around 530,000 people were registered as homeless including those directly at risk from homelessness (housing emergencies). By 2002, the figure had fallen by 38% to around 330,000 - including some 75,000 women (23% of the total) and 72,000 children and teenagers (22% of the total).<sup>16</sup>

## Development aid stalled

"Today, development policy is global structural policy whose aim is to improve the economic, social, environmental and political conditions in the developing countries. It is guided, among other things, by the vision of sustainable global development", says the coalition agreement between the Social Democrats and Alliance 90/The Greens, who have been in power since October 1998.<sup>17</sup>

Sadly, this new policy orientation has not been matched by appropriate financial commitments. On the contrary, whereas Official Development Assistance (ODA) amounted to 0.42% of gross national income

(GNI) in 1990, the figure has fallen to 0.26% in 1998. Since that time development funding has stagnated at a low level. In 2000, ODA accounted for 0.27% of GNI, with a slight increase to 0.28% in 2003.<sup>18</sup>

Also in 2004, German development policy was at a financial standstill, with ODA still accounting for just 0.28% of GNI.<sup>19</sup> In 2002, the Government pledged to raise ODA spending to 0.33% of GNI by 2006. Development Minister Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul comments self-critically that the Government "still has to make considerable efforts" to achieve this self-imposed target.<sup>20</sup>

The Federal Government had to swallow equally strong criticism from the NGOs working in the development field. In March 2005, Peter Mucke Executive Director of Terre des Hommes, summarized many development NGOs' key demands to the Federal Government.<sup>21</sup> He urged the Federal Government to:

- Adopt a binding step-by-step programme to achieve the target of 0.7% of GNI for development spending by 2010.
- Support the launch of an International Finance Facility (IFF) as a temporary framework, with the introduction of international taxes on international aviation and currency speculation as a means of refinancing the IFF.
- Commit itself to working pro-actively for substantial additional debt relief measures and a fair and transparent mediation process for indebted countries. This should be based on a broader concept of debt sustainability which would also take account of social development indicators.
- Commit itself to a concerted initiative to phase out European agricultural export subsidies.
- Use its influence in order to achieve the democratization of decision-making processes in the IMF and World Bank and the establishment of a high-level body with responsibility for international economic and financial issues within the UN framework.

Some movement has been seen in the German Government's position leading up to the Millennium+5 Summit in September 2005. Although the Government had for years rejected the idea of a binding step-by-step programme to achieve the 0.7% target, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development have now come out in favour of it.<sup>22</sup> International taxes were a taboo subject for the Chancellor and his finance minister until recently - but at

the World Economic Forum in Davos in January 2005 and at the spring meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in April 2005, they publicly voiced their support for the introduction of these taxes. A multiple annual commitment to development funding had been rejected by the finance minister on the grounds of German budgetary law - but this is apparently no longer a problem when it comes to financing the IFF. A public sign of the policy shift was Germany's entry into the "Lula Group", comprised of Brazil, France, Chile and Spain, following a meeting between Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and President Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva at the World Economic Forum in Davos. This group actively works to identify innovative sources of financing for development, especially internationally coordinated taxation.<sup>23</sup>

## A show of solidarity

The tsunami disaster in South and South-East Asia unleashed an unprecedented response in Germany, which may have been partially due to the fact that German holiday-makers in Southern Thailand and Sri Lanka were directly affected. In the first weeks after the tsunami, there was comprehensive coverage of the disaster and its aftermath especially in the electronic media. During the first two months after the tsunami, more than EUR 500 million (USD 621 million) in private donations was collected. The federal government has pledged a further EUR 500 million in assistance to be spread over five years in addition to funding already planned in the budget.<sup>24</sup>

However compliance with these pledges must be stringently monitored since in recent years "it has generally been the case that no more than 40% of the funds pledged have actually been approved - and even then, only in the forms of loans".<sup>25</sup> The appropriateness of some aid consignments, such as the donation of decommissioned fishing boats from the European Union to tsunami struck countries, is also questionable.<sup>26</sup>

What is noteworthy, however, is the extent to which the Germans were willing to show international solidarity in the wake of the disaster. The German people have sent out a signal which their government would do well to follow in its development policy. ■

13 OECD - Programme for International Student Assessment, "First Results from PISA 2003, Executive Summary"; Paris, 2003; [www.pisa.oecd.org](http://www.pisa.oecd.org)

14 pp. 20-23.

15 "Lebenslagen in Deutschland", op cit, pp. 84, 88.

16 Ibid, p. 46.

17 See, for example, [www.bmz.de/de/service/infothek/fach/spezial/spezial42/spezial042\\_1.html](http://www.bmz.de/de/service/infothek/fach/spezial/spezial42/spezial042_1.html)

18 Social Watch Reports 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004.

19 BMZ press release no. 35/2005, 11 April 2005, [www.bmz.de/de/presse/pm/presse200504111.html](http://www.bmz.de/de/presse/pm/presse200504111.html).

20 Ibid.

21 Social Watch Germany press conference, 11 March, 2005.

22 UN-Reform: Statement by Ambassador Dr. Gunter Pleuger in the GA debate on the report of the Secretary General "In Larger Freedom", 7 April 2005.

23 Joint statement adopted in Brasilia on 11 February 2005 by Brazil, Chile, France, Germany and Spain. UN Doc. A/59/719 of 1 March 2005, Annex.

24 In total, the Federal Government has provided EUR 84.6 million (USD 105 million) in emergency relief. [www.bmz.de/de/presse/aktuelleMeldungen/20050322\\_Tsunami/index.html](http://www.bmz.de/de/presse/aktuelleMeldungen/20050322_Tsunami/index.html).

25 Reese, Niklas. "Breakwater? Tsunami-inspired reflections on the politics of development", Asia House Germany, January 2005, [www.asienhaus.de/public/archiv/breakwater.pdf](http://www.asienhaus.de/public/archiv/breakwater.pdf). After the earthquake in the Iranian city of Bam, out of a total of USD 1 billion pledged in aid, only USD 17 million were actually approved.

26 Reese, Niklas. "Business as usual", Asia House Germany, March 2005, [www.asienhaus.org/flut/nachdemtsunami.pdf](http://www.asienhaus.org/flut/nachdemtsunami.pdf)

## GHANA

# A poverty reduction strategy that made little progress



The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy, initiated as part of economic reforms undertaken to control debt, has failed to improve the conditions of Ghana's poor. Women are particularly vulnerable to poverty because they are precariously employed and most have only a basic level of schooling. Gender disparity in education and health is most pronounced among the poorest, where 81% of women compared to 63% of men have no formal education.

### Social Watch Coalition

This report has two main concerns. First, to examine the gender dimensions of poverty in relation to employment, earnings, and access to public services, reporting on the changes which have taken place in the ten years since the launch of the Social Watch network. Second, to assess how the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) addresses the gender dimensions of poverty.

Despite its focus on employment, health and education this report adopts a broad definition of poverty, as "multi-dimensional, with complex interactive and causal relationships between the dimensions".<sup>1</sup>

### Gender, employment and income poverty

Historically, women and men have occupied distinct positions in the highly segmented Ghanaian labour force. Rural women are predominantly engaged in food crop cultivation and small-scale trade, while rural men are involved in larger scale cultivation of both food and cash crops. Urban women work predominantly in informal trading or service jobs in the private sector while men in urban areas are engaged in formal waged work in the public and private sector. A lower percentage of men work in the informal private sector than women.<sup>2</sup>

The participation of men and women in different sectors and industries has implications on their earnings and access to resources, and are some of the determinants of poverty. In addition to their lower participation rates in waged work, women occupy lower positions in the formal sector and therefore earn much less than men. In the agricultural sector, women work on generally smaller and less fertile pieces of land. They often also have less secure tenure on the land than men. Additionally, women have less access to agricultural technologies, and they lack resources to hire labour for farming and economic activities.

In the informal sector, women's enterprises tend to be smaller and less capital-intensive. The participation rates of men and women in the labour force are almost equal but a higher percentage of

women are considered to be working poor. This is due to the fact that poverty rates are highest among those engaged in unwaged work in family agricultural enterprises and the self-employed, where women are over-represented.

On average women work fewer hours per week than men, in part due to their unpaid household responsibilities. Twice as many women than men are involved in unpaid activities such as firewood collection, child care, sweeping, garbage disposal, cooking and fetching water, and they spend more time at these activities than the men who do participate.

Official data on income poverty says that extreme poverty defined as earning less than GHC 700,000 (USD 77.85) per annum per adult fell between 1992 and 1999, from 36% to 27% of the population. Using the upper poverty measurement of GHC 900,000 (USD 100) the rate fell from 52% to 40% of the population over the same period.

The latest United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) figures estimate that in 2002, approximately 44.8% of the population was living with less than USD 1 a day and 78.5% with less than USD 2. The same source estimates that in 2001, 39.5% of the population was living below the national poverty line. According to 1999 consumption data, the richest 20% of the population consumes 46.6% of national consumption and the poorest 20% only 5.6%.<sup>3</sup>

According to the 2003 Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ), unemployment and under-employment in both the formal and informal sectors worsened since 1998, especially in sectors where women are concentrated such as agriculture and small scale production, as well as among the urban poor and youth. Manufacturing industries have also been hard hit by trade liberalization and women tend to be the first laid off in these circumstances. Between 1997 and 2003, the income levels of the poor also fell and the percentage of the population in the lowest income quintile increased from 15% to 19%.

### Education

According to official data from 2003 an estimated 37.4% of women compared to 25.9% of men have no formal education. The figures are worse in the

lowest wealth quintile where 81% of women compared to 63% of men have no formal education and much better for the highest wealth quintile, where these figures are 7% and 5%. According to Ghana's National Development Planning Commission "adult literacy in the rural areas has either remained stagnant or fallen between 1997 and 2003". In 2003 the rural female illiteracy rate was a frightening 78% compared to 47% for men. Formal sector jobs now require secondary education or higher which has serious implications for women's opportunities. According to the 2000 Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS), 15.8% of men have a secondary school education or higher while only 5.7% of women have achieved this level of education.<sup>4</sup> Outside formal education, female apprentices have a narrower range of training opportunities than men because of gender segregation in trade occupations. Almost all apprentices are male, except those training to be hairdressers and seamstresses. These two options are the two most popular among women, but also the poorest paid.

In 1995 the Government announced a 10 year plan whose objectives included raising primary school enrolment to 98% by 2000. As Table 1 shows, this target was not reached. The marginally higher proportion of girls than boys enrolled nationally and in rural areas, however, should be noted. The situation is reversed: at secondary and tertiary levels boys greatly outnumber girls. In 2003 only 27% of all tertiary students were female. The data masks worryingly high dropout rates of 34% in grades 1 to 9, with higher rates among girls.

Economic factors such as family income are the single most important influence on educational opportunity, especially for girls. The Government reacted with a plan to pay a fee per pupil to cover the costs of basic schooling starting in September 2005.

### Health

Poor people and poor women in particular, suffer disproportionately from disease and illness due to their low social status, poor access to education and health services and harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation. After steadily improving between 1987 and 1997, key health indicators showed a worrying downward trend in the 1997-2003 period.

1 International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy 2003-2005. An agenda for growth and prosperity", February 2003.

2 Ghana Statistical Service (GSS). "Ghana Living Standards Survey. Report of the Fourth Round (GLSS 4)", October 2000.

3 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> GSS, *op cit*.



Infant mortality rose from 57 in 1998 to 64 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2003. Over the same period child mortality rose from 108 to 111 per 1,000 live births. The percentage of underweight children also increased from 25% to 35.8%. There are wide regional variations in these figures. The under-5 mortality figures range from 75 in Greater Accra to 208 in the Upper West Region.<sup>5</sup>

The UNDP reports slightly lower rates in 2002. Infant mortality was estimated at 57 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality at 100 per 1,000 live births.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of low rates of contraceptive use, the fertility rate is declining and experts cannot agree on why this is so. Lower fertility rates have not changed the fact that women in Ghana are at high risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes. The latest maternal mortality figures from the UNDP in 2000 estimate the rate at 540 per 100,000 live births.<sup>7</sup> The picture is even grimmer in the poorest areas, such as the Northern Region, where the rate may be as high as 800 deaths per 100,000 live births.<sup>8</sup>

The prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in Ghana, like elsewhere in Africa, brings gender inequalities into the spotlight. More than 90% of all HIV/AIDS cases are in people between the ages of 15 and 49 and two thirds of those infected with the virus are female.<sup>9</sup>

The worrying mortality and nutrition trends mentioned above were caused by a number of primarily economic factors. As poverty worsens more people find it difficult to bear the costs of feeding children, and health services and drugs move out of their reach. Interestingly, even as access to health facilities improved between 1997 and 2003, the percentage of people using health facilities dropped. Economic factors have also undermined the quality and quantity of health services, especially in rural areas. Large numbers of health professionals, especially doctors and nurses, have left the countryside because they were unhappy with the pay, which has compounded the chronic shortage of staff. Responding to widespread dissatisfaction with the high cost of health services, the Government announced a National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) in March 2004 but it is still in the process of being established. To encourage more women to give birth in health facilities the Government has also announced that deliveries will be free in all public health facilities.

### Poverty eradication policy

The economic areas with high women's participation have not been favoured by economic reforms such as liberalization and deregulation. The economy has grown steadily since 1984 but without a correlated increase in the number of secure jobs in the formal sector. In contrast, the informal

5 GSS. "Demographic and Health Survey 2003", September 2004.

6 UNDP, *op cit*.

7 *Ibid*.

8 GSS. "Demographic and Health Survey 2003", *op cit*.

9 Ministry of Health. *HIV/AIDS in Ghana: Background, Projections, Impacts, Interventions and Policy, National AIDS/STI Control Programme, Disease Control Unit*, 2001.

TABLE 1

Access to Primary Education - 1997 & 2003 (% of population)						
	ALL		RURAL		URBAN	
	1997	2003	1997	2003	1997	2003
Access	81.2	85.4	78.9	81.0	86.9	93.2
Primary Enrolment	67.0	69.9	65.1	64.7	71.9	79.3
Male	67.9	69.9	65.6	64.6	74.0	79.7
Female	66.0	70.0	64.4	64.8	69.9	78.9

Source: CWIQ 1997 & 2003

sector, which has high women's participation, absorbed 80% of the annual increase in the urban labour force. This had serious implications on the quality of employment and has contributed to the increase in the number of working poor.

Reforms have also affected poor people's access to social services. Health services recorded declines in user rates and schools continued to experience high dropout rates. State-sponsored health, education and social programmes targeting particularly vulnerable sectors of society have been unable to address these problems.

Since 2002, the GPRS has been used as the basic economic framework. It was started when Ghana joined the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in response to its debt crisis. The GPRS adopts a trickle down approach to poverty reduction, but this has not worked. The only new aspect of the GPRS is increased social spending. While the document recognizes that poverty is extensive in the country, it still considers the poor to be a special sector of the population, when in fact the majority of Ghanaians are living in poverty. If the Government admitted that most of the population has been impoverished by its policy choices, it would have to undertake a radical review of the policy framework. The GPRS does not depart from past policy choices and continues to be burdened by HIPC and donor conditionalities since it was drawn up mainly to fulfil one of the qualifying conditions of the HIPC initiative.

Gender analysis in the GPRS document is flawed and incomplete. Firstly, the causes and incidence of poverty are not properly analysed, and the gender-related aspects of poverty even less so. The same lack of analysis exists when we consider poverty vulnerable sectors and social groups. The sections of the GPRS on macroeconomic stability and governance include no gender analysis at all. The sections on production and employment, human development, basic services, and special programmes for the vulnerable refer to some gender inequalities but even in these cases the analysis is problematic. Gender is not considered in either the informal sector in urban areas or in the agricultural sector.

Structural employment issues and how they predispose women to poverty are not addressed in the GPRS. Downsizing in the public sector, which is an aim of the GPRS, is not examined from a gender perspective, hiding the implications the policy has

on women workers who have insecure positions in the sector. The caregiving economy is not discussed, nor is its contribution to development and the way in which women's unpaid work predisposes them to poverty. Therefore no attention is paid to what has to be done to ensure that women take advantage of the opportunities awarded to them by the GPRS. Also, in the section of the report on governance there is not one single provision addressing gender inequality in political participation, autonomy or voice.<sup>10</sup>

The participation of citizens in economic policy-making is supposed to be one of the tenets of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans (PRSPs) and it was meant to herald in a new era of policy-making when countries would gain control of economic programmes and become more committed to their implementation. The GPRS - like other PRSPs - was driven by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and donors, who after requiring a certain framework and basic analysis, called upon citizens to take ownership of the document. During the Ghanaian process some limited consultations resulted in agreement on the main sections of the GPRS after which technical teams were established to draft its main sections. Finally, civil society organizations and state agencies were invited to comment on the draft before it was finalized.

This participatory process was problematic, as the terms of participation were never clearly outlined. The National Development Planning Commission determined who would participate at what stage and in which way. Women's groups pointed out that the representation criteria were not transparent and no women's organizations were represented in the core groups. The process was complicated by the fact that various sections of the report were drafted by consultants who did not work with members of society. Not surprisingly, gender and other perspectives were missing from the analysis and overall the process was very technical and barely participatory. ■

10 IMF, *op cit*.

## ■ GUATEMALA

# Poverty eradication requires citizen participation



The absence of a state policy to steer social programmes and the lack of mechanisms to secure the participation of civil society in decision-making processes pertaining to public policies represent major obstacles to poverty eradication and the achievement of inclusive development and gender equity in Guatemala.

### Iniciativa Social<sup>1</sup>

Luisa Eugenia Morales

Guatemala will be the most highly populated country in Central America by 2015.<sup>2</sup> Fulfilling the goal of reducing extreme poverty and hunger by half entails enormous challenges. It is time to consolidate peace and national reconciliation and ensure compliance with the 1996 Peace Accords that put an end to 36 years of internal armed conflict and which offer a solid plan for advancing the country towards development and democratization.

Another challenge is to achieve a substantial improvement in the quality of life of 11.2 million Guatemalans. Over half of them live in poverty and over two million survive with less than one dollar a day,<sup>3</sup> lacking sufficient income or productive resources to make a decent living.

More than half the population (56%) are under the age of 18,<sup>4</sup> but only 66% of children complete primary education.<sup>5</sup> This very low rate of schooling is reflected in the lack of citizen participation in decisions relative to their present and future.

### Social exclusion

Historically, Guatemala was characterized by a model of economic and social exclusion, based primarily on the concentration of agricultural land ownership and the exploitation of peasant and indigenous labour.

The concentration of land tenure remains unchanged. Of the total number of farming and agricultural establishments, only 1.5% comprise 62.5% of arable land. In terms of the distribution of na-

tional income, the richest 20% of the population receive 63% of the income while the poorest 20% have access to only 2.1%.<sup>6</sup>

Economic and social inequalities seriously limit the options and opportunities of the rural population and of women and indigenous peoples in particular. An estimated 56% of the total population live in poverty. The poverty situation is even worse in rural areas, where the poverty rate rises to over 80%.<sup>7</sup>

During recent years, according to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) estimates, the gap between the urban and rural areas has become more distressing and the growth of extreme poverty in urban areas is remarkable: in 2000 it affected 2.8% of the population and by 2002 the rate had risen to 4.9%. In rural areas it rose from 23.8% in 2000 to 31% in 2002.<sup>8</sup>

### The disadvantaged

Two thirds of children in the country are poor and 48.7% suffer from chronic malnutrition which produces harmful consequences and is visible in the children's low height for their age.<sup>9</sup>

Indigenous people represent 43% of the total population. The majority work in the agricultural sector and receive low salaries, especially those who do not speak Spanish.

Although authorities in the last two government administrations<sup>10</sup> have referred to the important role of women in development, they have not encouraged the participation of women at the social level, even less so in the case of poor and indigenous women.

One third of indigenous girls do not attend school; in the case of indigenous boys this rate falls to 18%.

Poor women face very severe health risks; only 14% of the poorest quintile are assisted by a doctor or a nurse during childbirth, 71% have their children with the help of a midwife and the other 15% receive no attention at all, which increases the risk of death for both mother and child.<sup>11</sup>

Poverty, exclusion and social inequity have become the characteristics which underlie the development of society<sup>12</sup>, seriously limiting the options and opportunities of the general population and severely affecting the rural population, women and indigenous peoples.

### Commitments and reality

The situation contrasts with the commitments which the State assumed in 1996, when after a prolonged negotiation, the Peace Accords put an end to armed conflict between the army and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca). The Peace Accords created a national agenda – reached by consensus – to eradicate the causes that had led to such conflict.

The State has not complied with its Millennium Development Goal commitments to reduce poverty and hunger by 2015. By poverty we refer to all conditions that prevent men and women from fully enjoying their economic, social, political, cultural and environmental rights.

Addressing the goal of poverty eradication implies that the State should envisage short, medium and long-term measures for the effective protection and guaranteeing of human rights which would bring real improvements and changes to people's lives. This includes building citizens' capacity to expand their options and opportunities to live a decent life, without discrimination, poverty, injustice or insecurity.

Transparency in state management must be seen as a permanent endeavour and goal. The uprightness and ethics of civil servants are not enough to achieve this goal. It is also necessary for citizens to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and to have access to information. Only then will it be possible to promote social participation in public management.

1 Iniciativa Social (Social Initiative) está integrada por la Asociación de Instituciones de Desarrollo, el Comité Beijing, la Coordinadora Sí Vamos por la Paz! y el Instituto de Investigación y Autoformación Política - INIAP (iniap@intelnet.net.gt).

2 Estimaciones del Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE) con base en el XI Censo Nacional de Población 2002.

3 Gobierno de la República. Estrategia de reducción de la pobreza. "El camino de la Paz". Guatemala 2001.

4 Dato de UNICEF para 2004 ([www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guatemala\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/guatemala_statistics.html)).

5 Dato del Banco Mundial para 2003 ([www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/countrydata.html](http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/countrydata.html)).

6 Colectivo de Organizaciones Sociales (COS). *Proceso de Paz: situación actual, análisis y propuesta*. Guatemala, mayo 2003, p. 28.

7 Secretaría General de Planificación del Gobierno de Guatemala. *Metas del Milenio. Informe del Avance de Guatemala*, 2000, p. 3.

8 Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD). *Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2003. Guatemala: Una Agenda para el Desarrollo Humano*, 2003.

9 *Ibid*, dato para 2002.

10 Alfonso Portillo, del derechista Frente Republicano Guatemalteco, fue presidente en el período 2000-2004. En enero de 2004, la Gran Alianza Nacional, una coalición de partidos de derecha, asumió el poder bajo el mando del presidente Oscar Berger.

11 PNUD. *Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano 2002*, 2002.

12 PNUD. *Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano 2003*, 2003.

This participation will enlarge the public sphere and promote interaction between the State and civil society as well as between civil society and State. In this way they can share the efforts and responsibilities of improving living conditions and the quality of life through concrete social coexistence practices.

Values such as freedom, equity, inclusion, respect for ethnic diversity, women's empowerment and gender equity cannot be ignored when facing problems that cut across the whole society in its quest for a better quality of life as a pre-requisite for peace.

The World Bank has reported that investing in the development of one woman is compensated for by the high rates of social return to socio-economic systems. This return can be measured in terms of a higher rate of schooling for future generations, the curbing of infant mortality, and a reduction in fertility rates, among other indicators.<sup>13</sup>

### Lacking a state policy

As in the past, the population today suffers from the fragility of its democratic system. Every four years new authorities renew their promises of change. However deeply rooted problems which constitute the basis for discrimination and exclusion in the country continue to go unresolved. These include unemployment, public safety, food insecurity, corruption, escalating organized crime and drug trafficking, poor provision of basic education and health services, as well as political, social and cultural inequities.

Not to acknowledge the effort made by governments after the Peace Accords is to ignore the mandate for change bestowed by society on its governments to promote development along with equity and inclusion.<sup>14</sup> These efforts however have not materialized into state policy; they have become instead political programmes of the party that will eventually assume power. It is necessary to reach a national consensus over the Peace Accords, a task for which the State is responsible in coordination with civil society. This must guarantee and enforce compliance with the contents of the treaties and generate initiatives and actions to improve the quality of life and living conditions in order to move ahead in the construction of national peace.

The General Planning Secretariat was created in 2001 with the purpose of formulating, assessing and monitoring social development and population policy. The Secretariat was in charge of designing the Strategy to Reduce Poverty (ERP) and other specific strategies at the provincial and municipal levels, within the framework of the Urban and Rural Development Councils. ERP was based on three core pillars around which government actions should

13 Winkler, Donald R. y Andrea Guedes. *Mejorando la Contribución de la Mujer al Desarrollo Económico en América Latina y el Caribe*. Washington DC: Banco Mundial, 1994.

14 Se firmaron más de quince acuerdos multitemáticos, incluido el Acuerdo sobre Aspectos Socioeconómicos y Situación Agraria. They signed more than 15 multi-thematic agreements, including the Agreement on Socio-economic Aspects and Agricultural Situation.

TABLE 1

Reality in figures	
<b>Human Development</b>	
<i>Human Development Index (HDI)</i>	0,672
Urban	0,747
Rural, 583	0,610
Indigenous	0,578
Non-indigenous	0,724
<i>Gender-related Development Index</i>	
Urban	0,740
Rural	0,575
Indigenous	0,546
Non-indigenous	0,711
<i>Gender Empowerment Index</i>	
	0,467
<b>Education</b>	
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 and over)	69,7
Urban men	86,8
Urban women	77,6
Rural men	64,4
Rural women	49,0
<b>Employment</b>	
Participation rate	61,4
Men	79,4
Women	44,6
<b>Access to public office</b>	
Elected representatives	
Men	144
Women	14
<p><b>Source:</b> Our own elaboration on the basis of data included in the <i>Statistical Compendium on Human Development and Rural Reality</i>. United Nations Development Programme. Guatemala, 2004.</p>	

have been implemented in order to "sustainably enhance the levels of well-being and quality of life of all Guatemalans, especially the poorest and most excluded ones, in the short and medium terms and comply with the Peace Accords. These pillars are: equitable economic growth and investment in human capital and infrastructure".<sup>15</sup>

### Lack of consultation

The design of the ERP coincided with the process to define a poverty abatement strategy in other Latin American countries participating in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. However, contrary to what happened in other countries, the initiative was not subjected to a participatory consultation process in Guatemala. There was little contribution by key government stakeholders such as the ministries of health, education and agriculture and few social funds were dedicated to the elaboration of the strategy. Neither were the opinions, demands and proposals of social organizations included.

15 Gobierno de la República de Guatemala: Estrategia de Reducción de la Pobreza. "El camino de la paz", noviembre de 2001.

The 2004-2008 Government Plan targeted four basic areas to deploy its action:

- strengthening of family income through the promotion of investment and productive employment,
- fighting impunity, violence and crime,
- human development through education, health and access to basic services,
- inclusion and citizen participation.<sup>16</sup>

The Government is signalling its good intentions but there is a lack of clarity and transparency around State interventions aimed at alleviating hunger and poverty. People have not been taken into consideration when setting priorities and defining lines of action to meet their needs. "The short-term vision of governments has led to a discontinuity of important medium and long-term projects for the country, such as the Peace Accords".<sup>17</sup>

### Civil society participation

One of the biggest obstacles impairing progress towards poverty reduction is the lack of participation of civil society in decision-making processes relevant to public policies.

The 2000 UNDP *Human Development Report* states that equitable economic and social policies are directly linked to the preservation of civil and political freedoms and these, in turn, foster social and economic growth and abate poverty and inequality at the economic and social levels. It is the duty of public institutions and relevant stakeholders in the area of human rights to pursue policies that favour the poor and to apply processes that ensure the rights of the poor to participate in policy-making.<sup>18</sup>

These processes will be effective only if they are implemented and if the population perceives an improvement in its quality of life in the form of employment, social mobility and development opportunities.

In order to make substantial progress towards poverty reduction, the State must promote growth while ensuring the well-being of disadvantaged sectors, families, the rural population and communities in greater need. In this way development and equity will be pursued along with growth. Additionally, economic and social policies are required at the national level, and sectoral and territorial measures should prioritize human and natural needs and potential. ■

16 "Lineamientos de Gobierno Período 2004-2008". 20 de junio de 2005. [www.cgplan.gob.gt/docs/plan2004/plan2004.pdf](http://www.cgplan.gob.gt/docs/plan2004/plan2004.pdf)

17 Asociación de Investigación y Estudios Sociales. *Análisis del Programa de Reactivación Económica y Social. ¡Vamos Guatemala!* Agosto de 2004, p. 8.

18 PNUD. *Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2000. Guatemala: La Fuerza Incluyente del Desarrollo Humano*, 2000, pp. 86-87.

## INDIA

# The accumulated effects of inequality



Discrimination against women from or even before birth guarantees them a marginal role in Indian society, and ensures that they are poorer, less educated, and facing more unemployment and health risks than men. The cumulative effects of these inequalities worsen deprivation but the opposite is also true and by addressing inequality a positive multiplier effect can reduce poverty.

### Social Watch India

Himanshu Jha / Yogesh Kumar<sup>1</sup>

Targeting gender inequality for the eradication of poverty has been proposed and reiterated in various forms and at various forums. The Millennium Development Goals include eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. India's Tenth Five Year Plan includes the national development goal of reducing the gender gap in literacy and wage rates by at least 50% by 2007.<sup>2</sup> This paper looks at the present poverty and gender situation in India.

The *Beijing Betrayed* report by the Women's Empowerment and Development Organization (WEDO) presented at the Beijing+10 UN Conference mentioned "growing poverty [as a] powerful trend ... harming millions of women worldwide".<sup>3</sup> In India the majority of the approximately 260.3 million people living below poverty line<sup>4</sup> are women. Poverty was aggravated after economic reforms introduced the country to the forces of globalization in a way that women's labour was casualized and limits were placed on production entitlements on natural resources.

Poverty indicators have expanded as the concept of poverty has broadened. Along with consumption, income, capabilities, and entitlements, the concept of poverty now includes vulnerability, insecurity and defencelessness in the face of crisis. An interesting aspect of women's poverty is how the causes of its multiple manifestations are interrelated. Policy initiatives must be sensitive to the centrality of this issue because of the "substantial linkages between the women's agency and social achievements" and poverty's multidimensional nature.

India's sex ratio (the number of females per 1,000 males in the population) is a demographic indicator which is cause for concern. According to the 1991 Census there were only 927 women for every 1,000 men. If both sexes were treated equally the ratio esti-

mated for India would be 105 women to every 100 men. As Amartya Sen pointed out, with a population of 1 billion, there ought to be 512 million women in the country but instead the female population was estimated at only 489 million, which implies that there are 25 million "missing women". These missing women are either discriminated against before birth so that they are never born, or discriminated against once alive but in such a way that does not allow them to survive.<sup>5</sup> Analysts note the "sex ratio divide between the northwestern and southeastern regions" with the latter being friendlier to women. Developed regions such as Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi, and developed enclaves within these regions such as New Delhi, have more unfavourable sex ratios. In fact, gender inequality tends to intensify with development and globalization.

Labour market rigidities were removed and labour flexibility policy was introduced in the shift towards market regulation. The policy's emphasis on flexibilization policies, its response to market uncertainties, and efforts to reduce costs meant a reduction in the core workforce "relying on increasingly irregular forms of employment [and the] casual nature of the work contract".<sup>6</sup> Many of the areas affected by the policy were relevant to the "characteristics associated with women's historical pattern of labour force participation".<sup>7</sup> Also, "shifting industries and Employment Centres led to replacement of socially constrained and therefore less mobile women workers".<sup>8</sup>

### Gender inequality and poverty

The disparate yet interlinked nature of gender inequalities has been dealt with in detail by Amartya Sen,<sup>9</sup> who looked into inequalities in mortality, birth rate,

basic services, opportunities, professional life, ownership, and households. These are not only interlinked but they also contribute to women's poverty.

The different kinds of inequalities are serious impediments to opening up individual capabilities and choices. Their cumulative effect worsens economic deprivation, which in turn reinforces other kinds of hardships. Positive developments in certain areas likewise have a multiplier effect. Literacy, for example, has a positive impact on nutrition levels, medical care and employment opportunities.

### Women and health

Female mortality is higher among infants where "every sixth infant death is specifically due to sex discrimination"<sup>10</sup> and among girls under 5 years of age where the rate is 18% higher than among boys. Estimates indicate, that "of the 15 million baby girls born in India each year, nearly 25% will not live to see their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday."<sup>11</sup> The infant mortality rate is not always positively correlated with development. In the state of Haryana, which has a fairly high per capita income, the "infant mortality rate... is 68 per 1,000 live births, four times higher than the state of Kerala".<sup>12</sup> Sex-selective abortion is a mechanism of discrimination even before a female child is born, facilitated by technology which determines a child's sex during pregnancy. Additionally, chronic energy deficiency is found in almost 40% of adult females. In the cities of Calcutta, Hyderabad and New Delhi, the percentage of anaemic women is 95%, 67% and 73% respectively.<sup>13</sup> With the unavailability of accessible maternity facilities in most areas of the country, "300 Indian women die every day during childbirth or of pregnancy-related causes."<sup>14</sup>

There is pronounced discrimination against females regarding the availability of health and education facilities. A study in the Punjab region showed that family medical expenditure for boys was 2.3

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2 UNDP India. "India Human Development Goals." [www.undp.org.in/ihdg.htm](http://www.undp.org.in/ihdg.htm)

3 WEDO. *Beijing Betrayed. Women Worldwide Report that Governments Have Failed to Turn the Platform into Action*, New York, 2005.

4 Kundu, Swati Lodh. "Poverty of reforms in India". 4 March 2005. [www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/GC04Df07.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GC04Df07.html)

5 "Women in India. How Free? How Equal?" Report Commissioned by the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator in India, 2001.

6 Majumdar, Indrani. *Emergent Contradictions: Globalization and Women Workers in India*. New Delhi: Centre for Women's Development Studies, May 2004.

7 United Nations. *1999 Survey of Women, Globalization Women and Work*, 2000.

8 Majumdar, Indrani, *op cit*.

9 Sen, Amartya. "Many Faces of Gender Inequality", in *The Frontline*, 9 November 2001.

10 Coonrod, Carol. "Chronic Hunger and the Status of Women in India." June 1998; [www.thp.org/reports/india/wom.htm](http://www.thp.org/reports/india/wom.htm)

11 *Ibid*.

12 Ministry of Finance, Government of India. "Economic Survey 2003/2004". <http://indiabudget.nic.in/es2003-04/chapt2004/tab91.pdf>

13 Coonrod, Carol, *op cit*.

14 Mohan, Raman. "Tales that 'missing women' tell". 4 August 2002; [www.tribuneindia.com/2002/20020804/herworld.htm#1](http://www.tribuneindia.com/2002/20020804/herworld.htm#1)



times higher than for girls. Maternal mortality rates are higher, especially in rural areas. "The estimates nationwide are that only 40-50% of women receive any antenatal care... Pregnancy-related deaths account for one-quarter of all fatalities among women aged 15 to 29."<sup>15</sup>

## Education

The situation is no better in education. The literacy rate for women is 45% compared to 68% for men.<sup>16</sup> Of the 130 million 6 to 11 year-old children not in school, 60% are girls. Only 59% of primary school students reach grade five.<sup>17</sup> Also, only 39% of females (compared to 64% of males) above the age of 7 are literate.<sup>18</sup> Literacy has been found to be "a much better predictor of many indicators of family welfare like child mortality." The exclusion of women is even greater at higher levels of education and professional training. Women who ultimately end up in higher level professions inevitably hit a glass ceiling and remain at lower or intermediate levels of the hierarchy.

Unemployment and underemployment rates are higher among women than among men. The same is true of educated women. Among tertiary education graduates "the rate of unemployment was less than 9% for men but 27% for women". Lower literacy rates have resulted in fewer women in employment categories which require higher educational and professional training. Overall, female participation rate in the labour force is 32%,<sup>19</sup> with variations between states. The states of Tamil Nadu Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra show much "higher rates of work participation than the major northern and eastern states".<sup>20</sup> Nationally, women only make up 18% of the formal sector and only 9.2% of employed women hold full-time positions, compared to 18% of employed men.

Wage differentials between male and female workers are found in every sector and have widened since the 1990s. Women are mostly employed in agriculture and the informal sector. They comprise 32% of the informal sector workforce including agriculture and 20% of the informal non-agricultural sector.<sup>21</sup> "In the non-agricultural sector women are more likely to be self-employed or casual workers". The share of casual wage labourers of the total number of employed women is 42.5%.

15 *Ibid.*

16 World Bank. Genderstats; <http://genderstats.worldbank.org/home.asp>

17 UNICEF. *Panorama: India*. 2001; [www.unicef.org/spanish/infobycountry/india\\_india\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/spanish/infobycountry/india_india_statistics.html)

18 Coonrod, Carol, *op cit.*

19 World Bank, *op cit.*

20 Ghosh, Jayati. "Globalization and Women in India: Some Macro Conclusions", Paper presented at Seminar on Globalization and the Women's Movement in India, CWDS, New Delhi, 2005.

21 Unni, Jeemol and Uma Rani, 2003, [www.india-seminar.com/2003/531/531%20jeemol%20unni%20%20%20uma%20rani.htm](http://www.india-seminar.com/2003/531/531%20jeemol%20unni%20%20%20uma%20rani.htm)

In urban areas a "significant proportion of women workers are employed in the unorganized sectors such as household industries, petty trade and services and construction activities."<sup>22</sup> Women are also employed in large numbers in "invisible work" such as home-based work, subcontracted household work which makes up 49% of home-based work, or outwork and street vending.<sup>23</sup> Jobs in the informal sector are mostly without stable contracts or incomes. In fact women's share of informal employment declined during the liberalization decade. "It came down from 21.5% in 1993-94 to 19.9% in 1999-2000."<sup>24</sup> At the same time the wage gap between men and women has increased among lower wage earners. Most of these workers are self-employed or casual workers, with women placed in more vulnerable situations.

Women are also marginalized because they are powerless in different economic, social and political activities. Legal provisions and social practices regarding ownership and inheritance are weighted against women, except in a few areas where matrilineal family structures exist. Social, political and family structures do not include women in decision-making. This not only affects the place of women in society, the economy and the family, but also contributes to their low self-esteem. Women's empowerment, in terms of "capacitating women to understand, tackle and overcome gender oppression", is a process which requires economic, social and political steps, all taken in a coordinated manner. This needs to be emphasized because different forms of inequality are mutually reinforcing and their remedies have similar interconnections. Some policy aspects and development processes are also interconnected, such as improvements in literacy rates, which in turn improve nutrition, family education, and professional choices.

## Government policies

Women's development became a central issue after the report of the Committee on Status of Women in India (1974) and the emphasis it received in the 5<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan.<sup>25</sup> The National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) and the National Plan for Action for Empowerment of Women from the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan outline strategies for social and economic empowerment and gender justice. The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level was launched in 2004 to provide special emphasis within the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan programme by giving additional support to girls' education at that level.

Women in rural areas from families living below the poverty line were the target group of the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas programme which started as a pilot project in

22 Ministry of Finance, Government of India, *op cit.*

23 Unni, Jeemol and Uma Rani, *op cit.*

24 Majumdar, Indrani, *op cit.*

25 Planning Commission, Government of India. Fifth Five Year Plan.

1982. The programme aimed to give poor women access to employment, skills training, credit and other support services. Women's groups were formed to combine services such as family welfare, childcare, nutrition, education, childcare, safe drinking water, and sanitation. The Jawahar Rozgar Yojna, in operation since 1989, is aimed at "the generation of additional gainful employment"<sup>26</sup> by providing a means of livelihood for people who are at critical levels of subsistence. Reviews of this programme's work conclude however that "the share of women in employment generated was poor and there were differentials in wages paid to male and female workers".<sup>27</sup>

Government programmes, although rich in ideas and covering different aspects of empowerment, suffer from many problems which are common to other government-run initiatives. One such problem is budgetary allocations. Often it is a case of "too little, too late" which leads to a backlog in work coverage and budgetary deficits. As regards the 2005-2006 Budget, it is argued that in order to tackle the problems of employment generation, direct public intervention is needed. "The government's own estimates are that such a scheme would cost at least Rs 25,000 crore<sup>28</sup> [USD 5.7 billion] per year, while other estimates go up to around Rs 45,000 crore [USD 10.3 billion] per year. [However] in the current budget, the proposed allocation for Food for Work programme is only Rs 5,400 crore [USD 1.2 billion], a relatively small increase of Rs 3,582 crore [USD 818.9 million], while the allocation for the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana<sup>29</sup> has actually been cut by Rs 990 crore [USD 226.3 million]. This suggests that even the piffling amount set aside for Employment Guarantee Act is at the cost of other employment programmes, rather than in addition to them."<sup>30</sup>

There is also the perennial problem of implementation. Development, instead of being treated as an initiative, is treated as a government routine. The government programmes also suffer because of their high cost of implementation which leaves fewer resources for development at ground level. Financial allocation for these programmes is made by the central Government but must be carried out by the states. The political will and administrative effectiveness of the state governments often differ from the "central design" of the programmes. The successful implementation of these programmes is affected by the haphazard dynamics of federal policy.

(Continued on page 254)

26 *Ibid.*, Ninth Five Year Plan.

27 Chelliah, Raja J. and R. Sudarshan, Eds. *Income Poverty and Beyond: Human Development in India*. New Delhi: Social Science Press, 1999.

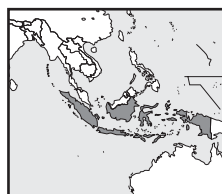
28 Editor's note: A crore equals 10 million rupees.

29 This programme aims at providing wage employment and food security in rural areas along with creation of durable community, social and economic assets.

30 Ghosh, Jayati. "Budget 2005: Reality Check", in *Frontline*, 20 March 2005.

## ■ INDONESIA

# Combatting poverty without a gender perspective



Poverty reduction programmes should take into account regional disparities and include gender-sensitive methodologies and strategies as well as allow for the participation and input of women's civil organizations. In addition, the Government should establish specific measures to meet the Millennium Development Goals and implement mechanisms to reduce corruption and bureaucracy.

### Women Headed Household Empowerment Programme (PEKKA)

Nani Zulminarni<sup>1</sup>

#### A gloomy portrait<sup>2</sup>

Indonesia's population in 2004 is estimated at around 210 million, half of whom are women. An estimated 55.6% live in rural areas and 65.6% are in the productive age category (15–64 years old). Official data reveal that the average income per capita per annum is USD 621 and that 18.4% of Indonesians live below the poverty line on less than one dollar a day. However the population's welfare can also be measured by monthly basic needs expenditure. By this measure data shows that the monthly average expenses of over 49% of the population is less than IDR 200,000 (USD 21), which is less than one dollar per day. This would indicate a larger number of people living under the poverty line than reported by official data. Figures from 1993 show much lower poverty levels with only 4.3% of households, or 10% of the population living below the poverty line. These figures might be supported by the 2004 United Nations Development Programme report, whose Human Development Index ranks Indonesia 111<sup>st</sup> among 177 countries, while in the 2003 UNDP report it was 112<sup>nd</sup> among 175 countries.

Poverty has a different impact on women and men due to different gender roles and gender bias. Some indicators show that women are in a worse situation than men. The maternal mortality rate is still high, 373 per 100,000 live births and the infant mortality rate is 40 per 1,000 live births. Education is another revealing indicator since it shows that the number of illiterate or under-educated women is twice the number of men. Data from 2002 estimate that 12.79% of women and 5.85% of men are illiterate. However women's contribution to the economy cannot be ignored. Around 33.5% of women carry out unpaid work to ensure the survival of their family and three times as many women as men work overseas in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Korea and

Hong Kong. These female migrant workers get hardly any protection from either the host country or the Indonesian Government during their time away and every year cases of violence against women migrant workers are reported.

Another phenomenon in Indonesia is the increasing number of women heading families, including both widows and single women. The 1993 data showed that 10% of households were headed by women. By 2003 the figure had increased to 13.19% but the number could be higher than the official estimate. Ongoing conflicts in some regions of the country and extreme poverty in others (eastern Indonesia) have motivated men to migrate in search of a better life. They often do so leaving the women behind. Households headed by women are in general relatively poorer compared with those headed by men. Data from 1999 onwards show that the number of female-headed households living under the poverty line is increasing while the rate amongst those headed by men is decreasing.

Poor households headed by women are the poorest in Indonesia. Their average daily income is around IDR 7,000 (USD 0.73) or less than a dollar a day. These households have on average three dependents, and many are located in rural and remote areas. The education level of people in these households is very low; more than half only have elementary school education. Household members work mostly in the informal sector as small traders, daily labourers in small paddy fields, or small farmers.<sup>3</sup>

#### The long journey of poverty reduction efforts

In the last ten years, there have been many poverty alleviation strategies, programmes and activities carried out through various poverty alleviation projects developed by the Government as well as by NGOs. Examples include the Underdeveloped Village Presidential Instruction Project, developed by the New Order Government, as well as income-generating projects organized by NGOs. Also an emergency programme for poor people, similar to the social safety network, was also developed prior to the 1997 economic crisis along with the Community Recovery Programme set up by the Government. Despite an in-

crease in the income of poor households and in the satisfaction of basic needs during the period of the project, a more extensive impact on the elimination of poverty was not noticed.

NGOs have developed various community empowerment programmes to organize people and form networks of poor people such as the Urban Poor Consortium, the Network for Women in Small Business, the Indonesian Farmers Association, the Indonesian Labourers Association, and the Women Head of Household Organization. Although these attempts have increased awareness and allowed people to advocate for their rights, they have not been able to bring about great change or reduce poverty.

The latest Government effort is to develop the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) as a guideline for eliminating poverty in Indonesia in order to meet donor institution requirements. However the PRSP concept is still very gender-blind and the involvement of women's groups to review the paper and include a gender perspective in it has met with strong resistance from the male-dominated working team. In addition, the Government has also made a commitment to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to complement its international commitments. The MDGs focus on the issue of poverty and related aspects; however the strategic measures to turn the MDGs into concrete policy have not yet been made clear and the public is still unaware of even the existence of these goals.

#### Framed by an unjust world

There are many interlinked factors causing the situation in Indonesia.

#### *Socio-economic and political policy is centralized and gender-blind*

National data does not always reflect the regional and local situation of the population since Indonesia is an archipelago with vast differences from one region to another. A very centralized and unjust development policy which focuses only on areas close to the capital has led to some areas remaining less developed than others, especially in the eastern part of the country. The proportion of people living under the poverty line is much higher in these areas compared to the national figure. Therefore national data cannot be used to portray the real condition in all areas nor can it be used to develop a national poverty reduction strategy.

<sup>1</sup> National Coordinator of PEKKA.

<sup>2</sup> The following report adopts the latest data from the National Socio-economics Survey which was conducted in 2002 and the data from the 2000 report.

<sup>3</sup> Baseline data of PEKKA from 200 villages in 2003.



Gender discrimination is neither understood nor considered by policy-makers, and this is illustrated by the minor attention paid to social and human resources development problems such as health and education, two problematic areas for women. The budget allocation for both programmes is under 5% of GDP.

Additionally macro-economic policy which focuses on increasing economic growth rates through industrialization, low wages, exploitation of natural resources, and political stability, has ignored the negative impacts of economic development. The urbanization of men leaves women with a double burden, as women are exploited to work for low wages while having to cope as household heads.

The reproductive role of women is regarded as an obstacle to their being active in the production sector. Women must also struggle to prove that their qualifications are equal to those of men in economics and politics. This is reflected by the low presence of women in jobs with high economic value and in the decision-making processes at different levels. In addition, women get paid less than men for doing equal work.

### *Bureaucracy and corruption in the Government*

The major problem of many of the development programmes implemented, including poverty reduction programmes, is the leaking of funds before they reach the poor. An inefficient bureaucracy system and corruption at all levels is part of the system. Consequently, poor people do not benefit from many of the development programmes and the gap between rich and poor continues to widen.

### *A dominant patriarchal ideology*

The prevailing patriarchal ideology leads women to have low autonomy and low social power in their daily lives. Women's autonomy refers to the authority that women have over themselves compared with men, while social power is the authority that women have or do not have over others in their household as well as in society. Several indicators show that poor women have no autonomy or social power. When work is distributed by gender and a woman's primary role is in the household, she becomes doubly burdened when she must work outside the home to overcome her family's poverty. In addition women's low education levels lead to low participation of women in decision-making within their households as well as in society.

### *Ongoing conflicts*

The conflict that hit Indonesia in 1998 led the nation into a situation of chronic poverty, causing many people to lose their livelihood or interrupt their education. Others were stranded in refugee camps and the death of many men has meant that women have had to become household heads under harsh conditions. Economic activities came to a stop and feelings of security and safety were lost, with women and children suffering the most.

### *Natural disasters*

Indonesia lies on a very fragile continent with a high potential for massive natural disasters such as tsunami, earthquakes, volcano eruptions and typhoons. The lack of early warning systems has caused many people to die or lose their property. For example the earthquake and tsunami which hit the Northern part of Sumatra at the end of 2004 killed hundreds of thousands of people and transformed hundreds of thousands more into internally displaced persons. The tsunami caused complete devastation in some areas and much funding is needed to rebuild. In addition the long dry season caused by climate change has caused farmers, especially in the eastern part of the country, to lose their source of production which has led to situations of hunger.

### *Dependence on donor countries and international financial institutions*

With a total debt of USD 144 billion Indonesia is one of the world's most indebted countries. Nearly half of the national budget is absorbed by interest payments on this debt. Consequently Indonesia depends greatly on donor countries and is not independent when it comes to developing its social policy.

Under pressure from donors, the Government adopted structural adjustment programmes to integrate policy into the market system and the global economy. This occurred at the expense of the social rights of the people, who among other losses have sacrificed access to health services. Indonesia's dependence on offshore loans has also caused it to suffer economically and the country had difficulty recovering after the economic crisis hit the Asian region in 1997. Economic growth reached its lowest point in 1998 and the exchange rate of the Rupee against the US dollar declined below 25%.

### *The impact of globalization*

As a member of World Trade Organization (WTO), Indonesia is trapped in the globalized economy, which is very harmful to the country. Its unequal position and status compared to developed countries, causes national economy to be controlled by global economic players such as multi-national corporations. This can be noted from the fast growth of hypermarkets, the fast flow of imported goods, and the creation of free trade zones and free industrial zones in several regions. The presence of global economic players in the local market has caused the death of the small and micro-business sectors, which employed many women and poor people. In addition, the opening up of the global market has caused the privatization of social services such as education and health even though these services are the responsibility of the Government. This has triggered an even wider social gap between rich and poor. Globalization has also caused an increase in the exploitation of women as sex workers. The trafficking of young girls to work as escorts to workers in industrial regions and other countries, has tricked poor women into believing they might have a brighter future.

### **Moving forward**

Under the current circumstances there is no single way to eliminate poverty and injustice. Multiple strategies at different levels should be developed and applied and multiple organizations and countries should be involved.

- In economic terms poverty is linked to income problems. However a plural definition of poverty should be applied since the income definition cannot fully explain poverty, particularly in rural areas where people are materially poor, physically weak, isolated, vulnerable, and helpless.
- Gender-based methodologies, strategies and approaches must be applied to develop poverty reduction programmes. The Beijing Declaration and framework is still valid and relevant and should be used and adopted as a guideline in the development of national poverty reduction policy.
- Decentralized approaches to development policy and strategy must be taken in order to better address regional particularities. Special attention must be paid to conflict areas, remote and isolated areas, as well as less developed areas.
- A clean government system must be promoted and developed by enforcing anti-corruption laws, bringing all corruption cases to trial, and punishing the corrupt.
- All laws, regulations and administrative practices should be revised to secure equal rights and access of poor people, especially women, to economic resources. Rights based approaches in the framework of "justice for all" should be integrated into all laws, policies and regulations.
- Alliances must be built with people at different levels and their livelihood, leadership and advocacy skills must be improved.
- Regional and international strength must be built in to fight economic globalization and the dominance of multinational corporations in order to lobby against the introduction of WTO-related policies which harm poor countries.
- Cooperation between small and poor countries should be strengthened at both the government and grassroots levels in order to diminish the dominance of superpower countries and also in order to lobby donor countries and institutions for debt relief. ■

## ■ ITALY

# Socially irresponsible



Ten years after the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women and five after the Millennium Declaration, Italy has done little towards the implementation of international commitments on human development. The population's relative poverty situation, quality of life and access to the labour market have worsened as have welfare policies. Today some basic rights are no longer guaranteed and among European countries, Italy is in last position for its gender, social protection and immigration policies.

### Italian Social Watch Coalition

Tommaso Rondinella / Jason Nardi

### Privatizing the country: the trend of the last four years

The centre-right's return to power in 2001 has meant the introduction of a mixture of neoliberal policies, the dismantling of the public sector and a partial disregard of the European Union's Stability and Growth Pact. Partly because of the international economic crisis, but mostly due to the absence of a coherent economic development strategy, Italy is in a negative economic situation: first the reduction of the public debt halted, then the debt started to increase, while the deficit has grown to 3.6% of GNP, rather than to the forecasted 2.7%. The situation of the economy is worrying to the International Monetary Fund and has forced the European Commission to start an infraction procedure, as talk of a recession begins.<sup>1</sup> The resources made available by the increase of the deficit and by the savings generated by low interest rates on the public debt, are often dispersed without a clear strategy. Therefore, only minimal funds are destined to schools, universities, research and the welfare system, while most spending goes into operations often tied to the interests of lobby groups close to the Government. Many public utilities have been privatized and increasingly market mechanisms are finding their way into public structures. This includes the financing of private schools and clinics and the spread of private insurance companies to replace public welfare.

### Less taxes, more debt

The 2005 State Budget is focused on cutting the taxes of upper-middle income groups. The reduction in taxes results in a few hundred euros of sav-

ings but forces citizens to spend much more on healthcare, local public services and social welfare. Local and regional administrations must not only increase taxes in order to compensate for the cuts by the National Government, they often must also terminate some public services. These are emergency measures that try to convince the European Union and European Commission that an effort is being made to realign state accounts. However this bookkeeping and the sale of public patrimony does not affect public spending in a structural way. There has been an attempt to go back to the Maastricht parameters<sup>2</sup> by one-off fiscal measures such as building and financing tax remissions, privatizations and securitizations. This strategy has worked for some years from the bookkeeping point of view, but already in 2005 it is no longer adequate for refilling the State's treasury. Now Italy is indebted and forced to pay rent on its own assets (through leaseback programmes to private banks and financial institutions), without an economic policy for general growth and the well-being of its citizens.

### Welfare and poverty

If we consider the State's activities and resources dedicated to welfare the country is still far below European standards (see Table 1). Italian families in a condition of relative poverty in 2003 numbered 2,360,000 (11.8% of the population) and were concentrated mainly in the south of the country where 65.9% of poor families live. Although the percentage of poor has diminished since 2001 (after increasing at the end of the 1990s), the intensity of poverty has augmented: the poor are becoming poorer and the differences in income distribution have become greater.<sup>3</sup>

The last state budgets have significantly cut funds for social protection (-25%),<sup>4</sup> in order to privatize social services and to create a two tiered welfare system: one for the poor and one for those who

can afford to use private services through insurance or by their own means. In the last state budget, there is EUR 10 million (USD 12.6 million) allocated for private nursery schools, while there is no national plan for public kindergartens - a service which would free women of some of their family responsibilities, thereby increasing market efficiency. Moreover, in the last two years funding has been cut to a programme guaranteeing the right to study while private schools continue to receive money. Allocations for universities and public research agencies are almost inexistent in the state budget.

### Military spending, immigration and television

The 2005 state budget also allocates EUR 1.2 billion (USD 1.5 billion) to finance military missions, half of which is absorbed by the war in Iraq. In total, military spending amounts to more than EUR 20,790 million (USD 26,166 million), the equivalent of a 5% increase over 2004 in monetary terms. Civil society is asking for a 10% cut in all military expenses (which corresponds to the increase in spending over the last four years). This would free funds for international cooperation, immigration and welfare, as well as the allocation of EUR 50 million (USD 63 million) for the reconversion of the military industry to civilian production.<sup>5</sup>

As far as immigration is concerned, of the EUR 332 million (USD 418 million) allocated in 2002/2003, EUR 230 million (USD 289.5 million) were directed at opposing immigration and less than one third were used for welcoming measures.<sup>6</sup> Funds were spent on the construction of Temporary Permanence Centres, in actual fact congested jails where illegal immigrants spend weeks on end waiting to be expelled, and where they are often victims of violence and intimidation. Collective expulsion of asylum seekers and illegal migrants is normal procedure. Hundreds of people are sent back to their countries of origin without their asylum request being examined, in violation of international conventions for refugees.

At the same time there is no sign of the EUR 100 million (USD 126 million) to finance the Global Fund

1 Economic and Financial Affairs Council (Eurogroup) of the European Commission. On 11 and 12 April 2005 the Eurogroup studied the budget situation within the eurozone, especially that of Germany, France, Greece, Italy and Portugal and concluded that the budgetary trends in these countries are a matter of concern and should be monitored very closely. As for Italy, the Eurogroup acknowledged the European Commission's intention to prepare a report by June based on Section 104(3) of the Stability and Growth Pact. Since it is expected that Italy will not be able to adhere to the 3% cap on deficits in 2005, this report would constitute a precursor to the excessive deficit procedure. [www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/communiqués/2005/04/12ecofin/](http://www.eu2005.lu/en/actualites/communiqués/2005/04/12ecofin/)

2 Parameters set forth in the Maastricht Treaty that established the European Union on 7 February 1992.

3 National Institute of Statistics in 2004 changed the methodology for the calculation of relative poverty. "The conventional limit of relative poverty for a two component family in Italy, represented by the average monthly spending, is of EUR 869.50 (USD 1,094) (2003), i.e. 5.6% more than the limit of the previous year".

4 Sbilanciamoci 2005 report, *Controfinanziaria 2005*, [www.sbilanciamoci.org/docs/rapporto\\_2005.pdf](http://www.sbilanciamoci.org/docs/rapporto_2005.pdf)

5 *Ibid.*

6 Corte dei Conti, Programma di Controllo 2003 (Court of Accounts, Control Programme 2003). [www.alef-fvg.it/immigrazione/txt/ricerche/relazione2004.pdf](http://www.alef-fvg.it/immigrazione/txt/ricerche/relazione2004.pdf)

to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, a commitment Italy made and encouraged at the G8<sup>7</sup> following the Millennium Declaration. Instead, a total of EUR 110 million (USD 138.5 million) were spent on buying decoders for digital terrestrial television, whose introduction was imposed by law. This was a true gift for private firms selling this technology, among them Mediaset, property of Prime Minister Berlusconi.<sup>8</sup>

### Beijing+10 and the status of women

Italy ranks 21st in the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and 32nd in the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), indexes used by the UN to measure the status of women. Since the Beijing Conference, Italy has fallen seven positions in the GDI classification and as many as 22 in the GEM. The status of women in Italy in 2005 is worse than in 1995 in terms of the proportion of seats in Parliament (13%), of women administrators (37.6%) and professionals (46.3%). Woman ministers average 23% in other EU governments, while in Italy, in the last Berlusconi government, they accounted for only 7.6%. The only aspect for which the situation appears to have improved is women's income in proportion to men's, but the relationship between how much men and women earn still places our country in 101<sup>st</sup> position worldwide. It is clear that the few policies put into effect by the Ministry of Equal Opportunities<sup>9</sup> to narrow this gap are insufficient.

### Family and labour

When analyzing the position of women in the labour market, we find that "women are decidedly in a disadvantaged position: they represent 51.4% of the population, 38% of the occupied workforce and 53% of job seekers."<sup>10</sup> As for unemployment rates, the differences between the sexes and the geographic regions are obvious. If we consider the workforce (between the ages of 15 and 64), the female unemployment rate is double the male rate in all regions of the country. Naturally, many of the access problems to the labour market are due to the need to balance family and work. However "the increase in female participation is not matched with a fairer distribution of family activities: unpaid childcare and social reproduction activities fall almost entirely upon women whose total working hours, paid and unpaid, are on average 28% more than men's. Some 35.2% of men do not dedicate any hours to family care activities."<sup>11</sup>

Women's labour participation is characterized by a higher number of short term contracts, a sign of the precariousness of labour, and by a higher rate of part-time jobs (61% of one-time contracts are women's,

7 G7 (United States, Japan, Great Britain, France, Canada, Italy, Germany) and Russia.

8 Sbilanciamoci, *op cit.*

9 Istat for the Ministry for Equal Opportunities. *How women's life changes* report, 2004.

10 Battistoni, Lea. *The numbers of women: female participation in the labour market: characteristics, dynamics and scenarios*. Quaderni spin, 2004.

11 *Ibid.*

TABLE 1

Public expenditure in Europe, 2003 (euros per capita)					
	Education	Health	Welfare	Environment	Defence
European Union (average)	1.129	1.625	1.558	144	429
France	1.365	1.918	1.754	208	608
Germany	1.062	2.000	2.049	126	370
Great Britain	1.048	1.595	1.619	127	595
Italy	887	1.230	545	149	424

Source: European Statistics (Eurostat), 2004.

according to Istat 2005). Incorporating these figures into the broader picture of poverty, it is evident that the most disadvantaged among the poor are families whose main income earner is a woman.

### The international cooperation crisis

On several occasions the Government has confirmed its commitment to reach the goal of 0.7% of GNP for international cooperation. In the Document of Economic Programming and Financial Budget 2003-2006, the Government predicted that 0.33% of GNP would be reached (0.27%, in 2005) by the end of the period. Despite the progressive review decreasing the original goal, today Italy is quite far even from the most modest ones: in 2004 ODA was 0.15%, but if debt cancellation is subtracted, the actual figure is 0.11%.<sup>12</sup>

There is a progressive dismantling of the bilateral cooperation through continuous fund cuts. There is no policy strategy for international cooperation and a total lack of monitoring and impact analysis. According to the OECD, Italy has "only an anecdotal idea of what is working and why".<sup>13</sup>

### The Government and the MDGs

The Government's report on Italy's contribution to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) exhibited an extremely small commitment and little clarity. This is demonstrated by the volume of resources allocated to the fight against poverty in the world, as well as by the extensive use of tied aid (aid that must be used to buy supplies or goods and services from the donor country). The report states that Italy focuses on MDGs 4, 5 and 6 (reduce child mortality, improve maternal health and combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, respectively), which represent the priorities of cooperation with African countries and the fields where our funds are concentrated, both on the bilateral and multilateral channels. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD<sup>14</sup> states that 92% of Italy's bilateral aid is tied. The coherence between development cooperation policies, emergency aid and foreign debt relief is rather weak. This became evident after the Indian Ocean *tsunami*

in 2004 when aid concessions were not followed up by debt cancellation as Italian law 209/2000 stipulates.

### Proposals from civil society

Italian organized civil society has elaborated and presented alternative proposals to state budget law, both for public income and spending through the "Unbalancing the budget" campaign, promoted by many NGOs and networks. In 2004 the Peace Table, a group of hundreds of local authorities and associations, promoted the creation of the Italian chapter of the "No Excuses 2015" MDG campaign. At the beginning of 2005 it also formed the Italian coalition of the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP). The GCAP presented a political platform in Parliament and is working on several mobilization initiatives, including White Band Day, and a report on the Italian Government's MDG commitments.

In the appeal launched by the Italian GCAP<sup>15</sup> the following requests were made to the government: "to maintain the commitments to end extreme poverty and to reach at least the MDGs, with sustainable, transparent and participated policies and measures, guaranteeing the effective and real participation of the Italian civil society (...) and to assure that the partnership for development with the private sector is reached in respect of human rights and the principles of sustainable development; to withdraw the Armed Forces from all military missions conducted in violation of article 11 of the Italian Constitution (repudiation of war as a means to solve international disputes) and the UN Charter; to reduce military spending, to promote the disarmament and the reconversion of the military industry, and to control the weapon's trade, using the freed economic resources for the fight against misery and to reach the MDGs". Finally, an increase expenditure for development cooperation is urgent, as Italy is the donor who proportionally spends the least in the world for international solidarity. ■

12 Development Assistance Committee (DAC), *Italy. DAC Peer Review: Main Findings and Recommendations*, 5 October 2004. [www.oecd.org/document/49/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_33721\\_33741553\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/49/0,2340,en_2649_33721_33741553_1_1_1_1_1,1,00.html)

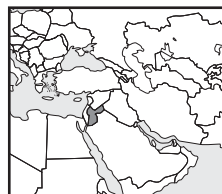
13 *Ibid.*

14 *Ibid.*

15 Coalizione Italiana contro la Povertà (Italian Coalition against Poverty), [www.nientescuse.it](http://www.nientescuse.it)

## JORDAN

# A long way to go to reduce poverty by 2015



Although resource poor, Jordan is one of the better off developing countries according to the Human Poverty Index. With the economy negatively affected by conflicts in the Middle East, the Government has had to create programmes to address high unemployment and public deficits. It also faces the challenge of how to empower not only the country's overwhelmingly young population, but also women who continue to have low political and economic participation despite advances in education.

### Women's Organization to Combat Illiteracy

Lubna Bajjali

Jordan is a small, lower to middle income country with almost no natural resources except for potash and phosphate. It ranks among the 10 water-poorest countries in the world<sup>1</sup> and is therefore dependent on external water sources for the majority of its energy requirements. At the same time, Jordan's location close to two conflict areas in the Middle East (Iraq and Palestine) makes it economically and politically unstable. This context has created huge social, economic and political challenges and has required great efforts on the part of the Government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to address citizen needs.

With nearly 70% of its population under 29 years old and 38% under the age of 15, demographically Jordan is a young country.<sup>2</sup> There is a tremendous need for improved education, health services and job creation with 40,000 additional new job-seekers entering the labour market each year.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, its youthful population is one of Jordan's main assets, providing energy and skills for social and economic development.

### Poor by some measures

Poverty in the country is characterized by financial destitution and not by human poverty, which is measured along three dimensions: living a long and healthy life; being educated and having a decent standard of living. Jordan has a low Human Poverty Index (HPI) value of 7.2% and ranks 7th among 95 developing countries. In 2004 Jordan scored 0.75 on the Human Development Index (HDI) which ranked it 90<sup>th</sup> among 177 countries.<sup>4</sup> The HDI measures average achievements in basic dimensions of human development while the HPI measures deprivations along those dimensions. It is important to

note that the HDI measurement does not include important aspects of life such as the ability to participate in decision-making processes. The HDI is also problematic because it uses data from international sources that may not be comparable due to differing criteria across regions.

The economy enjoyed unprecedented growth during the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s. It relied on transfers from expatriates, foreign assistance and loans which allowed for improvements in education and health.

However the fall of oil prices, a decline in remittances and a drop in Arab official assistance, resulted in negative economic growth in the late 1980s. Due to the Gulf War in 1990 Jordan lost its export markets as trade came to a stop with most of the Gulf countries and Iraq. Also the return of thousands of Jordanian expatriate workers working in those countries meant that Jordan lost its major source of foreign currency. This imposed severe limitations on the economy, leading to a jump in unemployment and poverty rates.

In 1991 the Government adopted a series of economic reform policies aimed at decreasing the budget deficit from 17.9% in 1991 to 3.6% in 1998. Nevertheless the budget deficit remained unchanged at 17.2% in 2004, despite having decreased for a time in the late 1990s. The deficit reduction policy affected people with low and middle incomes, increasing poverty and unemployment further.

In 1992 and 1993 the economic situation started to recover due to investments made by Jordanians returning from the Gulf. While Jordan still suffers from a significant debt burden, it has met or surpassed most structural adjustment targets set by the International Monetary Fund, and its currency (the dinar) has been stable since 1989.

According to the 2002/2003 Household and Expenditure Survey published by the Government in September 2004, the poverty rate dropped from 21.3% in 1997 to 14.2% in 2002, while the number of poor decreased from 943,000 to 733,000 during the same period.

### The jobless

Unemployment began to rise in the late 1980s and climbed to 16.9% by 1995. It remained high during the rest of the decade but by 2003 it had dropped to 14.6%. The causes of unemployment vary but are based on the following factors:

- the shunning, on the part of some university graduates, of some manual and service jobs deemed inappropriate or unappealing
- recurring economic slowdowns since the mid-1980s, combined with an increase in the labour supply following the return of Jordanian workers from the Gulf after 1990
- the lack of skilled graduates in some economic sectors
- poor career counselling for students
- shortcomings in job training and continuing education
- the low cost of foreign labour.

### Economic growth and free trade

The ability of economic growth to reduce poverty depends on a variety of factors, such as the employment growth rate and the formulation of macroeconomic and specific sector policies. Consequently economic growth is necessary but insufficient on its own to reduce poverty. The economy's growth rate is not sufficient to evaluate the well-being of the population not only because it ignores the level of income, but also because it disregards income distribution. Policies which strengthen the links between economic growth and poverty reduction must therefore be implemented.

In the mid-1990s Jordan joined the World Trade Organization and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and signed its related Association Agreement. In addition, it signed numerous trade agreements including the free trade agreement with the United States of America, the common Arab market agreement and the Qualified Industrial Zone (QIZ) agreement. The QIZs are industrial parks in Jordan or Israel which export duty-free goods to the United States. Since the QIZ agreement was signed in November 1997, eleven of these free trade zones have been established in Jordan providing jobs for nearly 45,000 people. Half of these people are Jordanian, and many are young or female.<sup>5</sup>

1 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "Review of World Water Resources by Country", 2003, [www.fao.org/documents/show\\_cdr.asp?url\\_file=/DOCREP/005/Y4473E/Y4473E00.htm](http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/DOCREP/005/Y4473E/Y4473E00.htm)

2 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Jordan Human Development Report 2004. Building sustainable livelihoods*, 2004.

3 *Ibid.*

4 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004*.

5 The Washington Institute. "A Decade of Israeli-Jordanian Peace: An Untold Economic Success Story"; [www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2230](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=2230)





However the QIZs also have a negative impact due to their heavy dependence on foreign labour which decreases the local added value in these zones, depletes hard currency, defeats the unemployment reduction and poverty alleviation objectives, and reduces competitiveness. Job creation was the central objective of the QIZ initiative and although the number of Jordanians working in these zones has grown steadily from 13,300 in 2001 to 19,214 in 2004, this growth was accompanied by a rapid rise in the number of foreign workers. Additionally QIZ workers are often employed in precarious circumstances at very low wages with few, if any, privileges. In most factories, employees work in poor conditions with inadequate lighting, ventilation and sanitation facilities.<sup>6</sup>

Even if QIZ gross exports are high, their impact on the economy is determined by their effect on wages and the salaries paid to Jordanian workers, and on domestic investment through profits retained and then re-invested in the country. These arguments show that QIZs have offered little of the industrial transformation they are allegedly designed to promote, and therefore caution must be used to evaluate their contribution to the overall performance of the national economy.

### Government poverty-fighting programmes

The Government is now promoting small and medium-sized enterprises in order to raise household income, reduce dependency and create employment opportunities. These projects have a positive impact on poverty reduction, especially for women who consider this opportunity the first step out of poverty. Community Based Planning was developed in 1999 by the Ministry of Social Development in consultation with community based organizations, community leaders and human rights activists to identify local community priorities. In 2001 the Government launched the Economic and Social Programme with the aim of creating good partnerships between the public and private sectors.

In 2002 the Government launched the National Strategy for Addressing Poverty which contains national goals to be achieved in 2015. Other government projects and programmes include the National Aid Fund to address poverty alleviation, the Development and Employment Fund, the Social Security Package and the Governorates Development System. These programmes aim, not only to enhance people's economic situation, but also improve their social development.

Community-based public works programmes which offer low wage jobs might be one solution to reduce the vulnerability of the poor and near-poor to economic shocks. These mechanisms provide insurance to low-income households, encourage risk-taking, and lead to higher incomes in the long run. Priority needs to be placed on human development policies, particularly those affecting the poor.

<sup>6</sup> International Labour Organization (ILO). "Facts on women at work", [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/int/download/women/pdf/factsheet.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/int/download/women/pdf/factsheet.pdf)

While overall literacy and health indicators are good, the profile of the poor clearly indicates that educational attainment directly impacts the incidence of poverty. It is important to continue investing in health and education so that the poor are able to benefit from economic growth and increased job opportunities.

To overcome the social deterioration resulting from economic adjustment, social reform should be seen as complementary to economic change. Through the National Plan for Socio-Economic Development, Jordan is trying to address the main economic and social problems, and improve the management of health and education services, and better school curricula. Social reform should be seen as a productive investment. Improving the quality of urban life, creating productive employment opportunities, and investing in high quality health care are productive investments that are prerequisites for attaining a certain standard of living. The price of ignoring such priorities is civil unrest caused by a lack of productive employment opportunities, poor living conditions, and social despair.

### NGO action

There are several NGO programmes and initiatives which adopt a human rights approach in order to raise awareness of civic, political, economic and social rights, including participation in decision-making. Some NGO programmes combat illiteracy in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and some offer vocational training courses. However the major problems of NGO programmes are that:

- they only provide direct short-term relief and emergency aid
- they are not self-financed and the lack of national financing makes them dependent on international donors
- there is no networking between NGOs therefore activities are sometimes duplicated and resources wasted
- there is a lack of coordination with government institutions.

A thriving civil society depends on people's habits, customs, ethics and attitudes towards the rest of the system. These cannot be changed in the short term and can only be indirectly shaped through increased awareness. This process is lengthy and depends on education and the activities of civil society to increase awareness so that people work together for the common good.

### Treaties and discrimination

Women's access to education and health has improved remarkably over the past few decades. However despite women's qualifications their participation in political and public life is still modest compared to their share of the population. Women do not enjoy equal legal rights even though the Constitution grants equal rights to women and men. Jordan is a signatory to many international conventions and treaties such as the Convention on the Elimina-

tion of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However discrimination continues to affect women and deprives them of development benefits because these international conventions are not translated into laws geared to protect women's rights.

### Conclusion

Is there a solution? Empowering poor people is the starting point. This includes providing opportunities for women; opening political space for poor people to organize; training young people for the market and enhancing the legal awareness of citizens. Policies must go beyond the purely economic to focus on the needs of the poor and ensure minimum social standards and universal access to basic social services. Jordan must invest in education, especially in the education of girls and women, in order to produce one of the highest payoffs in development. The Government must also deliver high-quality and cost-effective services for the poor including health care, water, sanitation and other basic services. Part of these efforts includes taking action to ensure that malnutrition, especially among women of child-bearing age and young children, is reduced. Equity should be considered in all areas so that all groups in society progress together. Equity also extends to future generations. This means that economic growth must be sustainable so that what is done to the environment today does not compromise the opportunities of future generations.

Economic policies must also be sound, well-balanced and sustainable. This requires strengthening national institutions in order to build the capacity to implement the right economic and social policies. This cannot be achieved while depending 100% on donor funds because as studies indicate, donors have their own strategic, political, economic and humanitarian objectives. Aid may be tied to these objectives which may not match national economic growth and social welfare targets. Additionally, the management efficiency of foreign aid and the harmony of domestic fiscal and monetary policies must also be assessed when allocating foreign and domestic resources to economic reform programme targets. Also, the impact of foreign aid and other instrumental and policy variables such as exports, imports, public expenditure, public revenues, and domestic credit on GDP must be measured. ■



## KAZAKHSTAN

# Uninterested in gender issues



Society continues to reject the idea of gender equity and tends to see the programmes which promote it as an inevitable part of international politics. Without the active participation of the President and the Government and without national laws in this area, it will be difficult to maintain the efforts of women's NGOs.

Centre for Gender Studies

Svetlana Shakirova

Of the eight Millennium Development Goals, Kazakhstan is most likely to achieve Goal 3 ("Promote gender equality and empower women"), even though it is maybe one of the hardest to achieve.

Assessed against the universally accepted indicators, Goal 3 Target 4<sup>1</sup> has already been achieved in Kazakhstan: there is no quantitative gender disparity in primary and secondary education, and there are no access problems for girls to any level of education.

Another indicator, the proportion of women in Parliament, is far less encouraging since Kazakhstan ranks 85<sup>th</sup> among 185 countries.<sup>2</sup>

Kazakhstan has over 15 million inhabitants and there are over half a million more women than men in the country. Over 30% of the population, mostly men, do not live to the age of 60. Women constitute almost 70% of the population who receive pensions, and one in five women-pensioners is a mother of four or more children.<sup>3</sup> One fifth of youths (18 years and under and mostly male) have not completed their secondary education. One sixth of the population, predominantly families with many children, single pensioners and the rural unemployed, live in poverty.

One out of every 12 people in the country is unemployed, and there are more unemployed women than men. The salary gap is 0.6 and women's contribution to GDP is 2.1 times less than men's. The average size of a state pension paid through the unified solidarity system is KZT 7,575 (about USD 57) for women, which is less than men's and 7.6% less than the national average, KZT 8,198 (USD 62).<sup>4</sup> The gap between women's and men's savings in the pension funds is much larger and amounts to 30%.

1 Goal 3, Target 4: "Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015".

2 Inter-Parliamentary Union, [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

3 Living Standards and Poverty in Kazakhstan. Statistical Monitoring, Almaty, 2004, p. 21.

4 *Ibid.*

TABLE 1

Human development indicators, disaggregated by sex					
INDICATOR	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Average life expectancy (years)	65.5	65.5	65.8	66.0	65.8
Women	71.0	71.1	71.3	71.5	71.5
Men	60.3	60.2	60.5	60.7	60.5
Gender gap in years	10.7	10.9	10.8	10.8	11.0
Proportion of employed women among wage workers (%)	47.6	42.2	45.2	45.0	45.0
Ratio of women wages to men wages (%)	67.6	61.5	58.7	61.7	61.7
GDP per capita (USD)	4,293	4,488	5,220	5,870	6,527
Women	3,152	2,683	3,284	3,797	4,223
Men	5,521	6,429	7,305	8,104	9,008
Gender gap (USD)	2,369	3,746	4,021	4,307	4,785

Source: Living Standards and Poverty in Kazakhstan. Statistical Monitoring, Almaty, 2004.

### Low women's participation in politics and public administration

Women are insufficiently represented at high levels of decision-making. There are 11 women in Parliament, that is, only 9.5% of the total number of members of Parliament. Women constitute 17.1% of regional delegates. At the decision-making level, women make up 18.3% of people holding political appointments in the central management structure, which is two times higher than the 2001 figure.

Currently, women are not represented in the highest level of political leadership: no woman holds the position of president, prime minister, vice-prime minister, governor or national bank chairperson.

Of the 15 ministers in the Government, four (27%) are women. This is below the level of Scandinavian countries but higher than Russia (where there are no women among 17 ministers) and other countries in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Women are not sufficiently involved either in the activities of political parties, especially in terms of leadership. During recent elections to the House of Representatives, women were placed fifth or below on most party lists. The proportion of women employed in state executive bodies is 58.5%. Women lead 24% of all enterprises and organizations in Kazakhstan.

### Gender related Development Index (GDI)

During 1999-2003, there was positive growth in the GDI in all three dimensions - life expectancy, access to education and GDP per capita.

In the index, a gap in life expectancy in favour of women is compensated for by an even larger gap in income levels in favour of men. In 2003, life expectancy for men was 11 years less than for women (60.5 and 71.5 years, respectively), while the average nominal wage of women in all branches of the economy was only 60.8% of men's, and GDP per capita was 2.1 times less for women (USD 4,200 and USD 9,000, respectively).

The Human Development Index and GDI both improved during the same period (1999-2003) indicating progress in the human development indicators for both women and men.

Social and economic changes during the past decade were characterized by two opposite views of the roles of men and women in the society - the conservative and pro-equality views. The transition period from the communist regime delivered a hard and as yet uncompensated blow to women's status in society and the labour market by significantly changing the gender composition of leadership, political posts, wage employment, unemployment, etc. Women have lost the social protection and the social status they enjoyed during the previous regime, and have become responsible for the economic survival and socio-psychological



preservation of the family. This however has not led to changes in gender ideology in society.

But it would be wrong to say that men benefited from the historical change in the structure of society. Men's conditions deteriorated in health status, life expectancy, mortality from cardio-vascular disease, education potential, employment opportunities for people over 40-45, labour migration from rural to urban areas, and uncertainty about the future. Every third man and almost half of women have incomes below the subsistence minimum (33.2% and 44.9%, respectively).<sup>5</sup>

The social price of the transition has been very high for both men and women and will hardly be compensated for soon.

### Regional disparities

Economic growth in Kazakhstan is gender-imbalanced. Women's access to and control over economic resources is still minimal. Rapid development of the mining industry and the financial sector has primarily benefited men.

The gap in men's and women's wages is widest in regions with high gross regional product per capita, mainly where the mining industry is concentrated. In regions dominated by oil-and-gas industrial activities, there are significant disparities between the proportion of people below the subsistence minimum in urban and rural areas. In high-income regions, there is also a large gap between female and male unemployment, in favour of men. In Astana, the figures are 13.0% and 4.25%; in Aktobe, 13.3% and 6.0%; and in Atyrau, 12.2% and 7.1%. In Astana, women's prevalence among the unemployed is due to the high demand for men in construction, transport, communications and service industries. Men benefit more from economic growth in dynamically developing regions.

It is not clear what the impact is of foreign direct investment (FDI) on women's status, quality and stability of employment, re-training, income growth, social protection and labour conditions. Forty-six per cent of FDI is in oil and gas extraction, and only 10% is invested in the processing industry, half of which in metallurgy. This industry is dominated by men. The female-dominated clothing manufacturing and food industries and other female sectors are recovering more slowly.

Regional aspects of poverty are closely related to gender. High rates of economic growth in oil-rich regions only widen the gender gap in income levels and unemployment with respect to rural areas. Men and cities benefit from economic growth while women and villages are left behind.

### A national plan without funding

During the transition period the Government demonstrated its commitment to gender equality. The former Family and Women's Affairs and Demo-

graphic Policy Council was established under the President of Kazakhstan in 1993 and women's empowerment has been gradually evolving since then. In 1998 the National Commission on Family and Women's Affairs was created.

To implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Government adopted the National Action Plan on Improving Status of Women (1999). The Government estimates that 80% of the plan had been implemented by 2002. The Concept of Gender Policy in Kazakhstan adopted in 2003 for the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), continues the ideology of previous National Action Plans and has no targeted financing.

Since 2004 the Commission has been developing the Gender Equality Strategy for 2005-2015. It includes measures for achieving gender equality in the areas of legislation, social policy, political and social life, economy, health protection, information policy, culture, education and science, as well as counteracting trafficking and violence against women and children.

### An unresponsive government

At the executive level however there is still a lack of understanding or only a formal acknowledgement of the importance of a gender-oriented approach to development programmes.

The first attempt to introduce gender planning was made in the Perspective Plan of the Government for 2001-2005, in a section called The Participation of Women in Development. Gender indicators are also included in the Strategic Development Plan up to 2010<sup>6</sup> as well as in the Concept of Gender Policy (2003) developed for the achievement of the MDGs. The wording of the latter, however, is vague: "Special programmes that take into account women interests will be integrated in the national and regional investment programmes".

Attempts by the donor community to help introduce gender analysis and assessment into the country's large-scale development projects has gradually started to yield results by expanding the political field of ideology and gender equality policy.

Experts note that official acknowledgement of the importance of gender policy is often met with unconscious resistance on the part of people who implement national programmes such as civil servants and managers. Official government documents and addresses often contain concepts such as "woman-mother" and "hearth-keeper," which emphasize the traditional domestic and reproductive roles of women in society. Gender policy is imposed from above and is still perceived as an unavoidable aspect of international policy. It is seen as an obligation the country holds as a UN member and as a "democratic, secular, law-abiding and social state",<sup>7</sup> rather than a concept relevant to Kazakhstan.

For example, Kazakhstan was the last CIS country to ratify the Convention on Eliminating All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1998, but the first to ratify its Optional Protocol in 2001. Although fast to join numerous international conventions and agreements, the Government is not quick to adopt national laws. Without national laws the political promotion of the gender concept is highly problematic.

### Pending legislative projects

In the past years, the Government has resisted the introduction of two laws: On Equal Rights of Women and Men in Kazakhstan and On Counteracting and Preventing Domestic Violence. Both draft laws have passed an international peer review and were repeatedly discussed at the meetings between the Government, international organizations and experts, and women's NGOs.

To date the efforts of the Commission in promoting new and amending existing laws have been insufficient. The status of the Commission and its weak influence on the country's policy provide no grounds for optimism. As pointed out in a report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe "without active involvement of the President and the Government, it is very hard to raise interest in gender issues"<sup>8</sup>

The main gender policy initiatives and decisions stem from the President, while the Commission only undertakes their implementation with the help of international funding and expertise, regional administrative resources and ideological support from the women's movement. Without international funding and the human capital of women's NGOs, the State's gender policy would become economically and ideologically bankrupt.

To explain the slow progress in the status of women, the Government points to a "lack of understanding of the nature and importance of gender issues among the general public"<sup>9</sup> The Government and the Commission also remain undecided about their stand on gender quotas recommended by Article 4 of the CEDAW. Concealed aversion to gender equality on the part of the executive branch, inhibition of vitally important laws, lack of support of gender quotas, weak institutional status of the National Commission, absence of direct financing of gender programmes are all factors that hamper the achievement of gender equality in the country.

(Continued on page 255)

5 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *National Human Development Report 2000* Kazakhstan. 2001, p. 24.

6 Second Periodical Report of the Republic of Kazakhstan. "On implementing the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women". Draft. September 2004, p. 14.

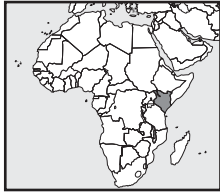
7 Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Article 1, p. 1.

8 Gatterer, E. *Gender Analysis of Parliamentary elections to Mazhilis (House of Representatives) in Kazakhstan*. Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) (unpublished). 19 September 2004 p. 17.

9 Second Periodical Report of the Republic of Kazakhstan, *op cit*, p. 10.

## KENYA

# No funds to finance the MDGs



Although the policy mechanisms are in place to meet the Millennium Development Goals, at present Kenya must spend a disproportionate share of its revenues on debt servicing, leaving little behind for poverty alleviation, education and health. Kenya calls on industrialized nations to meet their donor targets and listen to developing country's trade interests - two actions which would help provide funding for basic social services.

### Kenya Social Watch Coalition (KSWC)<sup>1</sup>

In September 2000 the United Nations Millennium Declaration was adopted along with its 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aimed at reducing poverty by half by 2015. These goals embody the aspiration for human betterment, expressed in a set of 18 numerical and time-bound targets and 48 indicators.

But with the burden of debt servicing and the deregulation of trade, investment and finance - all prominent features of globalization - the race by underdeveloped economies like Kenya's to meet these goals and targets is like running after the wind.

### Losing the war against poverty

Kenya will widely miss the two targets that fall under MDG 1 - to reduce by half by 2015 both the number of people living on less than one dollar a day and those suffering from hunger, thanks to the diversion of resources from basic social services and employment creation to external debt servicing. As of June 2004, Kenya's total debt stock stood at KES 643.4 billion (USD 8.5 billion). Against the backdrop of the country's annual revenue of KES 237.4 billion (USD 3.1 billion) and gross domestic product (GDP) of KES 1 trillion (USD 13.3 billion), the country's debt stands at about 65% of GDP and is more than 300% of annual revenue. Domestic debt stock comprises KES 290.4 billion (USD 3.8 billion) of the total. The composition of Kenya's debt as at July 2004 was 57% multilateral, 35% bilateral and 8% commercial and export credit.

Debt servicing has exerted inordinate strain on the Government's capacity to invest in such basic social services (BSS) as health, education, water and sanitation and affordable housing infrastructure. Between 1997 and 2001, the country spent KES 490 billion (USD 34 billion) on debt repayments. This amounts to 52% of the total government revenue for the period, which amounted to KES 936 billion (USD 12.4 billion).

Debt servicing has devalued Kenya's export earnings to the extent that its farmers basically produce and export in order to service the loans. Over

the period 1997-2001, the ratio of external debt servicing to exports averaged 16%. This means that for every USD 10 of exports, nearly USD 2 goes to repay the debt or to export credit agencies.<sup>2</sup>

In 2003, the total export of goods and non-factor services<sup>3</sup> was KES 183.2 billion (USD 2.4 billion).<sup>4</sup> The amount spent on debt servicing that year was more than USD 500 million. Kenya is a country where 7 million out of 30 million people subsist on less than one dollar a day.<sup>5</sup> If what was spent on debt servicing was invested in poverty eradication programmes, poverty could be eliminated in the country. In 2001-2002, the Government spent KES 80 billion (USD 1 billion) servicing the debt. In the same year it allocated only KES 16 billion (USD 212 million) to health and only KES 57 billion (USD 755 million) to education.

### Health policy

The targets for MDGs 4, 5 and 6<sup>6</sup> require policy interventions and resource allocation. In 1994, the Government developed a Kenya Health Policy Framework Paper to "promote and improve the health status of all Kenyans through deliberate restructuring of the health sector in order to make all health services more effective, accessible and affordable by 2010". The Framework sets the following six strategic imperatives for improving equitable access to health and healthcare:

- equitable allocation of government resources to reduce disparities in health status
- improving the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of resource allocation and utilization

2 Cancel the Debt for the Child Campaign (CADEC). *Lift the Yoke, Cancel Kenya's Debt*, Nairobi, The Chambers of Justice, 2003.

3 The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development defines non-factor services as transportation, travel, communications, construction, insurance, financial, computer and information services, royalties and license fees, other business services, personal, cultural and recreational services, and government services.

4 Government of Kenya (Ministry of Planning and National Development). *Economic Survey 2004*, Government Printer, Nairobi, 2004.

5 UNDP. "Human Development Report 2004. Cultural liberty in today's diverse world", 2004. [www.hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/](http://www.hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/)

6 "Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate", "Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio", and "Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS" and "Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases", respectively.

- population growth management
- enhancing the Government's regulatory role in all aspects of health care provision
- creating an enabling environment for increased private sector and community involvement in health service provision and financing
- increasing and diversifying per capita financial flows to the health sector.

A five-year National Health Sector Strategic Plan for the period of 1999 to 2004 was also developed by the Ministry of Health with the goal of providing "essential packages, which are acceptable, affordable, accessible to all Kenyans at all levels while creating an enabling environment for other stakeholders to contribute to reduction of the burden of disease and unmet needs." The Strategic Plan has the following goals and targets:

- 90% immunization coverage with all vaccines from the current 63% coverage in 85% of the districts
- 30% reduction in malnutrition among children under 5 years of age
- reduce malaria morbidity and mortality rates by 30%
- reduce the prevalence of HIV/AIDS by 10% and STD prevalence by 50%
- increase reproductive health/family planning services from 60% to 75% coverage
- reduce under 5 morbidity attributable to measles, pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria and malnutrition from 70% to 40%
- increase the provision of safe water and improve sanitation in rural areas by 30%.

These two documents provide the necessary policy and operational instruments to pursue the goals of reducing the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds, halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, and reversing the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015.

The Government developed the Kenya National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan 2000-2005 whose goal is to stop the epidemic and reduce its impact by reducing the prevalence of HIV among persons aged 15-24 years by 20%-30% by 2005, increasing access to care and support for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, and strengthening response capacity and co-ordination at all levels.

In spite of the work mentioned above, the reduction in child mortality witnessed during the

1 Edward Oyugi of Social Development Network (SODNET), Oduor Ong'wen of Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Initiative (SEATINI) Kenya, Lumumba Odenda of Kenya Land Alliance, Njuki Githethwa, Kenyan Debt Relief Network (KENDREN), Wahu Kaara of MDG campaign KENDREN, Andiwo Obondo of DARAJA, Alloys Opiyo of Undugu Society of Kenya.



period of 1960-1990 is being reversed. From more than 190 deaths per 1,000 live births in the 1960s, the under-five mortality decreased to less than 100 by the 1990s but then rose again to 123 per 1,000 live births by 2003.<sup>7</sup> The substantial reduction in the 1960-1990 period was attributed to government policies to control malaria, tuberculosis, measles, cholera and other highly transmissible diseases as well as the free healthcare policy.

With the introduction of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) the Government has reduced its investment in the control measures for transmissible diseases and introduced user fees. The number of people living below the poverty line has continued to swell - from below 40% during the 1980s to 57% in 2003. Today at least 12 children out of every 100 live births do not reach their fifth birthday.<sup>8</sup>

Recently, the Government proposed a National Social Health Insurance Scheme that would guarantee every citizen access to public health services and medical treatment. However, partly due to the intervention of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and big business lobbying, President Emilio Mwai Kibaki declined to make the scheme into law.

### Education policy

While in the pre-adjustment decade (1972-1982) primary school enrolment grew at a rate of 8.2%, it slowed down to only 2.7% during the first adjustment decade (1982-1992) and then declined by 6.3% in the next decade (1992-2002). Secondary school enrolment witnessed the same trend with enrolment growing at 9.1% during 1972-1982 only to decline to 3.2% during 1982-1992. The decline was also reflected in enrolment in teacher training colleges where there had been a steady rise from 8,683 trainees in 1972 to 21,011 in 1990 followed by a decline to 19,154 in 1992, a move that the Government itself attributes to SAPs. This no doubt works against the goal of ensuring that boys and girls are able to complete the full course of primary schooling by 2015, and eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary schools, preferably by 2005, and no later than 2015.

In 1998 the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST) published the Master Plan on Education and Training (MPET) 1997-2010. The Plan nationalizes the resolutions of the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 and the World Conference on Education for All held in Dakar in 2000 as well as the Education for All (EFA) Framework for Action in Sub Saharan Africa from 1999.

MPET's aim is to halt and reverse the decline in school enrolment and retention rates and increase participation regardless of gender, region, household income level or disability. It emphasizes quality of education and lays out policy guidelines and strategies to enhance access and participation, and the quality, relevance and management of education system. The two key strategies of the MPET are: to develop education and training programmes that rationally fit into

the micro fiscal policy with clear accountability and sustainability norms; and to develop new approaches to improve the central coordination of professional and budgetary functions, streamlining administrative and management infrastructure, and decentralizing responsibility to institutions and local communities.

Consequent to the MPET, the MEST developed the *National Handbook on EFA - 2000 and Beyond*, which outlines a comprehensive early childhood development programme especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children. It also focuses on improving the quality of education so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and life skills. The handbook also includes the following targets:

- ensure that all children, especially girls, in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality by 2015
- eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary schools by 2015
- achieve a 50% improvement in all levels of adult literacy by 2015 and equitable access to basic and continuing education for adults, especially women.

Real spending in the social sector has declined steadily during the last 10 years and there has been a reduction in per capita investment. A study carried out by the Government on BSS in 1998 found that there had been a general decline in public expenditure on BSS. It declined to only 13% of public expenditure by 1995 from 20% in 1980. In the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the Government spent 0.4% on BSS. This was an improvement from the 0.3% spent in 2002-2003 and the 0.1% in the 2001-2002 fiscal year. With a combined spending of only 1.2% on housing, water and sanitation, the targets of MDG 7<sup>9</sup> will also be widely missed.

### The 60:40 formula - solution or fantasy?

The implementation of the full Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) budget requires strict adherence to the poverty reduction priorities identified through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper consultation process. While this is the most sensible way of demonstrating commitment to poverty reduction, the reality is that commitments made before this process are still legally binding. The Government cannot, therefore, simply abandon these commitments for a new system without risking legal battles with contractors and service providers who are owed large sums of money. In order to reach a compromise, the "60:40" formula was introduced. It required that 60% of the budget be based on the historical/incremental considerations, while the remaining 40% be allocated according to poverty reduction priorities.

A preliminary analysis of the budget shows that the formula was never implemented. The 40% shift was not achieved. Instead only a disappointing 10% -15% was used for poverty reduction priorities since 2001.

The downfall of the formula came from the decision to designate funds according to historic spending whereby 86% of expenditure was made at the headquarters and only 14% was distributed to districts. This decision gave a substantial amount of resource allocation power to the headquarters, thereby making it impossible to apply the 60:40 formula to district poverty reduction priorities.

### Partnership for development

MDG 8 expects developed country governments to forge partnerships for development that facilitates the achievement of the other seven MDGs. However these powerful countries and the global institutions they control, such as the international financial institutions, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), have made it impossible for poor countries to put autonomous development policies and institutions into place.

Despite promises for a development round of trade negotiations nothing has materialized to endear poor countries like Kenya to the multilateral trading system. Since the interests of developing countries appear to be at odds with the agenda of developed country governments and big business, the strategy of developed countries has been to ignore, sideline, oppose, postpone, blackmail or do anything they can to prevent developing countries from developing with the help of trade.

The past few years have been characterized by missed deadlines and broken promises. Matters of interest to poor countries - agricultural reform, assessment of the liberalization of services, access to essential drugs and Special and Differential Treatment - have been sidelined by the powerful countries. Instead, rich trading powers have been pursuing an agenda of trade liberalization, privatization and investment deregulation in poor countries by expanding existing WTO agreements such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services and creating new ones such as the Singapore issues.<sup>10</sup>

By attaining the 0.7% of GNP aid target, committing themselves to debt cancellation, reining in transnational corporations, committing themselves to a further reduction in greenhouse emissions and ceding and respecting Africa's policy space, industrialized countries can facilitate the achievement of the MDGs.

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7 UNICEF. *The State of the World's Children*, 2005, [www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05).

8 *Ibid*.

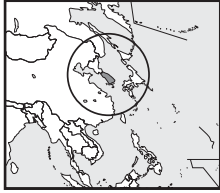
9 "Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020."

10 The Singapore issues are trade and investment, competition policy, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation.



## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

# To be a woman is to be poorer



The proportion of female-headed households living in extreme poverty doubled from 8.4% to 16.9% beginning with the 1997 foreign currency crisis, and women comprise 60% of the elderly who are poor. The feminization of poverty is reinforced by a labour market that keeps a category of high wages and stable employment exclusively for men. The unpaid family work that women do should be cash-compensated through a progressive pension system.

Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ)

Wee Jung-Hee<sup>1</sup>

### Characteristics of low-income households

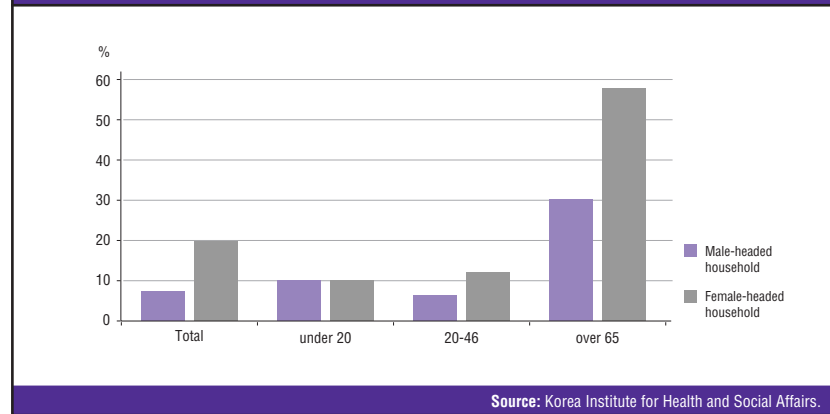
The term "feminization of poverty" was first used by Diana Pearce,<sup>2</sup> who studied how poverty had rapidly become a women's problem in Western society in the 1970s. In Korea the feminization of poverty occurs in much the same way as in the rest of the world. Since the 1970s extreme poverty in the country has decreased thanks to significant economic development, which created employment and produced income. Currently the recipients of the basic livelihood security scheme (people classified by the Government as being in situations of extreme poverty) amount to 3.0% of the population (1.4 million), followed by 4.6% of the population (2.16 million people), who are not classified as extremely poor but only earn KRW 1.22 million per month (USD 1,198). This group is followed by 8.1% of the population or 3.83 million people, who do not receive livelihood protection.

Two-thirds of the recipients of livelihood protection are women heads of household (29.4% of poor urban households), a figure which is increasing due to problems like divorce among other social causes. Women also comprise 60% of the elderly who are poor. It should be noted that there are more poor women than men. In a patriarchal system where "man" equals "provider" and "woman" equals "dependent", women are excluded from the socio-economic structure and are more vulnerable to poverty than men because of gender inequality in the labour market.

Since the foreign currency crisis in 1997, inequality in Korean society has worsened into a bipolar situation by which the poor are poorer while the rich are richer. The poverty rate (based on the minimum cost of living) increased by 2.7% in 1996 and by 7.9% in 2000 according to the Korean Insti-

CHART 1

### Poverty by sex



Source: Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

tute for Health and Social Affairs (2004). Poverty has increased in urban areas - especially in metropolitan areas - rather than rural areas. The poverty rate of households headed by an elderly person or a woman has also continued to increase.

In Korea the minimum cost of living per capita is KRW 340,000 (USD 340.34) per month - anyone living on less is considered extremely poor. Using this parameter to measure extreme poverty, we can see that the extreme poverty rate for male-headed households increased from 1.8% in 1996 to 6.4% in 2000, and the proportion of female-headed households living in extreme poverty doubled from 8.4% to 16.9% beginning with the 1997 foreign currency crisis. According to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare report 2000, among the population receiving public support in the extreme poverty group are 64.3% of women resident recipients and 51% of women self-support recipients, which proves that women are in a more critical poverty situation than men.

Since 2000 one out of five female-headed households (21%) has dropped below the extreme poverty line (under the minimum cost of living) which is triple the rate of male-headed households (7%). In the case of elderly female-headed households (above 65 years old), 56 households out of 100 are in a situation of poverty. This rate is 1.9 times higher than among male-headed households (29.3%). The poverty rate among women who are eligible to work (20 to 64 years old) also increased

from 4.5% in 1996 to 11.6% over a period of 5 years. As the unemployment rate rose and part-time jobs increased after the foreign currency crisis, chances for women to escape poverty through employment decreased.

The poverty rate of female-headed households decreased to 6.8% in 1997 from 9.3% in 1996, increasing again to 13.2% in 1998. It continued to increase to 16.9% in 1999, decreasing to 13.3% in 2000, 11.0% in 2001 and 9.3% in 2002. The poverty rate of male-headed households decreased to 2.2% in 1997 from 2.5% in 1996, increasing to 5.6% in 1998 and 5.9% in 1999. But it decreased again to 4.1% in 2000, 3.4% in 2001 and 2.4% in 2002, back to where it stood in 1997.

Gender disparity was apparent in the poverty rate both during the economic crisis and throughout the subsequent recovery period. For male-headed households, the poverty rate increased sharply in 1998, slowed down in 1999 and decreased significantly after 2000. For female-headed households, it increased sharply in 1998; it increased again in 1999 and then decreased slightly after 2000.

It is difficult for women to escape from poverty due to gender inequality in the labour market. Although the participation rate of women in economic activity has steadily increased to 42.8% in 1980, 47.0% in 1990, 48.3% in 2000, 48.8% in 2001 and 49.7% in 2002, when graphed by age the rate

1 Director, General Affairs Dept. Citizens' Coalition For Economic Justice, Social Worker, Member, Council of Religion & Citizen's Movement for the Homeless. Main thesis: *A study on individual character of homeless woman*, 2001, M.A. Yonsei University.

2 Pearce, Diana. "The Feminization of Poverty: Women, Work, and Welfare", *Urban and Social Change Review* (February, 1978).



takes the shape of an “M”. This illustrates how women’s economic participation is influenced by their reproductive role since participation drops during pregnancy, childbirth, and while they care for their children. This form of participation causes a wage difference between men and women. In 2000 women on average earned KRW 1.6 million (USD 1571) per month while men earned KRW 1.85 million (USD 1817). The gender disparity of wages is even more pronounced in part-time work. According to the 2002 Census of Economic Activity carried out by the National Statistical Office, the average full-time wage for women is KRW 1.29 million (USD 1,291) a month, KRW 830,000 (USD 831) for a part-time job, and KRW 570,000 (USD 570) for a day worker. Meanwhile men earned KRW 1.96 million (USD 1,962) for full-time work, KRW 1.14 million (USD 1,141) in part-time employment, and KRW 950,000 (USD 951) for day work. The wage difference between full time workers and part time workers, not only between men and women, is also significant.

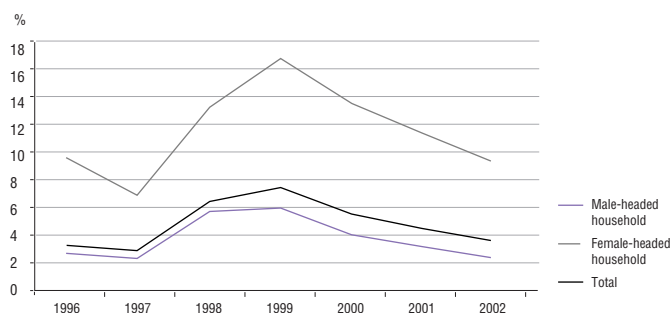
### Countermeasures to the feminization of poverty

Firstly, the main countermeasure to the feminization of poverty should involve a paradigm shift in welfare policy. The male-oriented welfare state is not the best system to meet new challenges, since traditional views of poverty and welfare have resulted in social policies that exclude women from the labour force. The Korean patriarchal system perceives women as full-time housewives who carry out unpaid domestic labour. Women therefore can only become beneficiaries of welfare policies made by men. Changes such as globalization, job restructuring, long-term unemployment, family dissolution, aging population, low birth rates, collapse of the social security net and increased women’s participation in economic activities must be newly considered from a gender perspective. Gender-neutral policies are not effective, since they do not take into account the different lifestyles of men and women, resulting in policies that are favourable to men and unfavourable to women. Gender sensitivity is indispensable to the national support project for poor women.

Secondly, the marginalization of women in the labour market must be overcome. Although Korean society has strengthened policies and programmes to promote women’s participation in socio-economic activities since the 1990s, there are informal barriers and glass-ceilings for women in the labour market. In addition there are low wages and employment problems that affect 42.2% of all employed women due to irregular, temporary and part-time work. Women must also interrupt their work and social participation because of domestic respon-

CHART 2

Comparison of gender poverty trends, 2004



Source: Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

sibilities such as marriage, pregnancy, child-birth, child-rearing and other family duties. The labour market in Korean society has a double structure. The upper part is characterized by high productivity, high wages, and stable employment while the lower part is characterized by low productivity, low wages, and unstable employment. This double structure, with men in the upper part and women in the lower part, separates the sexes into different business categories, positions and wage levels. The discrimination of women in the labour market results in poor female-headed households. The socialization of housework through social welfare services providing childcare, nursing, resident welfare and medical services give poor women a chance to find employment and receive job training, thereby increasing women’s participation rates. This type of social support has a symbolic meaning in helping women overcome their traditional role as homemakers and move towards a gender equality model. It is a precondition for the participation of women in the labour market.

Thirdly, the double welfare system based on the male-provider model should be reformed. The social security system is designed on the basis of the traditional concept that men support the family while women care for it. The work they do, like caring for children, the elderly, the disabled and the sick limits women from being individual recipients of social security. To eradicate this limitation the pension system must be improved. A progressive form of pension credit system should be introduced by paying caregivers for their work. Also a basic system of “one person-one pension” should be instated on the grounds of civil rights.

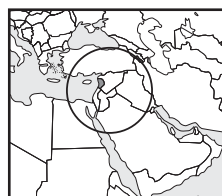
It must be understood why women and especially female-headed households become poor. A positive policy is needed to address increasing pov-

erty among the female elderly, as well as the gender disparity of poverty. For these reasons a caregiver’s allowance should be introduced which turns unpaid family work into paid work through social cash compensation.

Priority must be given to women’s employment promotion policy, paid work for family care-givers, and a social security system based on civil rights which considers various socio-economic conditions. It is a known truth that the development and selection of women-friendly social policy based on gender equality is an effective countermeasure to solve poverty and other social problems. ■

## LEBANON

# What is not counted does not count



Poverty reduction, social protection, and women's empowerment are still not priority items on the Government's agenda. For one thing, poverty has never been directly studied in the country. And Lebanon's high public debt and chronic deficit problems have received more attention than women's human rights and women's low participation in political and economic life.

Arab NGO Network for Development

Zeina Abla and Sawсан Masri

### Overview of poverty

A comprehensive and accurate picture of poverty in Lebanon is not available. Up to now there have been no scientific studies or surveys aimed at measuring and analyzing poverty in the country.<sup>1</sup> The limited data available on poverty is extracted from studies carried out for other purposes by either official institutions such as the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), the Central Administration for Statistics (CAS), or from the estimates of research institutions and individual experts.

The first of these studies was published in 1998 by CAS on *Household Living Conditions in Lebanon* and provided a significant source of data on households and expenditures. It classified the population according to 9 categories based on their monthly income (earnings from work and other sources) as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Distribution of households based on average monthly income	
INCOME CATEGORY (IN THOUSANDS OF LBP)	PERCENTAGE HOUSEHOLDS
Less than LBP 300 (USD 200), minimum wage	5.8
300-500	13.0
500-800	21.0
800-1,200	21.1
1,200-1,600	13.4
1,600-2,400	12.1
2,400-3,200	5.9
3,200-5,000	4.3
5,000 and above	3.1
Not specified	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

1 The Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Central Administration for Statistics are currently implementing the "Multi-Purpose Household Survey", which should provide precise data on poverty, measuring poverty through both Poverty Line and Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN) characteristics of the poor, and an updated poverty mapping. The survey results are expected in beginning 2006.

The study did not attempt to measure poverty or set a poverty line; instead, it asked households to estimate the monthly income they believed was sufficient to meet their needs. Basically, poverty was estimated by asking households about their income satisfaction. The response varied according to household size but the national average came to LBP 1,730,000 (USD 1,152). Over 37% of households reported that they had inadequate incomes, in many cases below LBP 800,000 (USD 533).

Another study commonly used and officially adopted by the Government and UN agencies is the *Mapping of Living Conditions in Lebanon* (MLC).<sup>2</sup> The MLC study attempted to measure poverty and study the level of satisfaction of basic needs of households and individuals by adopting the Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBN) Approach.<sup>3</sup>

MLC classified the population into five categories of basic needs satisfaction (very low, low, intermediate, high and very high) according to the Living Conditions Index (LCI). The population falling into the very low and low category are considered poor since their basic needs are considered unsatisfied, so 35% of the population live below the deprivation threshold, 7.09% of whom live in situations of extreme deprivation. MLC also revealed regional disparities between central Lebanon and the peripheral and rural regions (Bint Jbeil, Akkar, Marjaion, and Hermel), where the percentage of population living in deprivation exceeds 50%. Akkar, in the north, is home to the biggest share of deprived people (12.6%). A salient feature of the study is that the major share of deprived population live in urban regions, more specifically in pockets surrounding the country's big cities (Saida, Tripoli, Beirut and Ba'albak).

The most recent of these studies was prepared by the Consultation and Research Institute as an assignment for the Economic and Social Fund

Project funded by the European Union (EU) in 2002. Its purpose was to provide an analysis of poverty and target mechanisms for the project. According to the study, the lower poverty line was estimated by adopting the Least Cost Diet Methodology at LBP 471,000 (USD 314) per month for the average household of 4.64 members and the upper poverty line at LBP 1,172,394 (USD 781) for the same household size. The average varies between districts depending on size and composition of households. Minnieh, followed by Hermel, Akkar, Tripoli and Ba'alback have the highest absolute poverty rates, estimated at USD 365 for Minnieh, USD 357 for Hermel and USD 340 for Ba'alback.

The UBN (Living Conditions Index) and the income indicators of the MLC show similar results. According to the UBN, 32% of the population is deprived while the proportion jumps to between 37% and 43% when using the income indicator method.

Fifteen years after the end of the 1975-1990 civil war it is practically impossible to know if there have been improvements in the living conditions of the population. However from the data available on economic performance and government interventions there are no indications that any significant improvements have taken place.

Lebanon has been suffering from a recession. Economic growth fell from 4% in 1996 to -0.5% in 2000, only slightly rebounding afterwards, but never exceeding 2%.<sup>4</sup> Unemployment rates have also been on the rise from 8.5% in 1997 to 11.5% in 2001.<sup>5</sup> No income redistribution policy took place within this timeframe nor did the minimum wage (USD 200) change. Instead the Government introduced two new taxes for the sole purpose of raising public revenues. The newly introduced taxes are: the Value Added Tax, which is an indirect tax with no effect on wealth and income redistribution (some claim that it is even regressive) and a flat rate tax on income interest which also has no progressive effect. In fact, the government policies during the past few years have focused particularly on containing the high public debt level and chronic fiscal deficit by adopting a range of austerity measures.

2 "Mapping of Living Conditions in Lebanon", 1998. [www.undp.org.lb/programme/pro-poor/poverty/povertyinlebanon/molc/main.html](http://www.undp.org.lb/programme/pro-poor/poverty/povertyinlebanon/molc/main.html)

3 The UBN methodology was applied to the raw data obtained from the "Population and Housing Survey", MOSA and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In the absence of data on health, income and expenditure indicators, a set of 11 indicators were selected and grouped into four categories (housing, water and sanitation, education, and income). As a result of the application of the UBN methodology, each household obtained a composite score for the Living Conditions Index which was used to classify levels of basic needs satisfaction.

4 *Country and Market Update 2004 - Lebanon* published by Bank Audi, Beirut 2004.

5 UNDP/MOSA, *Social and Economic Outlook in Lebanon: Prospects and Reality*. Beirut, 2004.



The political framework does not contribute to the creation and implementation of a comprehensive strategy for social development and poverty reduction. Poverty reduction and social protection are still not priority items on the Government's national agenda. Public interventions have always focused on curing the symptoms of poor living conditions through the provision of social services and social care instead of creating sustainable mechanisms for development and poverty reduction.

### Gender analysis of poverty

This overview shows that Lebanon still has no accurate measure of poverty and that existing studies only provide rough estimates. It becomes even more difficult to examine gender aspects of poverty, especially when the household is used as the unit of analysis. Available development indicators should be used to assess women's poverty conditions and determine if progress has been made. The focus should be on whether achievements are sustained and whether women are liable to fall back into poverty when under social and economic pressure.

Lebanon has taken part in the main international meetings on gender equity and ratified the major conventions, from the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA), and more recently the Millennium Summit. The Government established the National Committee for Lebanese Women to follow up women's issues in coordination with governmental and non-governmental bodies. A National Action Plan for Women was set up to empower women and challenge social discrimination through a variety of projects. Despite some reservations,<sup>6</sup> this type of involvement indicates the Government's commitment to addressing the challenges facing women and to help them build their capabilities.

Lebanon has been successful in ensuring that women enjoy two of the most basic human rights: health and education. This is a step in the right direction in the fight against the feminization of poverty. Gender bias against women in health and education is almost inexistent. Female life expectancy is 75.1 years in Lebanon while males can expect to live 71.9 years, giving women an advantage of 3.2 years. These life expectancies are at the level of middle-income countries.<sup>7</sup> Lebanon has also made progress towards achieving gender equality in educational achievement. The gender gap in access to education is negligible at all levels. School enrolment rates in 1997 were equal for males and females of all ages up to 16 years, after which female school enrolment was higher for the 16-18 age bracket. At university level, more than half of students enrolled were female. Women also have an edge over boys when considering performance. In 1997-1998 and 2000-2001, boys lagged behind girls at all levels of education.<sup>8</sup>

6 Lebanon entered reservations on Article 9 (2) of the CEDAW with respect to women and men's equal rights in granting their children nationality; on Article 16 regarding equality of rights in rights and family relations; and on Article 29 regarding international arbitration.

7 Selected Gender Indicators, www.escwa.org.lb

8 UNDP/MOSA, *op cit*.

Gender bias, though, must be highlighted when considering needs other than education and health. Using the UBN approach, women account for 54% of people with very low basic needs satisfaction and 51% of people with low needs satisfaction (women make up 50.4% of the population). Women-headed households remain the most deprived, making up 14% of all households.<sup>9</sup>

It is important to examine whether women have been able to turn their capabilities into sustainable achievements, or what Amartya Sen calls "functionings", which can protect them from falling back into poverty. This can be assessed by looking at economic participation rates.

Women's economic participation was 21% in 1997 and rose to 25% in 2001. Despite the progress, economic participation remains very weak when the female proportion of the population and female educational attainment are considered. The low rates may be attributed to obstacles such as wage discrimination and job segregation. The distribution of women workers by sector shows that the majority take jobs associated with their traditional mother/caregiver role (27.8% and 29.4% of women in 1997 and 2001 respectively work in the teaching profession). Women are also assuming fewer and fewer upper managerial positions with the proportion of women in such jobs falling from 13.7% in 1997 to 6.4% in 2001.<sup>10</sup> With the opportunity cost of women's time and domestic work completely ignored, they remain at an economic disadvantage and have fewer incentives to achieving their full potential.

Economic participation definitely increases the potential for welfare and economic security, not to mention its non-material benefits. Yet even as part of the labour force, women have been more vulnerable to impoverishment as a result of the unfavourable macroeconomic conditions which have prevailed since 1997.

During the recession period, job creation was weak leading to a rise in unemployment which hit women more than men. In 1997 female unemployment was 7.2% versus 9% for men, rising to 18.2% in 2001 to almost double the rate for men (9.3%). International migration provided an option for unemployed men, but women migrant workers were much fewer. They were only half as many in the most important age bracket for economic activity (30 to 54 years). Consequently, more and more women were pushed into the informal sector, in this way increasing the incidence of impoverishment.

Since basic services are provided mainly to those employed in the formal sector, low female economic participation rates and the impact of the economic recession keep the most vulnerable women at the mercy of their families and of charities (particularly religious communities) as the only means to secure a decent livelihood.

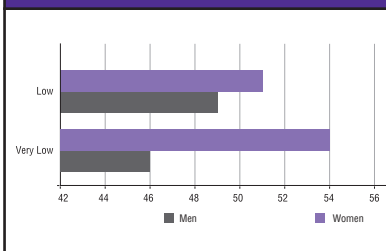
This type of support is influenced mainly by relationships within the household which give the upper-hand to males both legally or in practice. Family laws

9 "Mapping of Living Conditions in Lebanon", *op cit*.

10 UNDP/MOSA, *op cit*.

CHART 1

### Distribution of men and women according to low and very low degree of satisfaction of basic needs



(marriage, divorce, inheritance, child custody) are still ruled by religion, a situation which ensures women's continuing dependence on male relatives.

As long as the cultural division of labour within the family and related dynamics are not taken into consideration by policy makers, women will remain more vulnerable to threats and will be unable to enjoy their basic rights. From the moment that men assume the role of income providers and women of family caregivers (a case of unremunerated work), men automatically become the distributors of basic rights and security to family members while women are restricted to being the recipients and depending on the quality of relationships within the household in order to acquire their human rights. Current labour and social security laws continue to be discriminatory, especially with regards to maternity leave, family allowances and income tax, despite positive ratifications made in recent years to ensure complete equity between working men and women.

The patriarchal model and religious identity become entwined with political identity as reflected in the law which still prohibits women from passing citizenship on to their children and husbands. Under these cultural and social norms, women are equal citizens only on paper.

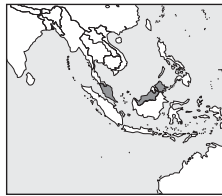
As far as actual participation in political life at the highest levels of decision-making, for the first time in Lebanon's history the cabinet included two women at the end of 2004. This, however, cannot be considered a big leap forward for women's participation in decision-making because both women ministers were filling in for two male politicians. Likewise, only three members of the 128-seat Parliament are women. This might be considered a positive sign were it not that these women's political posts were acquired on the basis of kinship ties to a leading male political figure. The latest statistics on municipal elections date back to 1998 when only 505 women were nominated to run, and 335 actually made it, representing barely 2% of the total 7,704 municipal council members.<sup>11</sup> The relatively active participation of women in municipal work can be explained by the very nature of public work and its link to community development, which fits the stereotypical image of a woman.

(Continued on page 255)

11 Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, "Municipal Elections in Lebanon - 1998", Beirut 1999.

## ■ MALAYSIA

# Plantation workers face poverty and poison



Women's empowerment efforts in Malaysia have been unequal. Plantation workers who sustain the nation's palm oil and rubber production are still the poorest and most vulnerable. They receive very poor wages, endure sexual harassment, and are the victims of agro-chemical poisoning.

Consumers' Association of Penang

Mageswari Sangaralingam

Malaysia registered impressive economic growth rates in recent years. Despite this growth there are still vulnerable groups who live in poverty, such as the elderly, the rural poor, single female headed households, indigenous people of Peninsular and East Malaysia, migrant workers and unskilled workers. The dynamic changes created by the process of economic transformation have increased poverty levels for some of these groups.<sup>1</sup>

### A decline in poverty

Malaysia's policy against poverty first took shape with the introduction of the New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1970, thus emphasizing its importance in overall national development. When the National Development Policy (NDP) 1991-2000 was introduced to replace the NEP some modifications were made to the poverty reduction policy but its basic features were retained. Subsequently the National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP) also dealt with the need to address the problems of the poor as a result of the economic downturn following the 1997 financial crisis.<sup>2</sup>

The ultimate objective of the public policy against poverty, as stated in the NEP, was to reduce the incidence of poverty by set time periods and eventually to totally eradicate it. Another objective of the policy was to reduce relative poverty and income inequality. During the NEP years, the focus was on the reduction of the gaps between the main ethnic groups, rural and urban dwellers, and income groups. Reducing intra-ethnic income gaps also became an objective of the NDP.<sup>3</sup>

The primary strategies selected to reduce and eradicate poverty were ones which provide opportunities to the poor to gain employment in higher-paying jobs or activities in order to increase their incomes and become self-supporting.

Official statistics show that the incidence of poverty among Malaysians decreased from 7.5% in 1999 to 5.1% in 2002. The number of poor households declined by 25.6% to 267,900 in 2005.<sup>4</sup> The overall decline in poverty was attributed to the Government's efforts to implement poverty eradication programmes, particularly through the promotion of income generating projects.

The incidence of poverty is reportedly highest among agricultural, hunting and forestry workers at 14.5%. Rural households headed by the elderly (65 years old and above) and female-headed households registered high incidences of poverty at 28.6% and 25.7%.<sup>5</sup>

To assist marginalized sectors of society, the 2005 national budget directed resources to the disabled, lower income groups, education, indigenous groups, small businesses, gender development programmes and other social services. There is also a specific allocation of MYR 37.8 million (USD 10 million) for gender development programmes. Nevertheless the crux of the issue is how these allocations are going to be used to implement projects that will truly benefit the target group.

### The forgotten sector

Women plantation workers appear to have been neglected in the Government's plans to eradicate poverty and enhance the status of women. The progress achieved so far in empowering women has been unequal. Women plantation workers still lag behind, since they are unable to free themselves from the vicious cycle of poverty they find themselves in.

The plantation industry is a crucial part of the country's development. Malaysia is a world leader in palm oil and natural rubber production and the cultivation of these crops is a major agricultural activity in the country. Apart from smallholders who depend on these commodities for their livelihood, there are also waged labourers employed by plantation companies. In 2005, an estimated 1,268,500 people were employed in the agriculture and fishery sector, which includes farm workers, plantation

workers and forestry workers.<sup>6</sup> Large segments of the population involved in the agriculture and plantation sector are poor.

In recent years, the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) has been working with labourers on oil palm and rubber plantations on the Peninsula. We have been involved in occupational health and safety issues, the fight for better wages, securing basic needs such as housing, health and sanitation, and other social issues such as domestic violence and alcohol abuse. In the area of occupational health and safety, the primary concern has been the use of highly hazardous herbicides such as paraquat, which was only recently banned in Malaysia.

Currently women make up nearly half the workforce on plantations where spraying a variety of herbicides is an integral part of plantation work. The reason why plantation companies employ women as herbicide sprayers is because women are readily available since they are unable to find other jobs. They are also considered timid, docile and compliant workers, as they do not question management and are easy to manipulate. Decades ago, when only men were employed as sprayers, they were not as obliging and did not do as good a job as women do.

### Risk factors

Most women on the plantations were born and raised there, as were their parents and grandparents. The environment on the plantation is hardly conducive to attaining a decent education or acquiring the critical skills needed in more specialized sectors of the economy. Studies have shown that women in poor rural households attain lower levels of education.<sup>7</sup> This fact added to the prevailing poverty places women on plantations in a very vulnerable position.

Lack of education, age and social exclusion therefore diminish women's opportunities and limit their possibilities for joining mainstream jobs in the industrial and service sector. Since most companies provide housing for their workers, this is a further incentive for women to continue living on the plantation.

1 Sulochana Nair, Dr, Poverty in the New Millennium - Challenges for Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur: University Malaysia, 2000.

2 Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department. "Malaysia: 30 Years of Poverty Reduction, Growth and Racial Harmony", Presented at Shanghai Poverty Conference- Scaling Up Poverty, 12 March 2004 in Shanghai, China.

3 Ibid.

4 Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department. Mid-Term Review of the Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001-2005, 2003, p. 60.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid, p. 98.

7 Tan, PC and NP Tey. Prevalence and Profile of Female Household Heads, Ministry of National Unity and Social Development and National Population and Family Development Board. Kuala Lumpur, 1993.



Nowadays many plantations have started employing migrant workers to carry out this hazardous job. The number of foreign workers, mainly men, employed in the agriculture sector has increased from 175,834 in 2000 to 327,490 in 2003.<sup>8</sup> All things being equal, women are nevertheless more affected than men.

### Poisoning

In 2004, CAP conducted a study of 11 oil palm plantations located in the northern states of Malaysia. The study focused on women herbicide sprayers, their working conditions and the consequent health impacts.<sup>9</sup>

Work on an oil palm plantation is back-breaking and hazardous. Women herbicide sprayers are expected to carry an 18-litre (4-gallon) drum containing herbicide and complete 14 to 16 rounds of spraying per day. Tractor spraying is also conducted on some plantations, where big drums of herbicide are placed on both sides of the tractor. Two women carry the pumps and spray as the tractor moves.

In either case, the sprayers themselves are engulfed in a fine mist of herbicide. Recommended safety measures are rarely employed. The use of protective masks, gloves and boots is often impractical owing to the hot and humid tropical climate. Due to the widespread lack of awareness of the hazards of herbicides, inhalation and skin absorption are the major causes of occupational poisoning cases among women sprayers.

On the plantations, management decides which pesticides or herbicides to use as well as their frequency of application. The majority of workers interviewed did not even know what herbicides they were using while others identified them only by colour or odour. The women obligingly carried out their supervisors' instructions on proportions and mixing of the herbicides. Most of the women were not even aware of the toxicity of the chemicals and the dangers that they were being exposed to.

The only protection women wear are safety boots and maybe a handkerchief or towel to cover their mouth and nose. The women complain that management is reluctant to replace worn personal protective equipment and demand that workers show them the damaged equipment. Even so, they only replace equipment periodically. Most women must purchase their own safety boots since they cannot get replacement for torn boots from their employers. Others do not replace their boots since they cannot afford to do so.

<sup>8</sup> Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, 2003, op cit, p. 171.

<sup>9</sup> Consumers' Association of Penang. Survey Report on Women Herbicide Sprayers in Oil Palm Plantation: Working Conditions and Health Impact. 2004.

### Miserable wages

The women work six days a week on a rotational basis and receive menial wages in return for their work. Earning their full weekly wage usually involves working long hours in the blazing sun. Furthermore, fear of losing their job makes them put up with unpleasant conditions including offensive remarks and undue pressure, while at times being subject to sexual harassment.

Workers are paid between MYR 15 to MYR 18 (USD 3.95 to USD 4.75) per day. Each herbicide sprayer earns MYR 350 to 450 (USD 92 to 118) per month. Some plantation companies give an extra MYR 2 (about USD 0.50) per day to herbicide sprayers. This is a clear indication that danger lurks in herbicide spraying compared to other work. On some plantations, electricity and water bills are deducted from salaries.

The survey results found that women sprayers are often not in good health. They suffer from acute and chronic ailments related to their work. Most plantations provide medical facilities for their workers although most of the time these facilities are inadequate and ineffective. If the women suffer from major illnesses that the plantation paramedic cannot treat, they must visit a medical doctor in the nearest town. Ill health affects productivity directly, so many illnesses go unreported.

Another disturbing revelation is that, as they are not provided with protective equipment, workers who are employed on a contractual basis work in worse conditions and are expected to manipulate more potent and harmful herbicides, including monosodium glutamate, and do not have medical coverage.

### Limited options

Why do the women remain on the plantations despite the poverty they experience and exposure to poisons? During the 1980's many plantations replaced rubber trees with oil palms due to higher economic returns. Therefore women plantation workers who were previously skilled rubber tappers lost their source of livelihood. Some of the women had tapped rubber all of their working-life and were therefore left in a difficult employment situation. In order not to be evicted from the plantation, the women had no choice but accept any job offered by management. Hence the women became herbicide sprayers even though it was not their choice of work.

As palm oil commodity prices increase in coming years, we can expect Malaysian production also to increase since it is one of the country's major crops. This will further intensify women's involvement in the sector. Women will find it increasingly difficult to escape this vicious cycle of poverty and their increasingly poor health will be the price they pay.

Only those with the determination and will-power to leave the plantation sector at any cost can break away from poverty. But for some families who leave the plantation, whether of their own accord or when plantations are converted for other development projects, poverty will still be a way of life. These families usually migrate to urban areas, only to join the ranks of the urban poor who live in squatter settlements. These displaced workers with low levels of education and skills have to compete with other marginalized groups, including foreign workers, for low-paying jobs.

### There is still work to be done

The immediate challenge for poverty reduction in Malaysia is to raise the incomes of the poorest of the poor. In a multi-racial nation with widely and well-established disparity in economic opportunities and incomes, the Government must intervene to ensure fairer distribution of opportunities and incomes among all racial and social groups.

It is difficult to break out of a poverty situation and education is one of the means by which families on plantations can escape poverty. For this reason, there is a need for policy and programme interventions to assist and encourage the children of plantation workers to pursue their education.

To conclude, the process and policy of development in Malaysia should focus on lower income groups - including women on plantations - in order to raise their income and social status, both in absolute and relative terms. This is the most effective means of achieving social justice, which is the foundation for genuine development. ■



## ■ MALTA

# Low participation of women in the formal economy



Women in Malta still lag behind in gender empowerment and economic participation. Only 32% are economically active and in general work in traditionally female jobs. Women are also poorly represented in the power structure. Although new laws have been enacted to protect women's rights, the country has no specific legislation on domestic violence.

### Kopin

Joseph M. Sammut

Malta is an archipelago in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea just south of Sicily. The country is one of the smallest in Europe, with a population of almost 400,000 and a high population density of 1,249 people per square kilometre. It gained independence from Britain in 1964 and became a Republic in 1974. In May 2004 Malta joined the European Union. Roman Catholicism is the official religion taught in all schools. Divorce is not permitted but can be obtained abroad and recognized in the country. Abortion is illegal.

The Constitution of Malta guarantees equal access to housing, employment, education and cultural, civil and political rights for men and women. Successive governments have ratified the different UN conventions relating to these themes, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1991. Reservations were entered to Articles 11, 13, 15 and 16 of the CEDAW at the time of ratification but they were later superseded by subsequent legislative changes. Yet the CEDAW was not incorporated into domestic law and the Maltese Courts cannot directly enforce its provisions. However the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms was integrated into domestic law in 1987, giving citizens the right to individually petition the European Court of Human Rights once domestic remedies had been exhausted.

### Changes after Beijing

In 1995, the Government participated in the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing and committed itself to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. A number of laws were enacted to protect the rights of women and give support to articles in the Convention, including the Employment and Industrial Relations Act of 2002 and the Equality for Men and Women Act of 2003. Family legislation was amended in 1993 to grant both spouses equal rights and responsibilities in marriage, including joint responsibility for children and the right to jointly administer property acquired during the marriage. Legislation regulating jury service, passport regulations, citizenship, income tax and social security have been amended to remove discriminatory provisions al-

though social security remains discriminatory towards women. The Constitutional Court - the final appellate court of the land - was instrumental in providing redress for human rights grievances. The Family Court was established in 2003.

The State machinery for the advancement of women is comprised of the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity and the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality for Men and Women. The first is responsible for equality, social, family and child policies, social security, and social housing. The National Commission and related departments play an active role in developing and monitoring policies and raising public awareness on gender equality, and collaborate and consult with various bodies including trade unions and women's non-governmental organizations. Women are equal in family matters and the Government has taken steps to provide gender-neutral legislation and redress in the courts for sexual discrimination. Lack of personnel makes it very difficult to follow all the cases brought forward. The Commission is also supposed to start its own initiative investigations in certain fields to identify direct and indirect discriminatory practices and policies, but it needs full-time personnel and adequate funding to do so.

### The gender gap

In the last decade women in Malta have begun to dominate the educational sphere. Today, female students outnumber their male counterparts at university and there was an increase in the number of female graduates in traditionally male professions such as law, medicine, information technologies, engineering, and management. Although women outnumber men in academic qualifications, they are still under-represented in managerial and decision-making positions. Cultural and traditional employment patterns often direct women to traditional female jobs such as teaching or nursing, into jobs in family-owned businesses, or into selected professions such as academia or medicine. In general women earn less than their male counterparts.

Although equality improved considerably with regards to human, civil and social rights between both sexes, women still lag behind in gender-related issues such as gender empowerment and economic participation. Women represent 50.45% of the population, but they are poorly represented in the power structure and in the economic sphere:

- Women comprise 9.2% of members of Parliament. Three women are in the Cabinet, two are ministers and the one is the Secretary of Parliament. In regional government, women comprise up to 16% of Local Councils (70 out of 438 councillors in 2005).<sup>1</sup>
- Positions in the Judiciary are overwhelmingly held by men. The Chief Justice and judges (17) are all men. In the Judiciary in 2005 there are only 3 women represented at the magistrate level from a bench of 17 magistrates.
- Women make up 13.55% of the total number of officers in the top five levels of the Public Service (90 out of 664 officers). In 2003, the highest 30 positions were occupied solely by men.<sup>2</sup> The first and only female Permanent Secretary was appointed during 2004.
- Women are a minority on government boards and committees. They hold 348 (18%) positions out of a total of 1,934. The highest gender balance in the composition of these boards and committees lies within the Ministry of Health (37.4%), the Ministry of Social Policy (25.9%) and the Ministry of Education (25.8). The lowest is found within the Ministry of Transport and Communication (4.2%) and Resources and Infrastructure (6.0%). The gender composition of board and committee membership tends to reflect the gender segregation of the labour market whereby women are concentrated in caregiving professions.<sup>3</sup>
- Women constitute 36.7% of gainfully occupied workers and 13.29% of the self-employed. In 2004, registered unemployed women represented 10.2% of the labour force. Between 55% and 60% of unemployed women and around 38% of unemployed men are under the age of 30.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Local Council Elections in three different phases covering all localities in Malta: 2003 - M: 125, F: 34; 2004 - M: 121, F: 19; 2005 - M: 122, F: 17.

<sup>2</sup> Management and Personnel Office (MPO). *Annual Report 2003*. Malta, December 2003; Department for Women in Society Ministry for Social Policy. *Annual Report 2003*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> National Statistics Office (NSO). *Labour Force Survey*, July-September 2004.





- Women in part-time employment as their main occupation amount to 67.63% of the workers in this category. Married women comprise 77.5% of workers in part-time employment, compared to 22.5% of married men. In 2003, single women constituted 47% of single part-time workers.<sup>5</sup>
- Women are overtaking men in education. In 2003, the overall university population was made up of 56% women and 44% men.<sup>6</sup> The female students are more likely to be found in courses which will lead to pink-collar occupations,<sup>7</sup> which are the lowest paid jobs in the professions.
- In 2003-2004, women made up 1.9% of university professors, 6.8% of associate professors and 15.0% of senior lecturers at the University of Malta.<sup>8</sup>

Only 32% of women are economically active, compared to 76% of men.

The female unemployment rate is 7.6% compared to 6.4% for men and Maltese women earn 80.08% of what men earn on an hourly basis.<sup>9</sup>

The narrowing of the gender gap in education among young adults is yet to be accompanied by overall equal participation in the labour market, equal access to professional and managerial jobs and the corresponding equality of income levels between the sexes. Maltese society is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. The Church strongly promotes the role of motherhood and prioritizes the upbringing of the children. As a result, women leave the labour force to have children. This situation is likely to change, however, with a younger and more educated generation of females. Nevertheless, there is a need for childcare facilities and better fiscal measures to encourage women's participation in the formal economy.<sup>10</sup>

The *Human Development Report 2004* of the United Nations Development Programme ranks Malta 31<sup>st</sup> on the Human Development Index and 53<sup>rd</sup> (out of 147 nations) according to the Gender Empowerment Measure.<sup>11</sup> The latter ranking reflects the lack of economic and political participation by women and their resulting exclusion from decision-making in these areas.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> NSO. "Official Statistics of Malta. Education Statistics 2003", 2005, [www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document\\_file.aspx?id=641](http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=641)

<sup>7</sup> Generally low status occupations such as clerical jobs.

<sup>8</sup> NSO (2005), *op cit.*

<sup>9</sup> NSO. "Structural, poverty and social exclusion indicators", December 2003, [www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document\\_file.aspx?id=426](http://www.nso.gov.mt/statdoc/document_file.aspx?id=426)

<sup>10</sup> Baldacchino, G. et al. *Factors affecting Women's Formal Participation in the Malta Labour Market: Results of a Research Project*. Workers' Participation Development Centre, University of Malta, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 2004*, 2004.

Malta has no specific laws addressing domestic violence and this crime falls under the criminal code requiring complaint from the injured party. A new bill circulating since March 2000 has not been enacted. In the last seven years, more than 96% of the users of the Domestic Violence Service were female. Statistics on domestic violence may only be the tip of the iceberg. According to the Criminal Code rape is considered a crime under the title of "Crimes against the Peace and Honour of Families and against Morals" and not under the title of "Crimes of Violence". Domestic violence is dealt with in the Family Court. A special police unit and several voluntary organizations provide support to victims of domestic violence. Counselling and legal assistance and shelter is provided through governmental social welfare agencies. The Government and the Maltese Church, through its different agencies and voluntary organizations, collaborate to shelter women and children who might have become homeless for a variety of reasons.

### Poverty and social exclusion of women

The richest 20% of the population earns 4.5 times more than the poorest 20%<sup>12</sup> It is estimated that 14.9% of the population lives below the at-risk-of-poverty line. Lower educational achievement puts individuals at higher risk of falling below the line. More women (15.1%) than men (14.7%) live below the at-risk-of-poverty line in almost all age groups.<sup>13</sup> Single female households have less access to economic and other resources.

Social security in the form of universal social benefits ensures a decent standard of living for all citizens, even though people on social security lack indispensable household amenities. The family institution is still deeply rooted and closely knit in society. The family of origin is the main source of help for those who are sick or under stress, and to a lesser extent for those with mental health problems, financial difficulties, long-term illnesses, physical disabilities or alcohol abuse problems.

Malta has gone through rapid economic growth and social transition which has brought new forms of poverty primarily concerned with non-economic and the social dimensions of exclusion. The new poverty context is found in persistent structural inequalities in employment, environment, housing, and education, for example. It is also evident in the break-up of family networks and the social exclusion of minorities who do not conform to the predominant culture and behaviour for reasons of substance abuse, domestic violence, stress, or special needs.

<sup>12</sup> NSO. *Poverty and Social Inequality*. News Release No 84/2003, 9 June 2003.

<sup>13</sup> NSO (2003), *op cit.*

### Action is needed

The past decades have seen a number of social and legal achievements for women, which have contributed to greater female participation in society and the labour market. However many issues are yet to be resolved to achieve the full potential of female employment. The female activity rate is still low by European standards and women's employment is concentrated in specific sectors and levels. Women do not always enjoy comparable working conditions to men and they participate less in vocational training.

- Women are severely under-represented in the labour market in general and in senior and decision-making positions in particular. There is strong vertical and horizontal occupational segregation. Women are concentrated in part-time jobs and the wage gap between women and men is persistent. Part-time workers are less protected and have access to fewer entitlements. The Government must evaluate the situation and provide legal protection and entitlement to social benefits.
- The State must sustain measures to increase the representation of women in elected and appointed bodies in all areas of the public sector and in the Judiciary. It needs to empower women to achieve balanced representation of women and men in general and at high levels of decision-making in particular. There is a need to carry out leadership training programmes and raise awareness on women's participation in decision-making.
- It is necessary to provide better working opportunities for women so that they reach high paying jobs and it is necessary to work towards gender equality in pay, training, career development and childcare facilities. There is a lack of after-school care, which is a factor that discourages women from continuing their career in the labour market.
- The Government must research the current and future potential of women wanting to re-enter the labour market and design a policy for this purpose.
- The Government must adopt legislation on domestic violence and start prosecuting offences.
- Changes in the Social Security Act are needed to ensure that women are not excluded from pension benefits for having to carry out family responsibilities.

Although Malta has seen significant progress towards greater women's emancipation, statistics show that the journey towards equality between the sexes is still a long one. Women cannot truly participate on an equal footing with men as long as they remain the sole or primary childcare givers and homemakers. Family responsibilities must be shared between the two sexes. Making gender equity a women's issue is doing a disservice to women. This issue should be portrayed as a human rights matter and one of social justice. ■

## MEXICO

# The challenge of inequality



The greatest development challenge facing Mexico is to bridge the inequality gap. The Government's report on the Millennium Development Goals recognizes that the goals achieved so far are not equitable when analyzing the population from a geographical, gender or ethnic group perspective. Nevertheless the federal authorities do not approach the fight against poverty from a human rights perspective and they have not incorporated the substantial contributions of citizen organizations.

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Mexico, a middle-income country in the most unequal region of the world, ranks high among other Latin American countries in terms of economic, social and gender inequity.<sup>2</sup> Twenty-four years after the ratification of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, 10 years after assuming important international commitments related to social development and gender equity<sup>3</sup> and five years after the Millennium Declaration and a commitment to abide by its objectives, inequality is Mexico's principal development challenge.

A group of civil organizations and networks undertook an alternative study in connection with the upcoming September 2005 plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration in order to contribute to the debate and the search for solutions. This report presents some of our ideas, concerns and proposals, together with comments on the Government's 2005 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Progress Report and some of its goals and targets (henceforward referred to as the official report).<sup>4</sup>

Even if the contents of the official report can and should be discussed, the document itself recognizes that "just by disaggregating the MDG follow-up information by geographical area, sex or ethnic group we obtain not only different levels of progress but also

results with wider gaps between them. Therefore, many of the achievements are not yet equitable; this shows that inequality and backwardness are prevalent as major issues in the development of Mexico."<sup>5</sup>

### MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

#### Target 1: Reduce poverty by half

In order to formulate public policies and programmes that foster social development and combat poverty, it is essential to use a multidimensional approach that defines poverty as the denial of human rights since poverty is a sustained and chronic deprivation of the capacity, options, security and power necessary to enjoy an adequate standard of living as well as other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.<sup>6</sup>

Unfortunately, this is not the approach of the "With You" (*Contigo*) Human Development and Social Strategy of President Fox's government (2001-2006). None of the programmes included in the poverty reduction strategy were designed from a human rights perspective and are therefore limited in scope. For example, the "Opportunities" (*Oportunidades*) Programme stresses the importance of strengthening human capital (capacity building) in health, education and nutrition-related areas. This approach, promoted by the multilateral banks, has proven to be inadequate in solving the vicious cycle of poverty.<sup>7</sup>

If the federal Government was to promote a social policy based on human rights, both the budget and public spending would be consistent with Article 2 of the CESCR, which regulates the adoption of measures up to the maximum of the available resources to the progressive fulfilment of the rights recognized in the Covenant.

Although the official report recognizes that social spending is the main instrument to combat poverty, and that resources for social programmes have increased, it is necessary to highlight two key aspects.

First, a closer look at the Federal Public Economic Accounts reveals a trend that disfavours social spending since not all of the allocated resources are being used. Conversely, an excessive use of resources is evident in programmes or by entities outside of the social spending area, as is the case of the Ministries of Economy and Public Credit, National Defence, Foreign Affairs and Government.<sup>8</sup>

For instance, the "With you" (*Contigo*) Strategy sector in charge of "creating jobs and income opportunities in marginalized regions and areas of the country" used only 96% of the resources allocated to it in 2003, which in turn were 22.3% less than those used in 2002.<sup>9</sup> This is the sector leaving the most resources untouched and its budget has been cut since the beginning of the present administration as a result. The Temporary Job Programme is one of the most affected by the allocation cuts. During 2003, it used 94% of the total resources assigned to it. However this amount is 54% less than its allocated resources in 2002. The number of positions created by the programme in 2003 was reduced by a similar proportion.

Meanwhile, the asset development sector - Programme on Savings, Subsidy and Credit for Progressive Housing (*Tu casa*) - has not seen its funding increase since 2002. In fact its resources show a downward trend. The explanation given by the Government in 2003 was that the executing institutions had not submitted a request or were not interested in being part of the programme. Considering that the population considers housing the main family asset and that many families are in need of a home, this statement is worrying.

### MDG 5: Improve maternal health

#### Target 6: Reduce maternal mortality

The official report does not study in depth how public health services are lagging behind and how this translates into inequity across sectors of the population and

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2 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)/United Nations Development Program (UNDP)/Instituto de Pesquisa Económica Aplicada. *Hacia el objetivo del Milenio de reducir la pobreza en América Latina y el Caribe*, 2003.

3 During the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

4 Government of the Republic. Human and Social Development Bureau. *Los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio en México: Informe de Avance 2005*. (Prepared jointly with the United Nations System in Mexico).

5 *Ibid*, p. 3.

6 UN Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee. Cuestiones sustantivas que se plantean en la aplicación del Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales: La Pobreza y el Pacto Internacional de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales. Declaration E/C.12/2001/10 approved by the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee on May 4, 2001, www.unhcr.ch

7 Sandoval Terán, Areli. *Estudio sobre estrategias de reducción de la pobreza en México*, DECA Equipo Pueblo; Social Watch Regional Network. *Pobreza y Sociedad Civil. Análisis y Desafíos desde la perspectiva de la Sociedad Civil en Centro América y México*. El Salvador: Asociación Intersectorial para el Desarrollo Económico y el Progreso, 2004, pp. 108-129.

8 The budget and social spending analysis presented in this report was prepared by FUNDAR researchers (www.fundar.org.mx).

9 Ministry of Economy and Public Credit. *Cuenta de la Hacienda Pública Federal 2003, Resultados Generales, Desarrollo Social y Humano*. p. 205.



between the different states. The "Start life off equal" (*Arranque parejo en la vida*) Programme focuses resources and action on high-risk pregnancies, even though maternal death takes place mostly during unpredictable obstetric emergencies. Another aspect of the programme that should be revised is the collection of payments to cover costs. Although it has been established that the poorest 10% will be exempt from payment, the cost of assistance during childbirth, plus transportation and accommodation, is unaffordable for poor women, especially when they live in remote areas. The programme foresees the construction of inns in the southern states of Chiapas, Guerrero and Oaxaca, but the implementation has been minimal.

## MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

### Target 7: Combat HIV/AIDS

The official report confirms that the struggle against HIV/AIDS is a national priority and assures that the resources allocated to prevention and control programmes in 2004 are 14 times greater than those allocated in 2000. However, this increase was primarily due to the acquisition of anti-retroviral drugs. Data from the National HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Centre indicates that in 2002 the expenditure by local governments was 43 times greater than the amount invested for that purpose in 1999, while spending on condoms was only 4.6 times more than 1999 figures.<sup>10</sup> It is precisely this disparity between treatment and prevention resources that makes the strategy inconsistent with the discourse.

In Mexico, a meagre 13% of the prevention expenses are geared to risk populations. For example only 10% of condom expenses are geared to men who have sex with other men.<sup>11</sup> If prevention efforts are not enhanced, especially with regard to sexual transmission and higher risk groups, will Mexico will reach a point where there will be insufficient resources to offer treatment and medicine to all people living with HIV/AIDS.

## MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

### Target 10: Safe drinking water and sanitation

According to the official report, between 1990 and 2003 there were improvements in water supply and sanitation coverage and the number of people with piped water and connections to public sewerage systems or septic tanks increased.<sup>12</sup> However the report omits the problem of regional differences in water availability, access and quality.

The Federal District (DF) has a human development index of 0.891 which is higher than the other 31 federal states and superior to the national mean of

0.802.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless water access inequality is alarming in the DF. In the Iztapalapa Delegation - home to two million people accounting for approximately 20% of the DF population - over 600,000 people do not have piped water on a daily basis and they obtain their water on an rotating system three times a week.<sup>14</sup> Some DF neighbourhoods get their water once every fortnight while other areas of the city are free to consume over 350 litres a day per inhabitant.<sup>15</sup>

### Target 11: Improve the living standards of those with poor housing conditions

The official report considers urban poverty to be "mostly moderate or asset-related".<sup>16</sup> The asset poverty concept excludes other options relative to rental, use, co-operative ownership and other tenure modalities whose security must also be recognized. The report fails to mention that there is lack of public policies and programmes offering cheap, legal, accessible and affordable housing options for people living in poverty and extreme poverty. Conversely, the report appears to blame the poor for the tenure and housing irregularity problems without clearly presenting the reasons for the problem or highlighting the lack of a human rights perspective in housing policy.

## MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development

### Target 13: Needs of the less developed countries

The official report describes some measures relative to trade, international cooperation and human development, and mentions the Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP) which covers nine states in the south and south-eastern region of Mexico and seven Central American countries and is the 2001 Mexican proposal to Central America for regional economic and social development.<sup>17</sup> Since the Meso-American Human Development Initiative in 2003, the Government has decided to reorient and build on this initiative for the fulfilment of the MDGs. However it has not mustered sufficient resources for the project or support from the communities that guarantee its feasibility. Between 2001 and 2004, most of the PPP's resources were invested in the Highway Integration, Energy Integration, Promotion of Tourism, Trade Promotion and Integration of Telecommunications initiatives while human and sustainable development initiatives were allocated more limited funds.<sup>18</sup>

13 UNDP. *Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano México 2002 and Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano México 2004*.

14 Federal District Environmental and Land Use Management Bureau, [www.paot.org.mx](http://www.paot.org.mx)

15 Federal District Human Rights Commission. "Concluye el Foro Intersectorial sobre el Derecho al Agua en la Ciudad de México", Press release N° 27/2005, March 13, 2005, [www.cdhdof.org.mx](http://www.cdhdof.org.mx) and [www.derechoalagua.org](http://www.derechoalagua.org)

16 Government of the Republic, *op cit*, p. 109.

17 Delaplace, Domitille. "Reflexiones sobre el Plan Puebla Panamá (PPP) para el V Foro Social Mundial". DECA Equipo Pueblo, mimeo, Mexico, January 2005.

18 Alianza Mexicana por la Autodeterminación de los Pueblos. "Violación a los Derechos Económicos, Sociales, Culturales y Ambientales (DESCA) por el Plan Puebla-Panamá", unpublished, Mexico, 2004.

The Mexican Government should not disregard the strong criticism and resistance of PPP opponents. These include not only the hundreds of civil organizations in Mexico and the region but also the peasant and indigenous communities, who have not been informed or consulted on infrastructure mega-projects and have been deprived of their lands by deceit and threats.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusions

The structural problem of Mexico's inequality calls for the right combination of legal measures and public policies (social, economic, labour, environmental, farming, etc.) to redistribute income and allocate budgetary resources. These solutions must clearly incorporate human rights, gender and sustainability perspectives. This is a must in order to go beyond the MDGs and it reinforces the need to "establish additional commitments that are more in line with the reality of the country", as stated by the Government in its report.

The measures must be defined in the framework of an in-depth, comprehensive and participatory discussion on the development model, priorities and alternatives. In his speech during the presentation of the 2005 MDG Progress Report in April 2005, President Fox underlined that the main purpose of the publication was "to trigger a national debate that leads to the construction of a long-term development perspective, the consolidation of democratic governance and the strengthening of citizenship. The three levels of government (municipal, state and federal) must participate in this debate along with legislators, the academic sector, the private initiative, international organizations and civil society in general."<sup>20</sup>

Civil society has permanently contributed proposals to this end. For example, during the National Programme on Human Rights (NPHR) formulation process in 2004, we suggested a review of the existing social programmes and their reorientation to meet the obligations of the State outlined in the CDESCR: appropriate measures, allocation of maximum resources, progressiveness, no discrimination, and comprehensive rights.

However the proposals relative to economic, social and cultural rights were not incorporated into the NPHR, revealing a lack of vision on the part of the Government for human rights based social and economic development and reducing the potential of social policies to contribute fully to the country's development. It will be necessary to set up adequate and effective mechanisms for institutional consultation, dialogue, priority identification, appropriate measures definition, correct decision-making and follow-up processes. In the meantime, the democratic planning of development as foreseen in Article 26 of the Constitution will not be a reality in Mexico. ■

19 International Peace Brigades, "Paquete de Información Quincenal sobre México" N° 85, 10 - 23 November 2003, [www.peacebrigades.org/mexico](http://www.peacebrigades.org/mexico)

20 Government of the Republic, *op cit*, p. 4.

## MOROCCO

# Inequity in the economic and private spheres



Morocco has seen some institutional advances in the promotion of the situation of women but there has been no progress in economic or social rights, and there are still great disparities between the urban and rural parts of the country. Equality and autonomy for women must be promoted not only in public life but in the private sphere as well since the traditional role of women has always been restricted to procreation and domestic chores.

### Espace Associatif

El Hassan Sayouty

In Morocco over the last ten years there has been some improvement in civil, political and cultural rights. Civil rights organizations have been pressuring the Government to recognize and correct the errors of the past. A new Family Code has been promulgated, and this is one of the main victories of women's rights groups. However there has not been any significant progress in the area of economic and social rights in recent years. In fact the country has lost some ground. Proof of this is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index, in which Morocco slipped from the 117<sup>th</sup> position in 1995 to 126<sup>th</sup> in 1999, then to 123<sup>rd</sup> in 2002, and rose to 126<sup>th</sup> again in 2003.<sup>1</sup>

In its 2000-2004 social development strategy to fight against poverty and exclusion the Government promised to make an effort to remedy this,<sup>2</sup> but results have not met expectations. Urban areas are still better off than rural areas (74% of poor people live in rural areas) and men are better off than women. These inequalities are worsening.

In Moroccan culture the man's traditional role is to provide for the family's economic needs and the women's role has always been limited to woman's procreation and to domestic chores. These gender relations are deeply rooted in social life, so policies, action and mobilizations to promote equality and autonomy have to be geared not only to the professional environment and the job market but also to private life and the family. It is difficult to bring about this kind of change from the political sphere.

### Human rights at the crossroads

In 2004 the organization Human Rights Watch published a report entitled *Moroc: droits humains à la croisée des chemins* ("Morocco: Human Rights at the Crossroads") which chronicled what has been achieved in this area but which also stressed that the country has regressed in some areas recently.

1 Espace Associatif and Droit et Démocratie. *Développement démocratique et action associative au Maroc, éléments d'analyse et axes d'intervention*. Canada, 2004.

2 Morocco is a democratic parliamentary monarchy. King Sayyidi Muhammad VI ibn al-Hassan came to the throne in 1999, there has been a bicameral legislative since 1996, and since 2002 Driss Jettou has been Prime Minister.

In the last 10 years a series of political and institutional reforms to improve civil and political rights have been implemented:

- A consultative human rights council was set up in 1990, and was re-structured in 2002.
- A Human Rights Ministry was set up in 1993, but under the last Government it was dissolved.
- Political prisoners were released and people in exile were allowed back into the country in 1991, 1993, 1994 and 1999.
- A bicameral legislature was formed in 1996, and in 1998 an alternating government was established.
- In 2001 the Royal Amazigh (Berber) Cultural Institute was founded.
- Positive discrimination in favour of women has been initiated: 10.8% of elected representatives were women in 2002.
- In 2004 Parliament promulgated the new Family Code.
- In 2004 an Agency of Equity and Reconciliation (IER) was set up to investigate violations of human rights that took place during the so-called Years of Lead.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of all this, the country has not escaped the worldwide erosion of rights and civil liberties in the name of the fight against terrorism following the attacks of 11 September 2001. Morocco also passed anti-terrorist legislation in the wake of attacks in Casablanca in May 2003.<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Watch emphasizes the positive aspects of the IER, highlights the errors and excesses committed with impunity under cover of the legislation against terrorism, and recognizes that it is important for the Judiciary to be reformed and independent.

### Gender equity ten years after Beijing

In March 1998 the Moroccan Government started work on a plan of action to integrate women into

development. This was in line with its national and international commitments, above all those made at the Platform of Action of the IV World Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995. The plan was supported by NGOs, and it was a demonstration of the Government's will to promote women's rights and to bring the most disadvantaged sectors fully into the development process.<sup>5</sup> However, the very Government which made the plan did not adopt it, and simply ignored pressure from a considerable social movement demanding its implementation.

Nevertheless, some changes have come about thanks to the Platform of Action that was set at the Beijing Conference:

- A Secretariat of State for the Family, Women, Children and the Disabled was created, dependent on the Ministry of Social Development. Its main function is to promote and coordinate policies and interventions directed at women. This objective corresponds to Paragraph 201 of the Beijing Platform.
- The main ministerial departments have now included a gender approach in their agenda with the aim to guarantee sectorial follow-up of policies directed at women.
- A project was set in motion to bring the gender perspective into the various statistical indicators produced by the Statistics Board, in accordance with UNDP and United Nations Development Fund for Women guidelines.
- A Faculty of Women and Development has been set up at the University of Mohammed V in Rabat, and doctorate courses are offered in this subject.
- On the national lists of candidates for elections to the legislature, 10% of the places are reserved for women.
- The makeup of the Consultative Council for Human Rights was modified after 14 NGOs were admitted: it was widened to include 47 members, and instead of only one woman there are now seven.
- In January 2004 the two parliamentary chambers passed a new Family Code which amounted to some measure of progress as

3 A period of political and social repression that began at the start of the 1970s after an upsurge of students' movements, workers' strikes and various attempted military coups. King Hassan II put an end to this in 1975 with the so-called Green March to occupy a sector of the Sahara that was still in the hands of Spanish colonialists, thus silencing the forces of the left.

4 Human Rights Watch, *op cit*.

5 Moroccan Democratic Women's Association (ADFM). *Convention CEDAW, Rapport parallèle*. 2003.

regards the principles of equality between men and women, polygamy, justice, and the protection of the rights of children.<sup>6</sup>

- Morocco (along with Cambodia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Peru) was chosen as a pilot country for the 2005 report on the introduction of a gender perspective into the evaluation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

Women's rights associations and other organizations in Moroccan civil society have taken initiatives to improve conditions for women and to strengthen their position in society, with special attention to the most vulnerable women.<sup>7</sup> This has yielded some positive results including the following:

- Various centres giving legal information and guidance for women have been inaugurated.
- Campaigns have been run to raise awareness about equality, combat violence and promote human rights, tolerance and citizenship.
- There were contributions for follow-up on the application of the new Family Code.
- Evaluation of the impact of reforms and action to improve women's civil rights and to fight against the feminization of poverty and precarious living conditions.
- There was a debate about the institutionalization of quotas for women in political participation.
- Progress was made in eliminating ambiguities between the role of the State and that of NGOs in satisfying women's rights.
- Consensus has been reached on the need to bring women into the development process as a whole, creating a democratic perspective not only of economic and social rights but also of human rights in general.

### The feminization of poverty and vulnerability

In recent years the Government, working alongside international financial bodies, has announced diverse programmes for development and to combat poverty.<sup>8</sup> It also reaffirmed that 55% of the 2005 State budget would go to social projects.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, poverty in Morocco is still more widespread and serious than in other countries with a similar level of income.

Until the results from the September 2004 census carried out by the High Commissioner for Planning (ACP) are released, the latest available data about poverty are from the 1998-1999 Household National Living Standard Survey (ENNVH).<sup>10</sup> In June

2004 the ACP published a letter about poverty that was written jointly with the World Bank.<sup>11</sup>

There is more poverty in rural areas.<sup>12</sup> In 1990-1991 the percentage of poor people in the rural areas was much higher than in urban areas (12% to 7.6% respectively), and in 1998-1999 the figures were 27% to 18% respectively.

The relative poverty thresholds used for the 1998-1999<sup>13</sup> ENNVH survey are defined as an annual income of MAD 3,922 (USD 451) in urban areas and MAD 3,037 (USD 349) in the rural areas.

Morocco has 30 million inhabitants, of these 6 million are poor, and 74% of the poor live in rural areas. Added to this, a significant number of people are living on incomes below MAD 4,500 (USD 517) per year, which means they are vulnerable and they could sink into poverty and a precarious situation at any time. This sector represents 43% of the total population and includes 33% of urban inhabitants and 55% of those in rural areas. This general situation should be borne in mind when analyzing the feminization of poverty and when designing policies to prevent it and to reduce social inequality.<sup>14</sup>

About half of Morocco's population are illiterate and more than 65% of this total are women. In rural areas 73% of women are illiterate, and the figure for urban areas is 46%. The percentage of people over 10 years of age who cannot read or write increased from 45.3% in 1994 to 51.7% in 1998.

In the area of health services, again there are great differences between rural and urban areas. Morocco has 46 doctors per 100,000 people but 44% of these live in just two cities: Casablanca and Rabat. In the countryside the rate of maternal mortality is 307 per 100,000 live births but in urban centres it is 125 per 100,000 live births, and the differences between the rural and urban rates of infant and child mortality are also very great.

According to the latest ACP report, unemployment increased from 11.9% in 2003 to 12.5% in 2004. In the countryside the rise was from 3.2% to 4.1%, and in cities from 19.6% to 19.8%. Overall there was a slight decrease in the number of unemployed men, but the percentage of women out of work rose from 12.2% to 14.2%. In the country as a whole unemployment among the active female population increased from 28.4% to 33.2%, therefore the growth in unemployment among the active population (85.3%) is explained by the increase in unemployment among women.<sup>15</sup>

A survey carried out by the Statistics Board in 2001<sup>16</sup> showed that about 52.9% of people over 15 years of age are economically active, and of these some three quarters are men and one-quarter women. Women tend to work in jobs that are lower paid, and this makes them more vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion.

The inequalities between men and women in the area of poverty can be approached from two angles: on the one hand there is monetary inequality (differences in income or expenses), and on the other hand there is the satisfaction of basic needs - food, housing, health and education - which is a qualitative concept of poverty.

The monetary focus, and data from the 1998-1999 ENNVH survey, suggest that poverty affects men and women almost to the same extent: 18.9% of men are poor and 19.1% of women are poor. In rural areas 27.1% of men and 27.2% of women are poor. These data would seem to indicate that, when it comes to poverty, there are no noteworthy differences between men and women. However, this panorama changes when age and marital status are taken into account because when these two variables are included in the calculations it emerges that the likelihood of being poor and of remaining poor is far greater for women than for men. In the 35 to 44 age bracket there are far more females who are poor, and this applies particularly to women who are single, widowed or divorced. In many cases these women did not work before becoming divorced or widowed, and they suddenly find themselves in a precarious situation. Sometimes a woman is forced to leave the family home and hand it over to her husband's relatives, who are his heirs.

Differences also appear when poverty is analyzed according to the sex of the head of the household: in urban areas 16.9% of poor households have female heads but in rural areas the figure is only 5% because, outside the cities, there are still networks of solidarity and support. Poor households with female heads tend to be big (five to eight children) compared to those in which the head is a man. Under these circumstances women are unable to provide adequate schooling, health services, food or housing for their children, and thus poverty is passed on to the next generation and they are obliged into work in the informal sector.

Employment legislation offers men and women the same possibilities in employment and an increasing number of women are entering into the labour market. In spite of this the market is still dominated by men, and in all the different categories women's unemployment is higher. What is needed is action on a worldwide scale to bring about a general improvement in the situation of women, particularly in the job market, so as to be able to fight against the stereotyped roles that are assigned to men and women in society as a whole. ■

5 Moroccan Democratic Women's Association (ADFM). *Convention CEDAW, Rapport parallèle*. 2003.

6 United Nations Development Programme. *Rapport de développement humain dans le monde arabe*. 2004.

7 ADFM, *op cit*.

8 *Rapport national sur les Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement*. 2003.

9 Presentation of the "Plan for Social and Territorial Development", Rabat, April 2005.

10 Statistics Board. *National Survey of the Level of Life in Households 1998-1999*.

11 High Commission for Planning. *La carte de la pauvreté communale*, June 2004.

12 World Bank. *Rapport sur la pauvreté: comprendre les dimensions géographiques de la pauvreté pour en améliorer l'appréhension à travers les politiques publiques*. 2004.

13 Statistics Board, *op cit*.

14 Statistics Board. *Rapport de l'atelier: Femmes et hommes au Maroc: Analyse de la situation et évolution des écarts dans une perspective du genre*. March 2003.

15 Higher Committee for Population. *Population et Développement au Maroc: dix ans après la Conférence Internationale sur la Population et le Développement (Cairo, 1994)*. 2004.

16 Statistics Board. *Annuaire Statistique 2001*.

## ■ MOZAMBIQUE

### Extreme need



With only three decades of independence, 16 years of a war that until 1992 devastated the country and indicators that point to it as one of the most disadvantaged countries in the world, the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals is urgent in Mozambique. Transparent governance will be essential in this effort.

#### Direitos Humanos e Desenvolvimento Comunitário

Custódio Dumas

In 2005 Mozambique celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a country independent from Portuguese colonial rule. Its population surpasses 19.4 million<sup>1</sup> and is composed of numerous ethnic groups, originating from Bantu stock. The urban population is mainly Christian or Muslim and in the north the latter are more prevalent.

In 2004 the country enacted a new Constitution which substitutes the earlier 1990 Constitution. The most important framework for these two constitutions are the principles of a multi-party system and freedom of expression allowing those with diverse opinions to participate in the construction of democracy. These principles were absent from the country's first Constitution, enacted under the influence of Marxist ideology in 1975, the year of national independence.<sup>2</sup>

The new Constitution expands the guarantees for full respect of citizen's rights and freedoms creating more sovereign state agencies and mechanisms for application of these guarantees (Articles 56, 73 and 133).<sup>3</sup>

#### One of the least developed countries in the world

Mozambique is one of the least developed countries in the world. According to the Human Development Index it ranks 171st in a total of 177 countries, with a value of 0.354.<sup>4</sup>

1 National Statistics Institute (INE). "O País", 19 June 2005, [www.ine.gov.mz/o\\_pais](http://www.ine.gov.mz/o_pais)

2 In 1975 the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) declared independence and two years later adopted a Marxist-Leninist ideological orientation. In 1990 the Government started negotiations with the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), favoured by that year's constitution that admitted a multi-party system. The UN intervened in 1992 offering a Peace Plan and in the 1994 elections FRELIMO's candidate and President since 1986, Joaquim Chissano, obtained more than 53% of the vote. Chissano was reelected in 1999. In 2005 Armando Guebuza, businessman from FRELIMO assumed the presidency.

3 [www.zambezia.co.mz/downloads/Constituicao2004](http://www.zambezia.co.mz/downloads/Constituicao2004)

4 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, 2004.

Around 70% of the inhabitants of suburban and rural areas have a domestic economy based on subsistence agriculture. Uncertainty about food availability is still a serious problem in many regions due to climate change. More than half of the population (53%) suffer from malnutrition and 26% of children under the age of five have low body weight for to their age.<sup>5</sup>

The proportion of people living below the national poverty line reaches 69.4%. Almost 38% of inhabitants live with less than a dollar a day and 78.4% with less than two dollars a day.<sup>6</sup>

Gross domestic product (GDP) growth was around 8% in 2002. Annual per capita yield was calculated at USD 230 in 2002.<sup>7</sup> The Government's budget is still extremely dependent on foreign aid.

To fight against extreme poverty the Government adopted as its central objective the Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty in 2001 with the aim to promote human development and create a favourable environment for rapid, inclusive and ample growth.<sup>8</sup> Its fundamental areas are education, health, agriculture and rural development; basic infrastructure, good governance and macroeconomic and financial management. This programme is totally unknown to the country's population, the majority of which is illiterate. It does not respond to reality and shows the State's negligence in its function as provider of basic services.

The new Government, elected at the end of 2004, committed itself to putting more emphasis on combating absolute poverty and on expanding the school system and the sewage system through participative governance. This is stated in the Government's Five Year Plan, but the Plan does not describe what activities are to be carried out.<sup>9</sup> For the time being, efforts to improve the population's quality of life through poverty reduction programmes

5 UNDP, *op cit*.

6 UNDP, *op cit*.

7 Embassy of the United States of America in Mozambique; Ministry of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour. "Report on Human Rights Practices", February 2004, [www.usembassy-maputo.gov.mz/direitos\\_human.htm](http://www.usembassy-maputo.gov.mz/direitos_human.htm)

8 Government of Mozambique. "Plano de acção para a redução da pobreza absoluta", 2001, [www.govmoz.gov.mz/parpa](http://www.govmoz.gov.mz/parpa)

9 Government Five Year Plan, 2004, [www.zambezia.co.mz/documentos/programa](http://www.zambezia.co.mz/documentos/programa)

have been hampered by high corruption levels, which have distanced the State even farther from its public objectives.

#### Vulnerability

In 2002, 44% of Mozambicans were under 15 years of age; dealing with problems which affect childhood is top priority.<sup>10</sup>

Gender-related questions also require special attention, as women constitute a very vulnerable majority sector. Poverty as well as illiteracy indicators are very high among women. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, in 2000, 60% of men but only 29% of women were literate.<sup>11</sup> Also in that year, maternal mortality was estimated at 1,000 per 100,000 live births.

Unemployment affects almost 60% of the active population<sup>12</sup> and is identified as one of the causes of poverty and criminality. Additional causes are the growing cost of living, the instability of the national currency (caused by very high inflation), the difficulty in accessing public services and drug use.

An unequal distribution of infrastructure, of qualified staff and of wealth favours the southern region at the expense of the northern region. For example, of the 300 lawyers in the country, less than 15 work in the north where almost 8 million people live.<sup>13</sup>

Citizen's lives are made difficult by the lack of food and road infrastructure, highways and bridges; in some regions, the nearest hospital or school is 20 to 50 kilometres away.<sup>14</sup>

More than 65% of the population have no access to safe drinking water and obtain water from rivers, pools and wells for daily use. Precarious sewage and lack of adequate housing make people vulnerable to natural disasters and epidemics, malaria being the principal and most frequent epidemic.

10 INE. "População", 19 June 2005, [www.ine.gov.mz/populacao](http://www.ine.gov.mz/populacao)

11 UNICEF. "Panorama Mozambique" [www.unicef.org/spanish/infobycountry/mozambique.html](http://www.unicef.org/spanish/infobycountry/mozambique.html)

12 [www.ine.gov/publicações](http://www.ine.gov/publicações)

13 Embassy of the United States of America in Mozambique, *op cit*.

14 Communitarian Development Organization. Investigation carried out in 2003 in the province of Manica, in the districts of Macossa and Tambara.



## Over half the population illiterate

Among people aged 15 and older, 53.5% were illiterate in 2002.<sup>15</sup> Only 4% of those who are literate have completed higher education and the majority live in Maputo.

Educational services are inefficient for Mozambicans, especially if they live in rural areas. The lack of school equipment, such as books, notebooks and pens; the shortage of teachers and insufficient school buildings make access to education almost impossible. Although basic primary school has been declared free of charge, payment has been demanded under the pretext of school maintenance and social action. Consequently, almost half of the school-aged children remain outside the national education system. In 2004, 60% of the children entered primary school, but only 52% of them reached fifth grade.<sup>16</sup>

## Insufficient attention to health

Attention to health is also deficient. According to UNDP in 2003 there were two doctors for every 100,000 inhabitants and in 2004 only 44% of births were attended by qualified personnel. In 2002, vaccination against measles covered 58% of children younger than one year, infant mortality reached 125 per 1,000 live births, and 197 per 1,000 for under-five mortality.

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS continues to be of great concern. The disease affects about 16% of the adult population<sup>17</sup> and life expectancy has dropped to 38.1 years. Were it not for the pandemic, Mozambicans would have a life expectancy of 64 years, according to global growth averages.

HIV/AIDS is the principal cause of death, after malaria. The number of orphaned children and the number of families supported by minors has been rising over the last ten years. In 2001 there were 418,000 orphans due to HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that one million children are directly affected by the disease.<sup>18</sup> The pandemic also causes the loss of already scarce technical staff. This creates an obstacle for development and is the cause of the gradual reduction, 0.3% to 1% of national per capita yield, in the period 1997-2010.<sup>19</sup>

According to government data, 58% of people living with HIV/AIDS are women and young people; and 75% of those infected between the ages of 15 and 24 are women.<sup>20</sup> Although 44% of women and 60% of men are aware of at least two methods for

preventing HIV/AIDS, only 6% of the women and 12% of the men stated that they had used condoms during their last sexual relationship.<sup>21</sup>

## High levels of corruption

After the signature in 1992 of the Rome Peace Accords between the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the Mozambique National Resistance, which put an end to almost 16 years of war, the country is experiencing a climate of peace that favours social, economic and cultural growth. Nonetheless, severe corruption in the public administration and the fragility of the judicial system are factors that impede socio-economic development.<sup>22</sup>

In the province of Inhambane, corruption has been identified as the chief obstacle to economic development. In this province businesses spend an average of 9.5% of their liquid income on illegal commissions.<sup>23</sup>

In 2003, the World Economic Forum's report on competitiveness in Africa placed Mozambique in 19<sup>th</sup> position among 21 countries for bribes in the area of importation and exportation, in 17<sup>th</sup> position for bribes to high government officials, and in 17<sup>th</sup> position for lack of independence of the judiciary.<sup>24</sup>

In October 2003, the National Assembly passed the Anticorruption Law intended to halt corruption in the government, the police force, hospitals and schools.

The fragility of the judicial system is mainly due to the lack of trained judges (the country has less than 200 judges), since many courts are run by staff without university training. At the same time, the number of public defence lawyers does not meet public demand.<sup>25</sup> There are two complementary systems of formal justice: civil and criminal law and military law. The Supreme Court of Justice administers the civil and criminal courts, while the Ministry of Defence administers the military courts.<sup>26</sup>

Due to the deep penetration of the FRELIMO into the courts and state apparatus, the abuse of power and the impunity of violators is making it increasingly difficult to combat corruption and bad governance.

Between 2000 and 2004 the crime rate rose sharply. Some police agents and public officials operate as members of or accomplices to organized crime. Corruption extends to all levels, and the police, badly paid and lacking in professionalism, extort street vendors and use violence and arbitrary detention to intimidate people, preventing them from reporting abuses.<sup>27</sup>

## The prison crisis

Conditions in prisons are extremely hard and life-threatening. Two National Services of Prisons (DNP), one under the authority of the Ministry of Justice and the other under the authority of the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, run prisons in all the provincial capitals. The DNPs also send some prisoners to a prison farm in Mabalane and others to industrial penitentiaries in Nampula and Maputo. Prisoners barely get one meal a day, composed of beans and cassava flour. It is customary for families to bring food to prisoners, though there is the occasional anecdote of guards demanding bribes in exchange for authorization to do so.<sup>28</sup>

A great number of deaths inside the prisons have been verified, mostly caused by disease. In 2005 some prisoners allegedly died of poisoning.

Prisons are extremely overpopulated, and generally house two to six times their maximum capacity. In 2001, the non-governmental National Association for the Support and Protection of Prisoners conducted an investigation into the country's prisons and verified that the Central Prison of Beira housed 705 inmates in a facility intended for 400; in Nampula there were 724 in a prison built for 100; and the Central Prison of Maputo, designed for 800 prisoners, housed 2,450. In contrast, the Machava Maximum Security Prison in Maputo, with a capacity for 600, held a considerably lower number of inmates. In prisons administered by the Ministry of Justice there were approximately 7,180 detainees.<sup>29</sup>

## Conclusion

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agreed upon within the context of the UN are a valid and essential tool for promoting socioeconomic advancement in a country like Mozambique, which faces great difficulties. The needs are extreme in all sectors and it is of the utmost urgency to deal with them. The MDGs are primary objectives that can only be reached if mechanisms are installed that will ensure accountability in the State apparatus, especially the judicial system. High levels of corruption in the public and private administration call for transparency as an urgent objective in the Mozambican reality.

It is hoped that the debt cancellation of 18 poor countries, including Mozambique, announced in July 2005 by the seven most industrialized countries and Russia (G8), will encourage greater investments in health and education, and in combating corruption. ■

15 UNDP, *op cit*.

16 *Ibid*.

17 INE, [www.ind.gov.mz/indpnud/](http://www.ind.gov.mz/indpnud/); 21 July 2005. Mozambique produces some 700 infections daily.

18 [www.stop.co.mz/news](http://www.stop.co.mz/news), 16 July 2005

19 National Office of Planning and Budgeting; Ministry of Planning and Finance; International Institute of Investigation in Nutritional Policy; Purdue University. "Poverty and welfare in Mozambique: second national evaluation 2004, March 2004, [www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000777/P880-Mozambique\\_P\\_042004.pdf](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000777/P880-Mozambique_P_042004.pdf)

20 Ministry of Health/INE. *Impacto Demográfico do HIV/Aids em Moçambique*. 2002.

21 *Ibid*.

22 "Policia e Justiça, os piores no Relatório sobre Corrupção e Governação", 3 June 2005, [www.stop.co.mz/news](http://www.stop.co.mz/news); the investigation of corruption and governance realized by *Austral Consultores* revealed that corruption in the public sector is serious or very serious, 34.9% consider the paying of bribes to be a common practice, 33.3% of businesses paid bribes to public services, 20% of users admit having paid bribes to public services, 12% of those interviewed declared having violated the rules of public contract building and 11% revealed having diverted funds.

23 Mosse, Marcelo. "Corrupção em Moçambique". 20 July 2005, [www.zambezia.co.mz/content/view/329/1/](http://www.zambezia.co.mz/content/view/329/1/)

24 World Economic Forum. "African Competitiveness Report 2003". 20 July 2005, [www.weforum.org/pdf/Global\\_Competitiveness\\_Reports/Reports/ACR\\_2003\\_2004/Index\\_Calculations.pdf](http://www.weforum.org/pdf/Global_Competitiveness_Reports/Reports/ACR_2003_2004/Index_Calculations.pdf)

25 Supremo Tribunal de Justiça (STJ). Novo presidente de STJ empossado a 7 de abril", [www.stj.pt/not\\_files/not02.html#08Abr2005](http://www.stj.pt/not_files/not02.html#08Abr2005)

26 *Ibid*

27 Mosse, Marcelo, *op cit*.

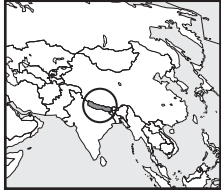
28 Embassy of the United States of America in Mozambique, *op cit*.

29 *bid*.



## ■ NEPAL

# The obstacles of tradition, war and poverty



The introduction of gender equity and human rights into public policy is just beginning in Nepal and is colliding with governance and implementation problems in a country with one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, high poverty and illiteracy levels, a strong patriarchal tradition and an armed conflict that compromises women's development.

### Rural Reconstruction Nepal

Mukunda Kattel / Rakhee Lohani / Ruth Segal

### The poverty trap

In 2004 Nepal ranked 140th out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index, 69th (among 95 developing countries) in the Human Poverty Index and 116th in the Gender-Related Development Index.<sup>1</sup> The country is a mosaic of over 61 ethnic groups who have their own distinct languages, cultures and lifestyles. Agriculture is the mainstay of the shrinking national economy, which additionally depends on foreign aid, remittances, tourism, the garment industry and the informal sector.

With an average per capita gross national income of USD 250, the majority of Nepalese are poor and caught in a patriarchal social system dominated by caste and class hierarchy.<sup>2</sup> Two of every five people live below the absolute poverty line and every other person in rural areas is poor. Very high unemployment and underemployment rates of 17.4% and 32.2% respectively<sup>3</sup> have kept people in the vicious cycle of poverty. The landless and land poor, *ex-Kamaiyas* (bonded labourers) and *Dalits* (untouchables) constitute the poorest groups.

Nepal's population has a high proportion of females of reproductive age (49.2%) with a high fertility rate (4.1 children per woman). The maternal mortality rate (740 per 100,000 live births) ranks among the highest in the world.<sup>4</sup> Around 6,000 women die each year from complications arising during pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>5</sup> Illiteracy affects 52.4% of adults (aged 15 and over), of which the striking majority are women.<sup>6</sup>

### Measuring poverty

In 2003-2004, the Central Bureau of Statistics conducted the Nepal Living Standard Survey following the World Bank's methodology. Results suggest that the poverty level fell to roughly 31% of the population in 2003-2004 from 42% in 1995-1996.<sup>7</sup>

However this announcement of a decline in the poverty rate is not encouraging. These aggregate estimates do not distinguish between the poor and extreme poor or highlight differences in poverty levels between geographical areas. Nor is the decline in the poverty rate sustainable since it is largely based on remittances.<sup>8</sup> Rather it is a cause for concern because the share of farming income has declined (from 61% to 48%) and the share of the labour force employed in agriculture has also fallen markedly (from 83% to 73%). The survey also raises technical concerns since the sample size was so small (around 400 households) that it might not be a reliable base on which to estimate the actual poverty level.

Without considering the country's ongoing conflict, poverty cannot be properly viewed or assessed since this strife, as of April 2005, has taken roughly 12,000 lives.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the escalating death toll, torture and violence, infrastructure has been destroyed, thousands have been displaced, social networks and communities have been uprooted and industries have come to a halt.

As the ten-year-long civil war continues to rage, the country is witnessing progressive militarization of the State and society in addition to its dire development scenario. Violence associated with the Maoist insurgency<sup>10</sup> and the Government's counter-insurgency operations has destabilized the political, economic and social structures. This has caused widespread terror and insecurity and contributed significantly to the already bleak poverty situation.

### Reduction strategies

Planned development has been pursued for nearly 50 years. However until 1980, policies for the integration of women into development processes were confined largely to education and training. Since the 1980s a gradual shift has taken place away from welfare towards equity policy and from anti-poverty efforts towards empowerment. The Government's Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-1985) contained the country's first specific provisions to enhance women's participation in the development process. The Tenth Plan (2003-2007), which is equated with the Poverty Reduction Strategies Papers, continues to focus on poverty reduction as its main objective and has included gender and human rights as a crosscutting and sectoral issue. It aims to reduce the level of poverty to 30% by the end of the period, and to 10% by 2017. However because of the high population growth rate of 2.25% the absolute number of poor will remain at roughly 8 million.<sup>11</sup>

### International commitments and national provisions

At the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, Nepal committed itself to the creation of an environment which enables equity and empowerment for people at all levels of society through sound governance, participation and enhanced capability.<sup>12</sup> It did the same at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and in the resultant Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Nepal further committed itself to the Millennium Development Goals and it is a state party to all of the major human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The 1990 Constitution provides the framework for the empowerment and advancement of women. Article 11 (3)<sup>13</sup> prohibits discrimination against women and instructs the Government to take special measures for their advancement. To give effect to these legal arrangements and commitments, the National Women's Commission was established in 2002. An important mile-

1 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 2004*, 2004a.

2 World Bank. *World Development Report 2003*, 2003, p. 235.

3 National Planning Commission (NPC)/His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG). *Nepal Living Standard Survey 1995-1996 Main Findings*. Vol. I & II, Kathmandu: NPC, 1996.

4 UNDP (2004a), *op cit*.

5 *The Himalayan Times*, 9 April, 2005.

6 According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2001 data, illiteracy in Nepal was 37.3% among males and 65.1% among females.

7 Asian Development Bank. "Quarterly Economic Update: Nepal (March 2005)". March 2005, [www.adb.org/Documents/Economic\\_Updates/NEP/economic-update-mar05.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Economic_Updates/NEP/economic-update-mar05.pdf)

8 "Gap between rich, poor increasing, say experts", *The Himalayan Times*, 9 May 2005.

9 Bloomberg. "Nepal Allows UN to Monitor Human Rights Abuses in Insurgency". 12 April 2005.

10 In 1996, only six years after the restoration of democracy by the People's Movement, a faction of the (Maoist) Communist Party of Nepal rose up in arms (the People's War) against the present socio-economic structure of the Government with the aim of establishing a new state styled after the one established by Mao Zedong in China in 1945.

11 NPC/HMG. *Tenth Plan 2003-2007*, 2003.

12 UNDP. *Poverty Eradication: A policy framework for Country Strategies*, 1995.

13 "The State shall not discriminate among citizens on grounds of religion, race, sex, caste, tribe, or ideological conviction or any of these." *Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal - 2047 (1990)*. Part 3, Art. 11(3). 23 June 2005. <http://asnic.utexas.edu/asnic/countries/nepal/nepalconstitution.html>

stone for the advancement of women was the Supreme Court's recent decision to annul the practice of returning a woman's share of her parental property after marriage. The Government has also established gender focal points in various ministries.

Nevertheless these advancements fall short of addressing the discrimination, humiliation and inequality which women face. Women are relegated to an inferior position in all spheres of political, social and economic life, and completely deprived of political as well as economic resources in terms of access to land, credit and gainful employment.

Legislative inadequacies only explain part of this. Another explanation is a lack of political will in the enforcement of existing laws. The most crucial problem is the lack of gender sensitivity among the predominantly male policymakers who are heavily influenced by patriarchal values.

### The gender scenario

Nepal is a caste-divided society heavily influenced and dominated by a patriarchal worldview. Women are seen as inferior to men and treated as dependants regardless of their education or economic situation. Discrimination against women starts at birth and continues throughout their lives. At home they are second to sons and inferior to husbands; in offices they are clerks and secretaries to male officers; in the socio-political public life, they are mere spectators to policies and decisions made by men. The following human development indicators demonstrate that women are well behind their male counterparts in all areas.

### Health

The health status of Nepal's people is one of the lowest in the South Asian region and this is particularly true for women. The under-5 mortality rate remains one of the highest in South Asia at 82 per 1,000 live births.<sup>14</sup> With 80 boys (per 1,000 live male births) as compared to 85 girls (per 1,000 live female births)<sup>15</sup> dying before they reach the age of five there is a contradiction of normal biological trends which suggests discrimination against girls in child-rearing practices (feeding patterns and health care). In addition, the maternal mortality rate (740 per 100,000 live births) ranks among the highest in the world. One out of every 24 women is at risk of dying during pregnancy and childbirth. That just over one in ten births is attended by a trained doctor or paramedic<sup>16</sup> is indicative of the failure of the State to deliver on its health promises.

### Education

Although the literacy rate has increased in recent years, the percentage of literate women lags behind the percentage of literate men. The overall literacy rate is 47.6% but the female literacy rate is only 34.9%.<sup>17</sup> Social prejudices against female education, restricted mobility,

women's low social status, early marriage and low participation in the formal employment sector result in lower literacy for females. Although there have been some quantitative improvements in the number of girls enrolled in school and women receiving training, these gains have not translated into significant advancement in the overall status of women. The lack of qualified and trained female professionals at different levels and in various sectors is a significant problem. A conventional education system and the lack of enabling support mechanisms have prevented women from taking advantage of further education and training facilities.

### Employment

Although women work more hours than men and are primarily responsible for maintaining the family, a large part of their work is not valued as economic activity. Available data indicate that women face higher levels of unemployment and underemployment in both rural and urban areas.<sup>18</sup> Most women workers - over 70% - are confined to self-employment, unpaid and low-wage informal sector services. Their contribution, although significant, is often underreported and unrecognized.

The development of export industries for carpet, garments, and woollen goods, has created some formal employment opportunities for women. The number of women in the non-agricultural workforce increased from 20.2% in 1991 to 34% in 2001.<sup>19</sup> However women continue to be concentrated in low income and low capital-intensive jobs.

Women are almost completely absent from policymaking institutions such as the National Planning Commission, and there are only one or two women working in the less powerful ministries. Out of 93,716 civil service posts only 8.55% are occupied by women.<sup>20</sup> So far only one woman has served as ambassador and one other as a Supreme Court judge.

### Access to and control over resources

Of total land holdings, females own just 8.1% and the average size of their land parcels is two-thirds the size of an average male holding. Only 4% of households are completely owned (both the house and the land) by a female.<sup>21</sup> Despite some legal advances in recent years, there have been no significant changes in women's rights to inherit parental property, which remains the socio-cultural right of the son. According to the 2001 census, in roughly 5% of households some land is owned by women, and some 0.8% of households are registered in women's names. Likewise, only 5.4% of households reported having livestock owned by women.

In only 0.8% of households were house, land and livestock all owned by females.<sup>22</sup> Similarly bleak is the record of women's access to institutional credit, both at the individual and household enterprise level.

### Increased violence against women

Alcohol and polygamy-related domestic violence is reportedly high all over the country and in all communities. Young widows, particularly in the Indo-Aryan community, are subject to both psychological and physical violence due to disputes over inheritance. It is estimated that annually 12,000 girls and women, approximately 20% under the age of 16, are trafficked into India and other countries for prostitution.<sup>23</sup> Poverty and unemployment, caused by a progressive decline in demand for the services of village craftspeople and the impoverishment of peasants through land division, is forcing families to sell their own daughters.

The ongoing Maoist insurgency adds another dimension to the violence against women, who are caught in the crossfire of this conflict. Young women are coerced into joining the Maoist army. Women accused of spying are killed by Maoists, others are tortured for hiding their men or encouraging them to leave the village. The government security forces treat them just as barbarically, accusing them of being Maoist sympathizers, of providing the insurgents with food and supporting the rebellion.

### Improvement efforts

Many international development agencies, particularly the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, United Nations, Department for International Development of United Kingdom as well as national NGOs, are working hard to address the issue of poverty and inequality. After the Beijing Conference, gender mainstreaming and rights-based programming has become a main strategy of these institutions. They now have a clear focus on gender training and ensuring equitable access to services. Their energy is directed towards empowering women to bring about equitable gender relations through their own agency. However real structural changes remain distant because of government inaction to address the development gap.

Since the 1990s there have been huge achievements in gender sensitivity. Rights-based consciousness has permeated most social, political and legal institutions, and some legal activism initiatives have been undertaken. However the key problem lies in governance and policy implementation.

To ameliorate the situation, there is a need for decentralized, participatory and gender-conscious governance with women participating throughout the entire process from policymaking to execution. Undertaking this task warrants both legal and political activism to undo the influence of patriarchal ideology and to eradicate the violence associated with the Maoist conflict, which is robbing women of their potential and making them more vulnerable to male discrimination. ■

14 UNICEF. *The State of the World's Children 2005*. [www.unicef.org/sowc05](http://www.unicef.org/sowc05)

15 World Health Organization. [www.who.int/countries/npl/en](http://www.who.int/countries/npl/en)

16 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey, 2001.

17 See footnote 6.

18 UNDP. "blank" *Nepal National Human Development Report. Empowerment and Poverty Reduction*, 2004b.

19 Central Bureau of Statistics. *Population Census 2001 National Report*, 2002.

20 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). "Nepal combined second and third periodic reports", 2002. "blank" <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N03/316/45/PDF/N0331645.pdf?OpenElement>

21 UNDP (2004b), *op cit*.

22 NPC/HMG, *op cit*.

23 UNDP (2004b), *op cit*.

## NETHERLANDS

# Development policy without gender equality



Civil society has called for the Netherlands to show leadership in international cooperation in the implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration. It also argues that the seven priorities recommended by the Millennium Project's Task Force on Gender Equality should be incorporated into the Millennium Development Goal agenda not only to overcome historic and pervasive gender bias, but also for the MDGs to be met.

Novib/Oxfam Netherlands  
National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO)

Sita Dewkalia and Nicole Metz<sup>1</sup>

The United Nations Development Programme estimated that there were 1.1 billion people living on less than one dollar a day in 2004.<sup>2</sup> Four years earlier, the international community agreed upon a set of global objectives, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in order to address this injustice and to pursue sound development. The year 2005 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen) and the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing). It is therefore a decisive year in the quest to meet the MDGs, since they encompass both social and gender aspects. The Dutch Government and the Dutch Millennium Development Goals Platform are promoting the MDGs as key international targets and as a first step towards the complete eradication of poverty. The Netherlands must play a leading role to increase the political will of international governments to achieve the goals, especially in preparation for the UN MDG Review Summit in September 2005. It must ensure, both during the preparations for the summit and at the gathering itself, that there is strong political commitment to meet the MDGs using women's rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as its basic principles.

### Development policy and the MDGs

In November 2003, the Minister for Development Cooperation, Agnes van Ardenne, published *Mutual Interests, Mutual Responsibilities: Dutch Development Cooperation en Route to 2015*, which outlines the Dutch development policy:<sup>3</sup>

- Sustainable poverty reduction is the main objective of development cooperation and the MDGs are the way to achieve it. To meet the goals, the Government priorities are to increase participation in meeting the MDGs by 2015, to boost the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation, and to make Dutch efforts and results more visible.
- The number of countries that are eligible for bilateral assistance has been further reduced from 49 to 36.
- Partnership is a key concept in development policy. "Development cooperation calls for commitment from everyone involved: the Netherlands, other donors, civil society organizations, the private sector, individual citizens and multilateral organizations, as well as developing countries themselves."<sup>4</sup>
- Emphasis on an integrated, coherent and regional approach to foreign policy, on sustainable development, on the collaboration with the private sector and on Africa.
- Aid to focus on four priority themes: education, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, environment and water. An increased proportion of the budget - up to 15% in 2007 - is earmarked for education.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) expressed their approval of the MDGs as a reference point for the policy, but questioned whether the proposed country selection, thematic focus, and central role of partnerships would be more effective. CSOs also noted that gender was neglected in the policy and strongly criticized the decision to discontinue the financial contribution to the UN Development Fund for Women.

### Development aid in figures

The Netherlands still contributes more than the internationally agreed 0.7% of GNP to official development aid (ODA). The contribution shows a slightly negative trend: in 1990, the Government spent 0.92% of GNP on ODA, 0.82% in 2001 and 0.8% in 2003. Of the total EUR 3.5 billion (USD 4.4 billion) spent on ODA in 2003, the Government dedicated roughly 12% to education, health and population.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, at the 2005 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee meeting, the Netherlands pushed for more generous ODA criteria which would allow for certain security-related expenditures to be made using these funds. CSOs are concerned that the changes will contaminate ODA and recommend that the criteria not be broadened any further to allow for expenditures related to peace and security, since these costs should be covered in Defence budgets.

### Gender

In March 2005, during the 49<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) a 10-year global review took place of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Government reconfirmed its commitments during the CSW session. Governments, including the Dutch Government, recognized that it is impossible to achieve the MDGs without strengthening women's rights and empowering all women and girls.

CSOs call for international leadership on the part of the Netherlands in the combined implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration and the three above-mentioned agreements. This will be possible if the seven priorities recommended by the Millennium Project's Task Force on Gender Equality are incorporated into the MDG agenda to overcome historic and pervasive gender bias.<sup>6</sup> These priorities are:

- To strengthen opportunities for post-primary education for girls while simultaneously meeting universal primary education commitments.
- To guarantee sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- To invest in infrastructure to reduce the time women and girls spend on burdensome tasks.
- To guarantee women's and girls' property and inheritance rights.
- To eliminate gender inequality in employment by decreasing women's reliance on informal employment, closing gender gaps in earnings, and reducing occupational segregation.

1 Both authors work for Novib/Oxfam Netherlands. They wrote this contribution in cooperation with the National Committee for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development (NCDO). We especially appreciate the collaboration of the Dutch Platform Millennium Goals (NMP), which is made up of 23 development organizations and organizations specialised in international development policy issues.

2 UNDP. "Human Development Report 2004. Cultural liberty in today's diverse world", 2004, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

3 Dutch Aid Policy: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Minister for Development Cooperation, 2003. *Mutual interests, mutual responsibilities: Dutch development cooperation en route to 2015*; [www.minbuza.nl](http://www.minbuza.nl)

4 *Ibid.*

5 Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (DAC) for Dutch Official Development Aid (ODA); [www.oecd.org/dac](http://www.oecd.org/dac)

6 Task Force report on gender equality. *Taking actions, achieving gender equality and empowering women*. Executive summary, p. 3; [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org)



- To increase women's representation in national parliaments and local governing bodies.
- To combat violence against girls and women.

The seven strategic priorities should also be included in the policies and programmes of Dutch development cooperation and at the same time be part of the UN MDG Review Summit in September 2005.

## Education

Education for all, especially for girls, is a Dutch Government priority. Starting in 2007, basic education will receive 15% of total development assistance. In 2004, the total expenditure on education was EUR 167 million (USD 210 million); in 2005, it is USD 295 million; in 2007, it will be USD 654 million.<sup>7</sup> The education contribution co-finances organizations in the Netherlands which fund basic education programmes in different developing countries. In addition it funds bilateral assistance to 14 developing countries. The Government also contributed USD 56 million in 2005 to the Fast Track Initiative, via the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, to help speed up the implementation of solid national education plans.<sup>8</sup> There are also silent partnerships with other donors which allow the Netherlands to spend education funds in non-bilateral countries.

The Global Campaign for Education<sup>9</sup> report *Missing the mark, a school report on rich countries' contribution to Universal Primary Education by 2015* shows that rich countries must push harder to reach MDG 2 - achieve universal primary education - especially for girls. However it is generally known that the goal of equal access to education by 2005 has not been achieved.<sup>10</sup> Dutch CSOs call for more funding for countries where girls have less access to education, especially in Western and Central Africa, North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia. In order to improve education, the battles against child labour, especially girl labour, and against HIV/AIDS must simultaneously be fought. Poverty cannot be an excuse for keeping children out of school. CSOs call on the Government to become a true international champion of education and provide leadership to other G7<sup>11</sup> and European countries which are performing badly in this area.

## HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is both a health and development problem which affects women and girls disproportionately. Currently the global community response is inadequate.

Therefore CSOs call for donor and collaborating countries to meet the 0.7% of GNP goal and the funding commitments made at the Social Summit in Copenhagen for basic social services. At the same

time CSOs are concerned about the creation of new and alternative funding mechanisms such as the Global Fund for AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, which is not working properly due to a lack of genuine participation on the part of developing country governments and civil society.

In health-related development issues the Netherlands gives priority to the fight against HIV/AIDS. In 2004 it announced that it would double its substantial contribution towards this cause by 2007. Total expenditure on HIV/AIDS in 2004 was USD 197 million and in 2005, USD 268 million.<sup>12</sup> Its focus policy points are:<sup>13</sup>

- An increased commitment to the international fight against HIV/AIDS through the appointment of an AIDS Ambassador and through an emphasis on taboo subjects such as SRHR for young people (both girls and boys), sexual minorities and sex workers, and needle exchange programmes for intravenous drug-users.
- Strengthening coordination. The Government supports the UN Programme on HIV and AIDS and its policy of the "3 ones principles" (one coordinating body, one integrated programme and one implementing system per country).
- To enhance the capacity to fight HIV/AIDS in countries with a large epidemic, not only in the health sector but also in other relevant sectors such as education.
- To promote a comprehensive approach in bilateral programmes and at the multilateral level by advocating for the integration of HIV/AIDS policies into other sectors of development.

The policy demonstrates a sense of urgency; however the nature of the HIV/AIDS epidemic continues to be underestimated. At the same time, there is ideological and conservative pressure on progressive policies and efforts from a number of donor countries, recipient countries and religious communities.

The position of the Netherlands is recognized and appreciated internationally and the country has demonstrated its capacity during the European Union (EU) presidency. Hence, the Dutch Government is in a position to influence international decision-making and CSOs call for this influence in the preparation of the UN MDG Review Summit. Particular attention should be paid to the gender dimension of HIV/AIDS, including power relations between men and women. Donor coordination should be strengthened and HIV/AIDS should be included in poverty reduction strategies as well as in trade policies: the World Trade Organization agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and Public Health should be fully implemented, especially at the national level. Even in security policies HIV/AIDS needs to be considered because of the spread of the disease in conflict areas, where systemic rape increases infection rates.

## Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Women and girls, as a result of the effects of poverty, are limited in their SRHR choices. Of all development indicators SRHR shows the biggest gap between rich and poor countries and between the different income groups within countries. The Millennium Project concludes that improvements in SRHR are fundamental to reaching the MDGs.<sup>14</sup> In the international political arena there is a strong but small opposition to SRHR. In particular there is resistance to abortion, and conservative forces are promoting the ABC Approach (Abstinence, Being faithful, Correct and consistent condom use). This approach requires a thorough review. Its gender dynamics are particularly worrying: many faithful and monogamous women are still getting infected. Therefore, this neoconservative view should be opposed. The same group also challenges the Cairo-consensus goal of providing universal access to reproductive health services before 2015. During its presidency of the EU in the second half of 2004, the Dutch government raised more than USD 80 million for SRHR and pushed for an EU annual review of SRHR progress.

Unsafe abortions as the consequence of unwanted pregnancies are one of the main causes of maternal health problems. Therefore it is of utmost importance to halt unwanted pregnancies by promoting good information and family planning, and making good abortion services and facilities available. Most new HIV infections hit young people, especially girls, between the ages of 15 and 24.<sup>15</sup> This group needs good information and condoms to protect itself and make sound choices. Encouraging abstinence can be dangerous if young people do not learn to say no. Abstinence is not an option for girls and women, since they may often find they are not in a position to refuse sex or demand the use of a condom. Besides, abstinence programmes do not include information on safe sexual behaviour. Sometimes people are even wrongly informed and told that condoms do not protect against HIV or pregnancy. SRHR and HIV/AIDS should be strongly linked in policies and programmes since promoting and protecting sexual health will help combat the spread of the disease.

The Government is pushing for the Cairo Agenda to be addressed at the UN MDG Summit in September. This is of utmost importance since SRHR is absent in the MDGs and there is widespread consensus that it should be adopted under Goal 5 - improve maternal health - as a new target.

(Continued on page 255)

7 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Budget 2005.

8 *Ibid.*

9 Coalition of NGOs and trade unions working in more than 100 countries for the right to free, good-quality education for all. [www.campaignforeducation.org](http://www.campaignforeducation.org)

10 The World Bank Group. *World Development Indicators*, 2005; [devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2005/Section1\\_1\\_1.htm](http://devdata.worldbank.org/wdi2005/Section1_1_1.htm)

11 USA, Japan, Germany, Great Britain, Canada, Italy, France.

12 Ministry of Foreign Affairs. *op cit.*

13 Dutch Aid Policy. *op cit.*

14 Task Force report on child health and maternal health. *Who's got the power? Transforming health systems for women and children*; [www.unmillenniumproject.org](http://www.unmillenniumproject.org)

15 United Nations Programme on AIDS. *AIDS: A Global Epidemic*, 1996; [www.hivpositive.com/f-HIVyou/f-Statistics/UN-AIDS.html#Young](http://www.hivpositive.com/f-HIVyou/f-Statistics/UN-AIDS.html#Young)





## NICARAGUA

# Proposals for the development of human capital



Nicaragua is the second poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean. To overcome this situation, organized civil society proposes an approach to the development of human capital that evaluates the impact of international financing institution programmes, incorporates a gender perspective and diverts the funds intended for debt relief to social expenditure, generating employment and citizen participation.

### Coordinadora Civil

Violeta Delgado (Coordinator)  
Isolda Espinoza / Milagros Barahona

Ten years have passed since Copenhagen and Beijing, and there are ten years to go to reach 2015, the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With this in mind Coordinadora Civil (CC) decided to turn the 2005 report into a "mid-term review", centred on poverty and gender equity, with the aim of assessing the fulfilment of the commitments made by the Government on an international scale, analyzing the results achieved vis-à-vis the living conditions of the population and putting forth the proposals of organized civil society.

### Poverty and gender equity

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the World Bank poverty line, in 2001 42.6% of the population lived with less than USD 1 a day and 77.8% with less than USD 2 a day.

According to the national poverty line, between 1993 and 2001, extreme poverty and general poverty decreased, particularly in the rural areas. In 2001, 5.1% of the total population (6.2% urban and 27.4% rural) lived in conditions of extreme poverty.<sup>1</sup> However unequal distribution of consumption and income persists.

In 2001, the poorest 20% of the population had only a 5.6% share in consumption, while the richest 20% had 49.2%; and the poorest 10% of the inhabitants received only 1% of income, compared to the richest 10%, who received 45%.<sup>2</sup>

### Feminization of poverty

Although the percentage of female-headed households of the total number of indigent households in urban areas decreased from 35% in 1993 to 34% in 2001, it rose among non-indigent poor households. Female-headed households continue to have a greater incidence<sup>3</sup> among indigent households in relation to the total, and this incidence has become greater among non-indigent poor households. The distribution of female-headed

households is concentrated in both indigent poor and non-indigent poor households: 64% in 1993, 65.1% in 1998 and 60.9% in 2001.<sup>4</sup> After a couple breaks up, and the male is no longer the provider, the female head of household has to add the role of economic provider to her domestic chores and the care of the children.

### Other dimensions: poverty of time

The people-centred development approaches widened the conceptualization of poverty by taking into account not only private consumption, but access to basic services provided by the State, the possession of goods, availability of time, dignity and autonomy.<sup>5</sup>

Time is a dimension of particular importance in understanding gender differences in poverty. Compared to men, women generally work more hours, although most of that work is not remunerated, or visible in terms of traditional economic analysis. Even in households where resources are shared by both partners, the burden of work is usually greater for women. Poor women who lack time cannot improve their situation by working more hours.

The percentage of time women dedicate to daily reproductive work is almost double that dedicated by men. For poor women living in rural areas, this time equals more than half the day.

### Economic participation

If the high rates of participation in reproductive work and average time dedicated to it are taken into account, economic participation rates for women are high. Between 1950 and 2001, the economic participation of women rose from 13% to 40% and the economically active female population rose from 13.6% to 35.7%.

The gap in economic activity rates according to sex is narrower among the non-poor than in the poor population. The lower rates of economic activity among poor women, urban and rural, confirm that the burden of reproductive work is an obstacle to their incorporation into the job market, particularly for women living in rural areas.

Poverty decreases among two parent households where female spouses contribute economically. Women could contribute to a greater extent to

household income if they enjoyed basic services that made reproductive work less burdensome and if they had opportunities - equal to those of men - in access to quality jobs.

### Entering the workforce

In 2001, more than half the working population worked in low productivity sectors: 55.7% of men and 65.5% of women. Urban women took the less stable activities: as unskilled independent workers or in domestic service.

The burden of reproductive work assigned to women determines the way in which they enter the job market. They tend to find work as self-employed workers or non-remunerated family members due to the limited productive resources to which they have access and to the need to combine productive and reproductive work.

### Remuneration

The underestimation of women combined with their labour insertion determine their inferior salaries. Available information<sup>6</sup> shows that there is less disparity between men and women's average salaries than there is in average labour income.<sup>7</sup> This suggests that average income for women who are self-employed and for those who are employers - work categories in which having access to productive resources determines the income received - is lower than for their male counterparts.

The greatest disparities in average labour income, whether related to salary or not, were persistently noted among the population with 13 or more years of education. This indicates that for Nicaraguan women education does not offer the same rewards as it does for men.

### Access to productive resources

Access to and control of productive resources by the population is a determining factor in increasing productivity and competitiveness in economic activities, and thus increases income level.

In 2001, men were 81.7% of total individual owners of agricultural enterprises and women 18.3%.<sup>8</sup> In 2000, men and women represented 63%

1 Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC). *Perfil y características de los pobres en Nicaragua 2001. Encuesta Nacional de Hogares sobre Medición del Nivel de Vida 2001*.

2 *Ibid.*

3 In rural areas, female-headed households represented 19% of the total.

4 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). *Panorama Social de América Latina 2002-2003*, 2003

5 United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). *Progress of the World's Women 2000, 2000*

6 ECLAC, *op cit.*

7 It also includes the income of wage earners, self-employed workers and employers.

8 INEC, "Sistema de Indicadores de Género", 2004.



and 37% respectively of the owners of urban economic establishments.<sup>9</sup> Also, the relative incidence of female ownership decreases systematically as the extent of resources increases.

### Access to basic services

In 2002, 75% of the population had access to enhanced water supply sources, 91% in urban areas and only 59% in rural areas.<sup>10</sup> Usually, women are in charge of carrying water to homes not connected to the water supply system. The enhancement of these services would benefit them by reducing their work burden.

At the national level, 40.1% of dwellings showed some degree of insecure tenure. This proportion is greater in rural areas (46.9%) than in urban centres (35.6%). In 2001, 55.4% of dwellings were owned by men and 44.6% by women.<sup>11</sup> Access to housing tenure contributes significantly to women's autonomy, especially in cases of violence committed by a spouse.

### Government strategy

In 2002, the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved the Reinforced Strategy for Economic Growth and Reduction of Poverty (RSEGRP). In 2002, the Government presented the National Strategy for Development (NPD), intended to complement and strengthen the RSEGRP.

The NPD follows a model centred on economic growth and competitiveness, according to which poverty will be reduced through a trickle-down process. This model prioritizes aid to the business sector above social dimensions.

In response to criticism by civil society and the international cooperation community, the Government published the Operative NPD at the end of 2004. It was put together following a broad consulting process at the departmental level and puts greater emphasis on policies for the reduction of poverty. Nevertheless, it was not properly discussed at the national level, so there is little awareness and approval of it.

Although the Operative NPD proposes access to land ownership and credit for small businesses and farmers, it reaffirms the assumption that competitiveness and economic growth are necessary conditions to the reduction of poverty. In addition, both the RSEGRP and the NPD lack diagnostics that take into account social and gender gaps in the population. Consequently, their proposals do not cater to the needs, interests and potential of sectors affected by those gaps.

The country reached the completion point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative (HIPC) in January 2004, obtaining external debt relief amounting to USD 5.4 billion. Between 2001 and 2004 the international community freed USD 806.6 million of budgetary resources for payment of external debt. These resources should have been exclusively directed towards the reduction of poverty, but only 40% of HIPC resources went towards RSEGRP in the same period. The rest was allocated

to the payment of internal debt to national banks at onerous interest rates and terms.

In 2003, per capita social expenditures maintained the same level as in 2000 (about USD 75), while resources directed towards payment of the external debt grew from USD 25 per capita to USD 68. Social expenditures<sup>12</sup> and debt servicing represented 10.2% and 9% of GDP, respectively. In the same year, education and health spending diminished by 1% with respect to 2002 while payments for interest and amortization of the internal and external debt rose 8%.

Between May and July of 2002 the CC facilitated a follow-up process on the execution of RSEGRP in seven municipalities and concluded that it is not contributing to poverty reduction. Among other findings were:<sup>13</sup>

- Decline in production and productivity due to the lack of technical assistance, credit, secure channels of commercialization and accessible prices.
- Stagnation of employment and an increase in underemployment and temporary employment.
- Increase in internal and external labour migration, especially among women.
- Insufficient access to education and rising illiteracy, especially in rural areas.
- The health system is unable to meet the demands of the population.
- Increase in inter-family violence in some municipalities.
- Increase in risk factors for children, adolescents and young people.
- Safe and accessible water does not reach the majority of the population.
- Deterioration of roads and lack of public and goods transport.
- Reduced impact and geographical coverage of social protection network

### Proposals

The organizations integrating the CC have publicly made the following proposals:<sup>14</sup>

#### World Bank and IMF

- Review the concepts of poverty and welfare of Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS).
- Incorporate achievement parameters of gender equity and citizen participation in PRS guidelines.
- Participatory evaluation of the impact on poverty on programmes and projects promoted by the World Bank.

<sup>12</sup> In education, health, housing, culture, sports and social benefits.

<sup>13</sup> Quintana, Mario. "La Estrategia Reforzada de Crecimiento y Reducción de la Pobreza (ERCERP), ¿Está reduciendo la pobreza?". *Visión de País*, No 18, special edition, July-August 2003.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*: Quirós Ana, Sarah Bradshaw and Brian Linneker. "Las mujeres en Nicaragua, la pobreza y cómo se pretende reducirla". Presented at the *Conferencia Centroamericana y del Caribe Reducción de la Pobreza, Gobernabilidad Democrática y Equidad de Género*, August 2002, Managua, Nicaragua, organized by GTZ.

- Evaluation of the validity of the trickle-down model for the reduction of poverty and social exclusion.

### International cooperation

- Greater coherence in the formulation and execution of bilateral cooperation policies and in decisions made by the governing councils of international financial institutions.
- Greater flexibility in cooperation policy with PRS allowing countries to review programmes already set in motion, evaluating their impact and reorienting them.
- Fulfil the Copenhagen and Beijing commitments for cooperation with poor countries and assure mechanisms for reciprocal monitoring of those commitments.
- Transparency and efficiency in the management of resources invested directly and through civil society organizations.

### The State

- Orientation of policies and programmes to the development of human capital, social protection and capacity building of the most vulnerable sectors.
- Incorporate a focus on gender equity in RSEGRP and NPD.
- The national General Budget and municipal budgets must be transparent in accounting for money allocated to the reduction of poverty.
- Divert funds for debt relief to social spending and support of micro, small and medium agricultural and industrial production.
- Generate employment and increase income of the population in both the public and private sectors.
- Apply the Law of Citizen Participation to the process of defining poverty, as well as to the formulation, follow-up and evaluation of RSEGRP and NPD.

### Local governments

- Develop, with the participation of all citizens, participatory plans and proposals aimed at the integral development of the municipalities.
- Identify programmes according to levels of poverty and local capabilities.
- Allocate specific budgetary resources to overcoming social and gender gaps.
- Develop mechanisms for follow-up and evaluation of RSEGRP and NPD in municipalities from the perspective of gender and with the participation of citizens and social organizations.

### Civil organizations

- Construct concepts of poverty and welfare that allow for critical participation stemming from specific proposals.
- Develop analysis capabilities, proposals, monitoring and evaluation, as well as auditing and citizen control of RSEGRP and NPD, with a focus on gender. ■

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>10</sup> UNICEF. [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nicaragua\\_statistics.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nicaragua_statistics.html)

<sup>11</sup> INEC. "Encuesta Nacional sobre Medición del Nivel de Vida 2001. Informe General".

## ■ NIGERIA

# The many programmes and the many poor



Despite various attempts to combat poverty through government programmes, 70% of the population continue to live on less than USD 1 a day. Women face prejudice and traditional practices which limit their access to credit and land and make it nearly impossible to escape from poverty. The question now is whether the 5 year-old National Poverty Eradication Programme and the new National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy can make real progress or whether these programmes will also be sabotaged by corruption and over-bureaucratization like others in the past.

### Social Watch Nigeria<sup>1</sup>

#### Poverty and gender equality

Poverty and gender inequality are inextricably linked in Nigeria, with both being widespread throughout the country. Poverty reinforces gender inequality and gender inequality accentuates poverty. This invariably means that gender equality can be used as a weapon to tackle poverty and that so long as inequality remains widespread, poverty will remain an intractable obstacle to the achievement of the international objectives contained in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Millennium Development Goals.

Poverty in Nigeria goes beyond living on less than USD 1 a day. Given the cost of living in the country, USD 1 (NGN 132.85) is grossly insufficient to take care of the basic necessities of food, water and transportation even if we assume that other necessities such as shelter, clothing, and healthcare do not require financial resources on a daily basis. Yet officially 70% of the country's population live on less than USD 1 a day.<sup>2</sup>

#### Manifestations of poverty

Hunger is the most glaring evidence of poverty in the country with many people unable to afford a daily balanced diet. Nigeria's Human Development Report indicates that the very poor spend 75% of their total income on food.<sup>3</sup> The United States Agency for International Development reports that "Poor nutrition invariably leads to widespread illnesses and disease, both made acute by poor health care".<sup>4</sup> Poverty also manifests itself in lack of access to food and water,

education, adequate health care, adequate housing, employment and political participation. Poverty makes it difficult for people to participate effectively not only in political but also cultural, social, economic and other activities. Therefore marginalized people do not contribute to policies and decisions which shape their lives and communities.

#### Attempts to tackle poverty

There have been a number of initiatives aimed at tackling poverty. These include the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure, the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme, Better Life for Rural Dwellers, Operation Feed the Nation and universal primary education. The poverty situation referred to above illustrates that these and other programmes have failed to achieve their objectives. Their failures can be attributed to "decades of corruption and mismanagement especially during the military administrations."<sup>5</sup> These "previous poverty reduction programmes did not reach the poor; they were opportunities to provide 'a job for the boys', distribute patronage, and promote parochial interests."<sup>6</sup>

NAPEP was initiated by the federal Government in 2000. It coordinates and monitors the activities of 14 core poverty alleviation ministries and 37 core poverty alleviation parastatals and agencies. It is the most ambitious of the programmes to date but is not fairing any better than its predecessors. The programme classifies poverty eradication activities into four schemes. These are the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), the Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme, the Social Welfare Services Scheme and Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme. The most popular of these schemes, YES, is comprised of the Capacity Acquisition Programme and Mandatory Attachment Programme.

The Civil Society Coalition on Poverty Eradication evaluated the NAPEP in 2003 and observed that "as with most human institutions, NAPEP came

across as having its own strengths and weaknesses. Its strengths include a coherent and coordinated poverty reduction policy, its inherent potential and actual positive impact on human lives; government support; international support; and a vigilant civil society. However, NAPEP suffers a number of weaknesses: over-bureaucratization; poor specification of assets; implementation gap; and a weak bottom-up participatory approach judged against best practices and the principles of the PRSP process."<sup>7</sup>

The Government's interest in the programme appears to be waning as illustrated by its financial contribution. In 2000, NAPEP was allocated NGN 10 billion (USD 75 million)<sup>8</sup> while in 2001 and 2002, its allocation declined to NGN 5 billion (USD 37 million) and NGN 2 billion (USD 15 million) respectively. The programme must also compete not only with other social spending but also with debt servicing which represented 12.4% of all exports in 2001.<sup>9</sup>

A poverty eradication initiative called the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) has also been incorporated into the country's new Medium Term Economic Framework 2003-2004. There are several criticisms of the NEEDS, especially from civil society. It must be applauded however for its efforts to include the state and local governments, and its encouragement of these levels of government to evolve their own poverty eradication strategies which take local circumstances into consideration. In the past, lower levels of government would have been forced to adopt and implement the federal model.

The goals of the NEEDS are wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and the reorientation of values. These goals are meant to be achieved through the reform of government and

1 This report was prepared by: Ray Onyegu and Jimmy Essiet (Socio Economic Rights Initiative); Judith Ogunniran (Women & Youths in Africa); John Onyeukwu (Concerned Professionals of Nigeria); Edozie Madu (Association of Youth Organizations of Nigeria); and Georgina Iberi (Social Alert - Nigeria).

2 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural liberty in today's diverse world*, 2004a, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

3 UNDP. *HIV/AIDS A Challenge to Sustainable Human Development*, 2004b, [www.undp.org.ng/Publications.htm](http://www.undp.org.ng/Publications.htm)

4 US Agency for International Development. "OTI country programs. Nigeria", [www.usaid.gov/hum\\_response/oti/country/nigeria/rpt0901.html](http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti/country/nigeria/rpt0901.html)

5 The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) Secretariat, *Nigeria: National Economic Development and Empowerment Strategy*, Draft Document, Nigeria, March 2004, p. 22.

6 "Communiqué/Report of the Poverty Reduction Strategies Workshop of the Economic Reform Program of Shelter Rights Initiative", *SEBN NEWS*, Vol. 1 No. 4, October-December 2002, p. 23.

7 Ogwumike, Fidelis O and Remi Medupin, *Performance Evaluation of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)*, Abuja, 2003, p. vii.

8 There was an outcry that this money was largely misappropriated, that the process of selecting beneficiaries of the Youth Empowerment Scheme and the Mandatory Attachment Programme was politicized, and that the beneficiaries were mostly the ruling party's jobbers. The head of the fund disbursement committee was the then Minister of Works, a well known politician who is today the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the ruling party and who headed the party's Presidential Election Committee.

9 *World Guide 2005/2006*. Montevideo: Third World Institute, 2005, p. 422.

institutions, growth of the private sector and the implementation of a social charter which has human development as its agenda.<sup>10</sup> There are targets attached to these goals including a reduction in the incidence of poverty, and the creation of a minimum number of new jobs. The poverty reduction target is 5% per year, equal to a 25% reduction by 2007 while the target for job creation is 7 million by the same year<sup>11</sup>. The NEEDS also includes targets related to social services including raising adult literacy from its current rate of 57% to 65% and expanding immunization coverage from 39% to 60%. The access to safe water target is 70%, not far from the estimated 64.1% of the population which now have access to this basic need.<sup>12</sup>

However a year after the launch of the NEEDS there is no authentic information against which its success or failure can be judged. This fuels the fear that the NEEDS is not immune from corruption. Cases of official corruption are now reported with disturbing regularity which means that the same problems that led to the failure of past poverty eradication programmes are also bedeviling present efforts.<sup>13</sup> This is not surprising when one considers that Nigeria is ranked as the third most corrupt country on an index which includes 146 countries.<sup>14</sup>

### The gender issue

Men and women play different roles in every society. In a patriarchal society such as Nigeria these differences harm women, which explains why poverty not only affects men and women differently but affects women more intensely. Women are traditionally expected to perform domestic chores and reproductive activities. For this reason, they are the least educated and thus more vulnerable to poverty. While the literacy rate for men in 2002 stood at 74%, it was only 59% for women.<sup>15</sup> In 1997, average net primary school enrolment was 57% for boys and 44% for girls while the post primary school enrolment for 1996 was 57% for boys and 47% for girls.<sup>16</sup> If employment is used as an indicator of poverty, women are also at a disadvantage because there are more

men than women in paid employment and the domestic chores and reproductive activities of the majority of women are not remunerated. The International Labour Organization measured women's labour force participation rate at 48.9% in 1995 as compared to the 87.5% participation rate of men.<sup>17</sup>

In political participation there is also great disparity between men and women. In appointed positions, the target of 30% women's representation has not been met at any level of government in the country. The disparity is even wider in elected office. In the 1999 elections, "of the 11,881 available positions throughout the country in that year, women contested only 631. Out of these, a total of 181 positions were won by women, which came to a mere 1.62% of the total contested positions."<sup>18</sup> In 2003, three women were elected into the 109 member Senate - the highest legislative house in the country - while 21 women were elected into the 360 member House of Representatives.<sup>19</sup> These few women are there to represent the 51% of the population that is female - roughly 65 million people.<sup>20</sup>

Numbers aside, the role of women in society is vital even if their work generally goes unremunerated. In addition to domestic work women engage in economic activities such as farming and trading. Even in families where the man is the proverbial bread winner, the income from these ventures subsidizes food and health expenses on a daily basis. The work of women as homemakers is equally important. They take care of the elderly, the sick, the children and the men by cooking food, fetching water, washing clothes, and cleaning the house, among other activities. Saddled with these traditional roles and undermined by discriminatory practices, it is not surprising that women are the most impoverished members of society.

### Accounting for the disparities

There are several factors responsible for the disparities mentioned above, such as women having limited access to credit. Since they lack financial empowerment, they must approach credit facilities to support their economic activities. However credit institutions - where available - are reluctant to extend their services to them. The reluctance stems from a prejudice that women are bad managers of funds and would not be able to repay the loan. Those willing to extend services to women insist on male guarantors. However many men, because of the same prejudice, are not eager to play that role. Moreover, due to lack of information many women are not aware of when and where credit is available.

Women's lack of access to land is another major contributor to gender disparity. While men can automatically inherit land from their parents, wives, and children cultural restraints prohibit women - in their role as wives, mothers or daughters - from doing so. Their only option is to purchase land but given their financial handicap, this is hardly an alternative.

Cultural norms do not only inhibit women from inheriting land. Traditionally upon the death of her husband, a widow is dispossessed of all of her husband's property, which is distributed among the husband's male relatives. One state in the country, Enugu, enacted a law in 2001 forbidding this practice. However there has been no enforcement of the law and the practice remains widespread. Other states and the federal Government carry on as if they were not aware of the tradition.

The fact that gender is not considered in budgeting also contributes to the gender disparity which fuels poverty. Policies, programmes, and activities affect men and women differently because of the different roles they play in society. These differences should be taken into consideration when budgets are being drawn up but unfortunately this does not occur and budgets remain gender blind. Issues that could improve female enrolment in schools, for example, are therefore not effectively addressed in budgets.

Even the Constitution contributes to the low status of women instead of upholding their right to equal treatment. It leaves much to be desired in terms of gender equality; even the language of the Constitution is masculine, with the pronoun "he" used 235 times mostly to refer to men and women.<sup>21</sup> Its other shortcomings include the failure to make socioeconomic rights enforceable and to make explicit the age of marriage for women. The Constitution only contains an inchoate definition of discrimination in relation to women; it fails to clarify its position on who is an indigene when women marry outside of their ethnic group; and it does not explain the citizenship rights of non-Nigerian men married to Nigerian women.

Several groups have litigated and undertaken campaigns and other advocacy strategies to draw attention to the human rights violations highlighted in this report. There are also networks which disaggregate budgets at the various levels of government on the basis of gender. There is consensus among all those working in this field that the heavy debt burden, both external and internal, constitutes a serious impediment to the capacity of the Government to provide for the needs of women and empower them economically. It is generally accepted, therefore, that it will take the full efforts of Nigeria and its development partners to improve the plight of women. ■

10 NEEDS, *op cit*, p. 10.

11 *Ibid*, p. 13.

12 *Ibid*, p. 14.

13 Since the beginning of 2005, an Inspector General has been forced to resign his position and has been arraigned in court for allegedly stealing NGN 10 billion (USD 75.27 million). The Education Minister as well as his Housing counterpart have also been dismissed for corrupt practices. The former, along with a former Senate President who was also forced to resign, and other principal officers of the federal legislator, have also been arraigned in court for bribery. The legislators allegedly demanded and received a NGN 55 million (USD 414,000) bribe from the Minister as a condition for not reducing the education budget for 2005.

14 Transparency International. "Corruption Perceptions Index 2004", [www.transparency.org/cpi/2004/cpi2004.en.html](http://www.transparency.org/cpi/2004/cpi2004.en.html)

15 UNDP (2004a), *op cit*.

16 The National Core Team for the PRSP Project, *Federal Republic of Nigeria, Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*, 2001, p. 10.

17 International Labour Organization. "Nigeria Labour Force Participation Rate", [www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eeo/download/nigeria.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eeo/download/nigeria.pdf)

18 Akiode-Afolabi, Abiola and Lanre Arogundade, Editors, *Gender Audit 2003 Election*, Women Advocate Research and Documentation Center, 2003, p. 63.

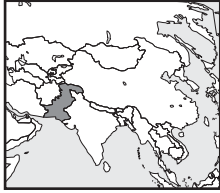
19 *Ibid*, p. 95.

20 World Bank. "Genderstats. Nigeria", 2000, <http://genderstats.worldbank.org/genderRpt.asp?rpt=basic&cty=NGA,Nigeria&hm=home2>

21 "Close Up the Gaps, A Position Paper on Gender and Constitution Reform in Nigeria", Gender and Constitution Reform Network.

## PAKISTAN

# A difficult context for poverty reduction



By all measurements there are millions of people living in poverty in Pakistan. The political climate and strong cultural and religious traditions complicate poverty alleviation and social development progress. Despite ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, Pakistani women continue to be victims of honour killings and have low participation in the labour market.

### Social Watch Pakistan

Aijaz Qureshi / Mushtaq Mirani

Pakistan, located in South Asia and a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, is a federal state with four provinces (Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province, and Balochistan), one territory (Northern Areas) and one capital territory (Islamabad). There are several languages spoken in the country but Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, Urdu, Brahvi, Seraiki, and Hindku are the main tongues.

The federal Constitution has seen several amendments since its promulgation in 1973 and consequently its form and contents have changed markedly. Currently, the self-appointed President, General Pervez Musharraf, presides over the country, which is under military rule.

### The economy and unemployment

The Economic Survey 2004-2005 states that gross domestic product (GDP) grew at a rate of 8.4%<sup>1</sup> during the timeframe of the study; however several independent economists contest this rate. According to the same survey the per capita income<sup>2</sup> also rose from USD 579 in 2002-2003 to USD 736 in 2004-2005. According to the World Bank's gross national income (GNI) per capita ranking for 2004,<sup>3</sup> Pakistan falls into position 160 out of 208 countries with a per capita income of USD 600.<sup>4</sup>

The benefits of growth are hotly debated. The Government claims that growth will reduce poverty and improve quality of life.<sup>5</sup> Political parties, civil society organizations and development experts reject this idea and assert that poverty has increased,

the gap between the rich and poor has widened and quality of life has further deteriorated, following the worsening poverty pattern of the 1990s.<sup>6</sup>

There are indicators that confirm that the country is not faring well. The 2004 Human Poverty Index, which measures three dimensions - a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living - ranks Pakistan only 71<sup>st</sup> among 95 countries. The latest United Nations Development Programme estimates also state that the richest 20% of the population consume almost five times more than the poorest 20%.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore in 2004 Pakistan ranked 142<sup>nd</sup> among 177 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI) with a value of 0.497 based on values from 2002.<sup>8</sup> This value is almost equal to the 1999 HDI value of 0.498, demonstrating that human development in the country has been stalled for years.

Considering the expenditure levels on health and education, this arrest in human development is not surprising. In 2002-2003 the Government spent only 1.7% of the gross national product (GNP) on education and in 2004-2005 it spent a mere 0.6% of GNP on health.<sup>9</sup>

The unemployment rate is also disputed by independent economists. According to the Economic Survey 2004-2005 there are 3.52 million people unemployed in 2005, down from 3.72 million in 2004. The Labour Force Survey 2003-2004 estimates the total unemployment rate at 7.7%, in rural areas at 6.7%, and 9.7% in urban areas. Those people over 10 years of age who are without work, but available to work and seeking employment are included in the unemployment measurements.<sup>10</sup> Independent ex-

perts dispute this rate and claim that the unemployment rate is actually much higher and that there is disguised unemployment in rural areas, which would raise the rate to at least 20%. There is also a growing trend among women to seek employment. If this factor is included in the employment survey then the unemployment rate increases further.

Meanwhile, the consumer price index rose 17.56% between 2000 and 2004 with fuel and lighting prices rising the most sharply by 23%.<sup>11</sup>

### Poverty

Depending on the measure adopted, (USD 1 a day, USD 2 a day or national poverty line), 13.4%, 65.6% or 32.6% of Pakistanis are living in poverty respectively.<sup>12</sup> Considering that the country has a population of 150 million this means that there are roughly 20.1 million, 98.4 million or 48.9 million people living in poverty in Pakistan. Whatever the measurement, there are too many people living in poverty. It is generally accepted that poverty is worse in rural areas - the Asian Development Bank reported a rural poverty rate of 39% in 2002.<sup>13</sup>

The social consequences of poverty levels have been manifesting themselves in ugly ways. Suicide rates are on the rise. In 2004, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan recorded a total of 716 suicides during the year, of which 192 victims were male and 524 female. As of 30 June 2005, already 589 suicides have been reported which suggests that last year's figures will be surpassed. Reasons for suicides include illness, domestic problems, financial problems, marriage choice, matrimonial problems, psychological problems and unemployment. In 2004, domestic problems were reported as the reason for 251 suicides while financial problems and unemployment were cited as the cause of 64 suicides. Midway through 2005, unemployment and financial problems had already been blamed for 66 suicides each.<sup>14</sup>

1 Ministry of Finance. *Economic Survey 2004-2005*. "Growth and Investment." 4 June 2005. [www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/01-Growth.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/01-Growth.pdf)

2 The GNP at market price in dollar terms divided by the country's population.

3 The World Bank uses the Atlas conversion factor when calculating the GNI per capita in US dollars in order to reduce the impact of exchange rate fluctuations. The Atlas conversion factor is the average of a country's exchange rate for that year and its exchange rate for the two preceding years adjusted for the rate of inflation in the country.

4 World Bank. "GNI per capita 2004." 2004. [www.worldbank.org/data/datatopic/GNIPC.pdf](http://www.worldbank.org/data/datatopic/GNIPC.pdf)

5 Ministry of Finance, *op cit*. "Overview of the Economy". [www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/overview.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/overview.pdf)

6 Asian Development Bank (ADB). "Poverty in Pakistan: Issues, Causes, & Institutional Responses." 12 August 2002. [www.adb.org/Documents/news/PRM/2002/prm\\_200203.asp](http://www.adb.org/Documents/news/PRM/2002/prm_200203.asp). According to the ADB 12 million more people were added to the ranks of the poor between 1993 and 1999 and income distribution became more unequal. The income share of the bottom 20% of the population dropped 1% between 1987 and 1997 and the income share of the top 20% rose by 1.3% during the same period.

7 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Human Development Report Indicators Pakistan." 2003. [http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/cty/cty\\_f\\_PAK.html](http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/cty/cty_f_PAK.html)

8 UNDP. "Human Development Index", 2004. [http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/indic/indic\\_8\\_1\\_1.html](http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/indic/indic_8_1_1.html)

9 Ministry of Finance, *op cit*. "Economic and Social Indicators Table". [www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/indicators.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/indicators.pdf)

10 Ministry of Finance, *op cit*. "Population, Labour Force and Employment". [www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/13-population.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/13-population.pdf)

11 Government of Pakistan. Federal Bureau of Statistics. Monthly Price Indices. [www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/statistics/price\\_statistics/monthly\\_price\\_indices/mpi7/mpi.htm](http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/statistics/price_statistics/monthly_price_indices/mpi7/mpi.htm)

12 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*. 2004.

13 ADB. "Agricultural Growth and Rural Poverty. A Review of Evidence", 2005. [www.adb.org/Documents/PRM/Working\\_Papers/wp-02.pdf](http://www.adb.org/Documents/PRM/Working_Papers/wp-02.pdf)

14 Human Rights Commission Pakistan. [www.hrcp-web.org/suicide.cfm#](http://www.hrcp-web.org/suicide.cfm#)



Another poverty-driven phenomenon is the organ trade. The district of Sargodha in central Punjab has become the principal supplier of kidneys to most of Asia. In 2003, a government inquiry estimated that during the 1990s nearly 3,500 people from the region had sold their kidneys to international buyers.<sup>15</sup>

### Human rights

The human rights situation is deteriorating in Pakistan. Due to the absence of a democratic system and of an independent judiciary, together with the dominance of tribalism, feudalism and religious fundamentalism, citizens' human rights are being violated. The unjustified arrest of political opponents and the suppression of freedom of expression are very common. Journalists and reporters are often compelled to follow the Government's official line and political dissent is largely suppressed.

### Women

Women's human rights are violated and they live under severe subjugation. Violence against women goes unabated. Honour killings and domestic violence are common in many parts of the country. The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan reports that between May 2004 and May 2005 in the interior of the Sindh province over 451 people, including 240 women, 156 men and 46 minors were killed under the pretext of *karo-kari* or honour killing. Additionally over 30 women including 4 minors were raped over the same period in Karachi.<sup>16</sup>

Women's participation in social and economic activities is restrained due to the tradition of *pardah*.<sup>17</sup> The Hudood ordinance<sup>18</sup> passed during General Zia's dictatorship<sup>19</sup> also curtails the rights of women. Despite these constraints, liberal and progressive political parties are encouraging women's participation in social, economic and political activities.

To date, the Government has not provided gender-neutral training to the police or to the judiciary, nor has it amended discriminatory laws. In effect the Government has ignored Article 5 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was rati-

fied in 1996<sup>20</sup> while Benazir Bhutto held office.<sup>21</sup> Article 5 states that State Parties to the Convention "shall take all appropriate measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes".<sup>22</sup> That honour killings on the scale observed in the Sindh province still exist is evidence of the Government's weak commitment to the CEDAW. This is reflected in Pakistan's Gender-related Development Index<sup>23</sup> ranking which placed it 120<sup>th</sup> among 144 countries in 2002.

Women continue to have low participation rates in the labour force due to cultural and religious constraints. In 2002, women represented only 29.5% of the labour force, while men represented 70.5%.<sup>24</sup> Their lower participation is most likely linked to lower levels of literacy among women. In 2003-04, although 53% of the population was literate, only 42% of women could read and write compared to 66% of men.<sup>25</sup> Representation in governing bodies also remains low with women holding only 73 of the 342 seats (21.3%) in the 2005 National Assembly and 18% of the positions in the Senate.<sup>26</sup> Women have 60 reserved seats in the National Assembly as well as posts reserved at local levels of government. However in certain tribal areas women are barred from contesting local elections.

In urban centres, women have more health, education and employment opportunities. But in rural areas, they are being deprived of many basic services including health services. The maternal mortality rate stands at 500 deaths per 100,000 live births and only 20% of births are attended by skilled personnel - two indicators which prove that women's access to health services is poor. Family planning services are also in short supply, resulting in a low contraceptive prevalence rate of 28% and high fertility (5.1 births per woman).<sup>27</sup> Poor access to health services might also explain why infant and child mortality rates remain high, at 83 and 107 per 1,000 live births respectively, despite significant declines since the 1970s.<sup>28</sup>

### Poverty alleviation and social development policy

In 2002, the Government adopted a poverty reduction strategy which focuses on five areas:

- accelerating economic growth and maintaining macroeconomic stability
- investing in human capital
- augmenting targeted interventions
- expanding social safety nets
- improving governance.

Government celebrates the advances made to date, making frequent mention of the 8.4% GDP growth and arguing that this growth will benefit the poor by increasing employment and income.<sup>29</sup> It asserts that economic liberalization has encouraged domestic and foreign investment in the country and that the benefits of this investment will trickle down to the poor. A further government strategy was the Devolution of Power Plan to support citizen participation in local governance and improve the delivery of social services to the public. Part of this plan is a 33% quota for women on local district councils to improve women's empowerment.

In the period 1999-2004, the Government spent over PKR 860 billion (USD 14.4 billion)<sup>30</sup> on the development of the social sectors and poverty related programmes which translates into less than 1% of GDP per year.

### A critique of Government policies

Opposition political parties, trade unions, human rights organization and civil society organizations are critical of government policies for several reasons. They argue that despite government policies there is still a lack of real democracy in the country. To this can be added a worsening of law and order, continuing sectarian hatred, too much control of the press, the lack of an independent judiciary, human rights violations, increased violence against women, disharmony among the provinces, increased unemployment due to privatization, increasing inflation, victimization of political opponents, and expensive and delayed justice. The Government is also criticized for spending more on defence and less on the social and economic needs of the poor, and for focusing more attention on economic growth than on these vulnerable groups. Likewise, the authorities are accused of not giving enough attention to the agricultural sector, where a large proportion of the population is employed. Finally, non-governmental organizations call for adequate spending on health, education, water supply, sanitation and transportation.

### Recommendations

In order to protect human rights, improve social and economic development and increase the quality of life of Pakistan's citizens, the following recommendations are made:

(Continued on page 256)

15 Aamer Ahmen Khan. BBC News. "Pakistan's Kidney Donor Crisis." 13 December 2004, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/4092325.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4092325.stm)

16 DAWN. "Karachi: Sindh Government Criticized for Human Rights Violations: 451 Killed in Karo-kari". 17 June 2005, [www.dawn.com/2005/06/17/local7.htm](http://www.dawn.com/2005/06/17/local7.htm)

17 The literal translation of the word *pardah* is screen or veil. It is the practice by which women are excluded from public observation by the use of clothing used to conceal their bodies from head to toe, and by using high walls, curtains and screens inside the home. It is practiced by Muslims and Hindus and the limits placed on women vary according to country and class level.

18 The Hudood Ordinance criminalizes extra-marital sex which includes adultery and fornication. It also criminalizes rape outside valid marriage.

19 Zia-ul Haq overthrew the Government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1977 and governed until his death in 1988 when Benazir Bhutto assumed power.

20 Amnesty International. "Pakistan: Honour Killings of Girls and Women." 1 September 1999, <http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engASA330181999>

21 Benazir Bhutto, who took office as President in 1988, was the first female head of State of a predominantly Islamic country. She carried out two terms in office (1988-1990 and 1993-1996).

22 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm#article5](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm#article5)

23 The Gender Development Index is the HDI adjusted to account for inequalities between men and women.

24 Instituto del Tercer Mundo. *The World Guide 2005/2006*. Oxford: New Internationalist Publications, 2005.

25 Ministry of Finance, *op cit.* "Economic and Social Indicators Table".

26 Inter-Parliamentary Union. "Women in Parliaments World Classification", April 2005, [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

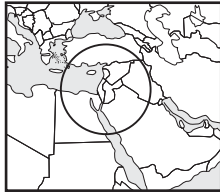
27 UNDP (2003), *op cit.*

28 *bid.*



## PALESTINE

# Women and poverty: the high price of occupation



All development indicators in Palestine are in danger of further decline because of the combination of Israeli occupation and the subsequent deterioration of the economic situation. Women bear the brunt of this burden with female-headed households experiencing an incidence of poverty 1.3 times higher than households headed by men despite humanitarian aid and women's efforts to generate income in household-based activities.

Bisan Center for Research and Development

Izzat Abdul Hadi / Nadya Engler

"In 2004, poverty increased as a result of growing unemployment, declining incomes from those employed, and the loss of property caused by Israeli Defense Forces house demolitions, land requisitions and levelling"<sup>1</sup> reads a recent report of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). With the economic strangulation caused by the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the repressive system of closures, and the Separation Wall (*al-jidar al-fasel*), the continuing occupation impedes access to resources, opportunities, services and aid, compounding the problems faced by Palestinians from all sectors of society. With high unemployment among men and the loss of family members to prison or death, women are experiencing a significant portion of the effects of both the occupation and the resulting widespread and increasingly entrenched poverty in the country.

### The numbers speak for themselves

Over 70% of households are currently in need of assistance. Unemployment increased in 2004, and at the close of the year, 32.6% of the workforce were unemployed (nearly 29% in the West Bank and over 41% in the Gaza Strip).<sup>2</sup> Poverty rates are complex and varying, but statistics show that at the end of 2004 roughly half the population were living on under USD 2.10 per day, up from 22% in 2000; in the Gaza Strip, this number rises to 68%.<sup>3</sup>

In December 2004 the national poverty line was set at ILS 1,800 (USD 398) per month for a family of two adults and four children. This translates into ILS 300 (USD 66) per person or about USD 2.21 per day per person, the same figure as the previous year. However in a 2003 joint report by the World Bank and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), a subsistence poverty line was set at

ILS 205 (USD 45) per person per month or approximately USD 1.51 per day - ILS 128 (USD 28) per month for food according to minimum calorific intake and ILS 77 (USD 17) for other necessary expenses including housing, clothing, and water. The Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs currently offers assistance to special hardship cases at the rate of ILS 96 (USD 21) per month or USD 0.71 per day. In December 2003, roughly 607,000 West Bank and Gaza inhabitants, or 16% of the population, were living below the USD 1.51 subsistence poverty line, and the proportion has increased since that time.<sup>4</sup>

### The causes of poverty

To point a finger at the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the root of all social, economic, and political problems would not be doing justice to these problems. However in order to understand poverty in Palestine one must understand how the occupation affects all aspects of life. The Israeli system of checkpoints, roadblocks, and closures has separated Palestinians from Israel and Jerusalem and made travel between the West Bank and Gaza Strip nearly impossible. Within the West Bank, there are over 700 kilometres of roadways that Palestinians need a special permit to travel on. Israelis have obstructed roads in hundreds of locations with piles of boulders, cement blocks or trenches to further inhibit movement, cutting off many towns and villages from direct vehicular access. There are 60 permanently staffed Israeli military checkpoints in the West Bank in addition to "flying" or temporary checkpoints. Palestinians require permits from the Israeli authorities to leave their villages or towns, which are difficult to obtain. In addition, Palestinians do not enjoy independent international borders for trade or travel.

Since these closures were imposed at the beginning of the second Intifada in 2000, tens of thousands of workers have been prevented from entering Israel to reach their previous jobs. In 2004 alone 881 Palestinians were killed, 4,009 were injured and over 13,500 people in Gaza lost their homes due to Israeli military actions.<sup>5</sup>

Farmers and fishermen lost USD 1 billion to Israeli measures between the start of the second Intifada on September 2000 and August 2004. During this period, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, Israeli troops uprooted 1,145,154 trees and levelled 6,185 hectares of land. Agricultural income has plummeted as closure policies raise transportation costs and produce spoils due to long delays at checkpoints.<sup>6</sup> Fishermen in Gaza have limited access to the Mediterranean Sea and where there is access the coastal waters suffer from over-fishing. It is estimated that the rangeland of livestock in the West Bank (approximately 770,000 sheep and goats) had been reduced by 66% by the end of 2003.<sup>7</sup> With the cost of goods rising due to transportation costs and Israeli goods entering the market freely at lower prices, income from local production has further decreased. With the destruction of industrial structures estimated at USD 75 million, infrastructure (USD 634 million), and transportation (USD 25 million), few investors are willing to take the risk. It is estimated that between 2000 and 2004 approximately USD 576 million were lost in investment. Overall losses in this period totalled nearly USD 20 billion with the production sectors accounting for more than half that amount.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the occupation, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening, reinforcing an unjust distribution of wealth. The corruption of some segments of the Palestinian Authority is also depriving people of the full benefits of their Government's resources.

### A wider sense of poverty

Poverty cannot be viewed purely as an economic issue. Not only does poverty have many social impacts, but the term needs to be understood in such a way as to incorporate the inhibited access to resources, opportunities, services, and aid. Economically, this translates into a lack of access to markets, raw materials,

1 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). *Review of the Humanitarian Situation in the occupied Palestinian territory for 2004*. Jerusalem, 2004.

2 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). *Second Quarter 2004 Report on Palestinian Socio-Economic Conditions*, December 2004.

3 OCHA, *op cit*.

4 World Bank. "Poverty in the West Bank and Gaza After Three Years of Economic Crisis", 2004, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWESTBANKGAZA/Resources/wbgaza-povertyafterreconcrisis.pdf>

5 OCHA, *op cit*, p. 3.

6 WAFA News Agency. "Losses of the Palestinian Agriculture Exceeds USD 1 Billion", 22 September 2004.

7 International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas. "The Agricultural Sector in Palestine" *Caravan*, Vol. 18-19, June-December 2003.

8 Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction. "Palestinian losses reached USD 20 billion in the last four years". [www.pecdar.org/default.asp?page=2750](http://www.pecdar.org/default.asp?page=2750)

means of production, job opportunities, and labour. More generally, the repercussions of the lack of sovereignty over borders and Israeli confiscation and expropriation of land prohibit control over natural resources. The lack of freedom of movement negatively affects access to education, mental and physical health services, and meaningful political and social participation. These consequences increase disproportionately for the poor.

### The consequences

All development indicators are in danger of further decline because of the combination of Israeli occupation and the subsequent deterioration of the economic situation. The environmental situation is worsening as many municipalities do not have access to waste disposal grounds and garbage is dumped or burnt openly in close proximity to residential areas. Health is deteriorating in proportion to declining nutrition and difficulty of access to health services. In 2002, the then Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency stated: "The stark fact is that 22% of the Palestinian children are suffering from acute or chronic malnutrition for purely man-made reasons. No drought has hit Gaza and the West Bank, no crops have failed and the shops are often full of food. But the failure of the peace process and the destruction of the economy by Israel's closure policy have had the effect of a terrible natural disaster."<sup>9</sup> People are not seeking medical treatment unless absolutely necessary because of cost and mobility issues. Sanitary conditions are substandard in many places with no means to repair them or are direct consequence of Israeli military destruction. There has also been a decrease in water quality and access. Educational enrolment is declining slightly but noticeably due to closures and concern for safety as well as to increasing school fees and transportation costs.

### Coping strategies

Many economic coping mechanisms, along with the savings and credit of the poor, have been drained over the past four years. Food consumption has been reduced as much as possible, family jewellery has been sold, phone lines have been disconnected, heating in winter is considered a luxury, and in some areas, families are doing without electricity or running water in order to reduce expenses. Children have been pulled out of school to save on school fees and families with businesses or agricultural work rely more on the unpaid labour of household members. Some children have been sent out to work. People continue to borrow or receive financial support from family members both in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and abroad but the dependency ratio is increasing and over time this strategy is less sustainable. Opening small scale businesses and turning to very localized projects is the main direction of survival strategies besides relying on relief and humanitarian aid.

9 Hansen, Peter. "Hunger in Palestine", *The Hindu*, 10 December 2002.

The poor have been targeted somewhat effectively by relief efforts so that the number of people living at or below the subsistence level has not risen to reflect the actual economic situation. In the West Bank and Gaza food aid served approximately 1.5 million people during 2004 - roughly 40% of the population. These numbers are ten times higher than in 2000. Although relief has been effective, it has taken funds away from development aid which, according to OCHA, has declined by 70%. It is estimated that in 2005 nearly USD 100 million is needed in food aid alone.<sup>10</sup>

### Women's experience

A 2002 national participatory assessment of poverty states that "as women, men and children, describe their lives, and problems, gender is almost always a salient feature and poverty a gendered experience".<sup>11</sup> Women, children, and youth are the most vulnerable sectors in Palestinian society. "Women tend to suffer disproportionately during times of political unrest and instability" and in the Palestinian context "the hardship of daily life was felt most acutely by Palestinian women who carried the burden for responsibility within the household because of the death, imprisonment or unemployment of male members".<sup>12</sup> Women must also bear "the brunt of the anger and frustration of male relatives who feel humiliated because they cannot fulfil their traditional role as providers for the family".<sup>13</sup> There is concern that in the absence of a strong government, traditional structures that reinforce patriarchal values are re-emerging.

"Female-headed households display an incidence of poverty 1.3 times higher than households headed by men" with nearly 30% of families headed by women falling below the poverty line.<sup>14</sup> In the formal labour sector "women are disadvantaged in terms of wages and social security benefits and... there are unequal barriers for women entrepreneurs in terms of property and inheritance rights, access to credit, penal liability and the availability of childcare facilities".<sup>15</sup> Although women are very active in the informal sector they are not protected from various types of abuse. If informal work is inside the home, it is complicated by other household responsibilities.<sup>16</sup>

10 OCHA, *op cit*.

11 Palestinian Authority Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme. "Project Policy Briefing Paper: Women, Gender and Poverty in Palestine: Learning about Family Crisis, Survival and Development from Poor Women, Men, and Children", *Palestinian Participatory Poverty Assessment: October 2002*. Ramallah, p. 2.

12 Commission on the Status of Women. "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women: Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations Economic and Social Council", (E/CN.6/2005/4), 10 December, 2004.

13 Amnesty International (AI). "Israel and the Occupied Territories: Conflict, occupation, and patriarchy: Women Carry the Burden", AI Index: MDE/016/2005. London, 31 March 2005.

14 Commission on the Status of Women, *op cit*.

15 *Ibid*.

16 AI, *op cit*.

Women have had more than economic burdens placed upon them during the recent conflict since they are most often responsible for the wounded or disabled, which adds extra caregiving responsibilities. High fertility rates, especially among the poor and less educated, are a physical, psychological, and financial burden that along with early childbearing and local social traditions, present obstacles to women who wish to enter the workforce.

As funds diminish, it is common for the education of girls to be sacrificed before the education of boys. Since girls are expected to marry and live outside their parents' home, they are not considered a worthwhile investment. Social traditions also make women more vulnerable to isolation due to lack of freedom of movement. Families worry about the honour of the women in their household and are reluctant to allow them to run the risk of harassment at checkpoints, or of being unable to return home due to the unstable political situation. In addition, transportation and travel time has become more costly. This means that women have less access to their personal support network of friends and family who live in other areas. Nor do they have access to activities, services, and household decision-making that take place outside the home. They also suffer from poor access to healthcare, especially reproductive healthcare, family planning, and ante and post natal care. In some areas school attendance by girls and female teachers is dropping despite generally high enrolment rates. Women's health is in decline and it is affecting children. According to a recent World Health Organization study 70% of new mothers suffer from anaemia.<sup>17</sup>

### Government actions and policies

The Palestinian Authority has taken some steps to address gender and poverty, but the results and impact have not yet been seen. The Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) was established in late 2003, and in early 2004 it announced its goals of instituting a government commitment to gender equity, and working to promote gender equity, democracy and human rights through effective networking and advocacy. Its three areas of intervention were defined as 1) empowering women in policy and decision making, 2) combating poverty among young women and female heads of household, and 3) improving vocational and technical training opportunities for women.

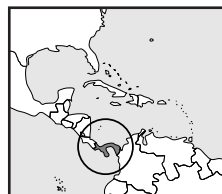
(Continued on page 256)

17 Commission on the Status of Women, *op cit*.

18 Palestinian Authority Ministry of Planning (MOP). "Draft Medium Term Development Plan, 2005-2007", Ramallah, February 2005.

## ■ PANAMA

# Social expenditure does not serve its purpose



A significant increase in public social expenditure has failed to meet the poverty reduction and equality goals in Panama, where the gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow. Without mechanisms aimed at ensuring transparency and accountability and controlling corruption it will not be possible to make progress in social expenditure management.

Fundación para el Desarrollo de la Libertad Ciudadana,  
Capítulo Panameño de Transparencia Internacional

Patricio Mosquera De La Guardia<sup>1</sup>

Panama is one of the few countries in the region that according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has met between 60% and 70% of the eight goals set in 2000<sup>2</sup> at the UN Millennium Assembly, held by world leaders to promote global development and halve poverty by 2015.<sup>3</sup>

Many of these advances are reflected in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Human Development Report 2004*, which points out that in recent decades health care, access to knowledge and living standards in Panama have, on the whole, improved steadily.

### Figures that make the difference

Although Panama is considered a medium human development country (ranked 61 among 177<sup>4</sup>), a closer look will reveal a scenario which is not very different from other Latin American countries. Panama ranks second in inequality of income distribution in the region. This, added to the huge pockets of poverty found in its territory pose an obstacle to reaching higher levels of social and human development. Inequity and poverty are crucial problems still pending on Panama's modernization and social development agenda.

According to estimates from the 2000 Census<sup>5</sup> and based on the national poverty line,<sup>6</sup> 40.5%, over 1.1 million of the almost three million Panamanians are poor. Of these, 26.5% live in extreme poverty.

The average income of the richest 20% of the population is more than 41.5 times that of the poorest 20%. The Social Policy Department of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)<sup>7</sup> has estimated that in the last decade for which statistics are available, the poorest 20% have a share of barely 1.5% of the total income, while the richest 20% receive 62.7% of total income.<sup>8</sup> This leaves little doubt that social inequity has become one of the country's main problems in recent years.

The fight against poverty and inequality is no longer just an ethical imperative. More broadly, these realities can be regarded as the cause of the social instability which, apart from affecting the country's possibilities for economic and social development, could also be placing the stability of a relatively recent democracy at risk.

### Worst conditions in rural and indigenous areas

Although Panama shows relatively good indicators, they tend to hide large differences between urban and rural areas. In the same way as in most developing countries, the dichotomy between the city and the country has profound dimensions, which are often not reflected in figures related to income distribution and poverty.

Thus, while people living in cities enjoy a medium to high level of human development, most rural and indigenous people subsist in insecure conditions. In 2000, the province of Panama, where the capital city is located, showed a medium to high level of human development (0.764), while the Ngobe Bugle area registered a very low level (0.363).<sup>9</sup>

Economic disparities are even more evident when the different geographical areas of the country are compared. The case of indigenous people is alarming, since they have a 95% probability of poverty. In the Ngobe Bugle area, the extreme poverty rate is 93.4% and in the Kuna Yala area the rate is 82.4%. The situation faced by provinces is also worrying: in Veraguas, extreme poverty reaches 48.3%, closely followed by Bocas del Toro and Coclé with levels above 43%.<sup>10</sup>

### Inefficient expenditure

Between 1990 and 1999, the per capita social public expenditure rose from USD 373 to USD 648.<sup>11</sup> Although resources for social purposes were almost doubled (at present 40% of the Government's budget is allocated to the social area), results fall short of expectations. As former first Vice-President of Panama Arturo Vallarino (1999-2004) pointed out, "the mean levels of well-being reached by families reflect large disparities between different human groups within the country".<sup>12</sup>

A cold analysis of the figures can turn out to be devastating. According to estimates carried out by the MEF<sup>13</sup> for 1997, the annual minimum amount required to eliminate poverty was around USD 406 million, while social public expenditure amounted to approximately USD 1.82 billion. This figure exceeds the former figure by far, so it was only to be expected that the country's social situation would deteriorate. While the poverty level in 1997 was estimated at 37.5% of the population, in 2000 it reached 40.5%.<sup>14</sup>

1 Economist and consultant

2 "Panamá cumple metas contra pobreza", *La Prensa*, 12 June 2004.

3 The main goal is to halve the percentage of people earning less than USD 1 a day, an amount that is inferior to income according to Panama's extreme poverty line. See footnote 6.

4 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report 2004*, 2004. In recent years, Panama's position on this index has systematically fallen. This does not imply it has gone backwards but that other countries have improved.

5 10th National Census of Population and 6th Census of Housing, 2000. [www.contraloria.gob.pa/dec](http://www.contraloria.gob.pa/dec)  
The lack of data figures after 2000 prevents this analysis from being updated. In spite of the fact that the General Comptrollership of the Republic carries out an annual Household Survey and in 2003 the Ministry of Economy and Finance carried out a Living Standards Survey, the results are not made available to the public or have not yet been processed, which has prevented non-governmental organizations from handling this information.

6 Panama's national poverty line is set at USD 2.48 a day, that is to say that people who earn below that income are considered poor. The extreme poverty line is set at USD 1.42 a day.

7 Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). *Perfil y características de los pobres en Panamá*. 1997.

8 *Ibid*, Chart 3, p. 19.

9 UNDP. *Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano Panamá 2002*. Panamá, 2002. [www.undp.org.pa/pnudpanama/](http://www.undp.org.pa/pnudpanama/)

10 *Ibid*.

11 *Ibid*. "Anexo: Gasto Público e Inversión Social".

12 Chery, Jean Marcel. "Gobierno no udo con la pobreza". *La Prensa*. Panamá, 22 June 2004.

13 MEF, *op cit*.

14 Social Watch Report 2004. *Fear and Want. Obstacles to human security*. Montevideo, 2004. [www.socialwatch.org.uy/es/informesnacionales/360.html](http://www.socialwatch.org.uy/es/informesnacionales/360.html)



The *National Human Development Report 2002* pointed out that “in spite of a high level of total social expenditure and relatively acceptable basic social services, Panama has not reached indicators similar to those achieved by other countries that are in the same situation (...) Panama does not deserve to be poor and it does not need to be poor.”<sup>15</sup>

According to Paulina Franceschi, coordinator of this report, the poor outcome results from the fact that the “execution of this expenditure under the public sector’s responsibility reflects problems regarding coverage and quality, which reduce its effectiveness and impact”.<sup>16</sup> This opinion is supported by the World Bank,<sup>17</sup> which holds that the Government’s strategies are too centralized, and its policies are not focused enough and are inefficient in achieving any reduction in poverty or inequality.

### Need for transparency and follow-up

There are other points of view. Enrique de Obarrio, President of the Panamanian Business Executives Association, believes that “inefficiency in public spending, corruption and the government’s squandering are the real cause of poverty and social inequality”.<sup>18</sup> The inadequate distribution of funds (more than half are spent on salaries and operational expenses) and the lack of continuity of existing programmes, have given rise to patch-up measures that are becoming permanent. The lack of seriousness in putting programmes into practice is evidence of the political interests of those in charge of their implementation.

Public perception is of the same opinion. According to 71.4% of the population,<sup>19</sup> corruption has played a crucial role in the negative results in the management of public expenditure. The embezzlement of public funds, just to mention one form of corruption, discloses legal deficiencies when it comes to taking action against corrupt practices, and shows to what extent impunity is rampant.<sup>20</sup>

The major challenge to overcoming poverty and improving income distribution does not lie in increasing expenditure and social investment but in ensuring that the resources allocated to the poorest sectors meet their target. This will not be achieved unless control mechanisms are introduced to ensure

transparency and accountability by authorities, thus allowing citizens to monitor the decisions and conduct of their representatives in an effective way.

### Other challenges: education, health and unemployment

In 2004, the Government allocated USD 552.7 million to education.<sup>21</sup> This amount, one of the largest in the region, represents 20.9% of public expenditure.<sup>22</sup> There is a large disparity however between private and public education.<sup>23</sup> Fifty-two percent of state primary schools have “multigrade” instruction, in which up to 20 students from first through sixth grade have their lessons in the same classroom, taught by one teacher.

Not all differences are related to the quality of education. According to the Programme to Promote Educational Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean, while the average level of education for people aged 25 is four years of schooling among the poor, people of the same age within the highest income sector get 14 years of schooling. As pointed out by the World Bank,<sup>24</sup> the state subsidy to education allocates 95% of its resources to higher education, of which only 5% of the poor are its beneficiaries.

According to figures from the 2000 Census,<sup>25</sup> 7.6% of the population are illiterate (7.1% of men and 8.2% of women). This might be considered on the whole an acceptable rate, but it contrasts with the high illiteracy rates affecting the population, women in particular, in indigenous areas. In the Ngobe Bugle area, for example, the illiteracy rate is 45.9% (35.9% of men and 55.3% of women) and in the Yuna Yala area it reaches 38.5% (26.1% of men and 48.5% of women).

Nevertheless, an objective look at education cannot fail to acknowledge advances. Among these is the launch of an equal opportunities programme that would benefit approximately 3,000 disabled students.

The health sector faces severe problems in terms of the qualitative gap separating urban from rural areas. Poor rural people live in communities that have poor access to healthcare centres and lack

quality healthcare services. In this sector there are various challenges: increased coverage for the poorest, control of infant mortality and care and prevention of diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

Yet the major challenge is the reform of the social security system. According to President Martín Torrijos, who took office in May 2004, “this is a difficult and painful situation which causes a feeling of frustration among many Panamanians”.<sup>26</sup> The Government has committed itself to take the necessary steps to maintain the health and pensions system and guarantee its feasibility. The alternatives include increasing the retirement age, while reducing the number of beneficiaries; increasing the time for contributing to retirement plans as well as increasing the sums contributed by workers and employers; and revising the way health and pensions funds are collected.

The uncertainty of obtaining and maintaining employment is still one of the main concerns of many Panamanians. According to official figures, the unemployment rate, which in the metropolitan area is 13.3%, nationwide reaches 15.2%. The female unemployment rate is as high as 18%.<sup>27</sup>

### Conclusion

Panama needs to adopt a strategy that, on the one hand, will help the country achieve an adequate balance between poverty reduction and social equality, and on the other hand, preserve the long-term stability of the economy. Inequality and poverty are crucial problems still pending on the country’s modernization and social development agenda. In order to address them, it is essential to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure for social purposes and to implement mechanisms aimed at ensuring transparency, thus incorporating the organized participation of civil society that demands the fulfilment of its rights and the monitoring of tax contributions. ■

15 UNDP (2002), *op cit*.

16 Castillo Duarte, Edith. “Panamá, uno de los países de América Latina con mayor gasto social”. *La Prensa*. Panama, 22 February 2002.

17 World Bank. *Panama Poverty Assessment: Priorities and Strategies for Poverty Reduction*. Washington DC, 2000.

18 “La postura de algunos representantes de los grupos empresariales del país”. *El Panamá América*. Panama, 26 January 2005.

19 Pulso de la Nación. “La ‘Patria Nueva’ y sus promesas de campaña”. *La Prensa*. Panama, 19 October 2004.

20 Some of these cases are presented in: Vega, Lina. “Los cuarenta días de la Procuradora”. *La Prensa*. Panama, 12 February 2005.

21 General State Budget, 2004. Details about the 2005 budget can be seen in: [www.mef.gob.pa/comunicados/2004-Comunicado-presentaci%C3%B3n%20vigencia%20fiscal%202005-22-10-04.asp](http://www.mef.gob.pa/comunicados/2004-Comunicado-presentaci%C3%B3n%20vigencia%20fiscal%202005-22-10-04.asp)

22 According to the World Bank, the State allocates 4% of its GDP to education. Source: *Social Watch Report 2004. Fear and Want. Obstacles to human security*. Montevideo, 2004.

23 On average, annually, the public sector spends USD 644 on each primary school student, while it spends USD 1,800 on a secondary school student.

24 World Bank, *op cit*.

25 10th National Census of Population, *op cit*.

26 State Communication Secretariat. “Social security reforms will ensure a country with future, stated President Torrijos”. Panama, 9 June 2005.

27 MEF Social Policy Department. “Main Social Indicators: Years 1990, 1995 and 1997-2000”. 14 June 2005. [www.mef.gob.pa/indicadores](http://www.mef.gob.pa/indicadores)



## ■ PARAGUAY

# State inefficiency and inaction



In Paraguay one third of the rural population are extremely poor and urban poverty doubled in five years. The State is plagued by cronyism and corruption, and little has been done to reduce inequality or achieve economic growth. The implementation of proposals from citizen organizations to redistribute wealth depends on the politicians and on bureaucrats accepting that democratic life requires considerable civil society participation in government decisions.

DECIDAMOS - Campaña por la Expresión Ciudadana

Verónica Serafini

### More rural and urban poverty

There has been a steady increase in poverty measured by income (national poverty line) in the last ten years. The incidence of poverty is higher in rural areas, where half the people are poor and a third live in extreme poverty, that is to say their income is lower than the cost of the basic food basket. Urban poverty has also increased - it doubled in less than five years.

In absolute terms, it is estimated that currently there are 2.3 million poor people in the country (41.4% of the population),<sup>1</sup> half of whom live in extreme poverty. This constitutes a crucial obstacle to raising people's capacities because poor nutritional levels affect their ability to learn, to make rational decisions, to defend themselves against violations of their security, to access health services and to be productive at work, in short, to lead a life with reasonable prospects for the future.

### Inequality with many causes

One of the factors which affects poverty levels is the polarization in the distribution of income. This inequality means that the education and health level of the population who cannot meet the cost of these services is lowered, creating a vicious cycle. To make matters worse, in fostering a climate of violence and political instability it deters investment and restricts possibilities for economic growth.

### The concentration of land tenure

The fact that poverty is highest in the rural sector is linked to the pattern of economic growth and to the unequal distribution of land. Agricultural growth in the last ten years has been low, and this, along with a fall in international prices for the main products in this sector, has led to a serious crisis that has been aggravated by the progressive reduction in the land available to extend and develop agriculture.<sup>2</sup>

1 General Statistics, Surveys and Census Board (DGEEC). [www.dgeec.gov.py](http://www.dgeec.gov.py)

2 Morley, Samuel and Rob Vos. "Pobreza y crecimiento dual en Paraguay", in Enrique Ganuza, Lance Taylor and Samuel Morley, Eds. *Política macroeconómica y pobreza en América Latina y el Caribe*. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), International Development Bank (IDB), Madrid: Ediciones Mundi-Prensa, 1998, pp. 669-712; Morley, Samuel. *Rural poverty in Paraguay*. Mimeo, Washington DC: World Bank, 2001.

TABLE 1

The evolution of poverty in Paraguay (%)							
	1994	1995	1996	1997/9	1999	2000/0	2003
<b>Total</b>	n/d	<b>30.3</b>	n/d	<b>32.1</b>	<b>33.7</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>41.4</b>
Extremely poor	n/d	13.9	n/d	17.3	15.5	15.6	20.1
Non-extremely poor	n/d	16.4	n/d	14.8	18.2	18.33	21.3
<b>Urban areas</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>23.2</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>39.8</b>
Extremely poor	7.8	6.8	4.9	7.3	6.1	7.1	13.4
Non-extremely poor	19.1	16.9	16.3	15.9	20.6	20.5	26.4
<b>Rural areas</b>	<b>n/d</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>n/d</b>	<b>42.6</b>	<b>41.9</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>43.4</b>
Extremely poor	n/d	21.4	n/d	28.9	26.5	25.6	28.7
Non-extremely poor	n/d	15.8	n/d	13.7	15.4	15.7	14.7

Source: General Statistics, Surveys and Census Board (DGEEC). Preliminary results from the estimation of poverty and income distribution in Paraguay - Permanent Household Survey, 2003.

Some 30% of the rural population do not own land and nearly 40% own less than five hectares.<sup>3</sup> A relatively high proportion (21.5%) have between 10 and 20 hectares. A survey carried out by the International Fund for Agricultural Development shows that rural poverty is greatest among people who own less than 10 hectares. Some 65% of farms constitute only 5% of the land, while 1%, the big landowners, hold two-thirds.<sup>4</sup> One of the main agricultural products that the peasantry produces is cotton, but the price of cotton fell steadily from USD 1,625 per ton in 1991 to USD 928 per ton in 2002.<sup>5</sup>

### Lower domestic production

Around 70% of male adults in the rural sector say that their main activity is agriculture, but less than one third of rural income comes from this activity.<sup>6</sup> Other important sources of income for peasant families are forestry, handicrafts, services and construction, but these sectors have not prospered in the last ten years. The constant appreciation of the national currency (guarani) to keep prices stable has led to an increase in imports. Consequently industrial production for the domestic market has shrunk.

3 Galeano, Luis A. *La pobreza en el Paraguay rural*. 15 June 2005. [www.derechos.org/nizkor/paraguay/1997/25.html](http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/paraguay/1997/25.html)

4 International Fund for Agricultural Development. "The Republic of Paraguay. Country Strategic Opportunities Paper". 15 June 2005. [www.ifad.org/gbdoc/eb/83/e/eb-2004-83-r-14.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/gbdoc/eb/83/e/eb-2004-83-r-14.pdf)

5 Statistical data from the Central Bank of Paraguay.

6 Robles, Marcos. "Paraguay rural: ingresos, tenencia de tierras, pobreza y desigualdad". *Economía y Sociedad*. Nº 1, 2000, pp. 5-27.

In addition, there has been a fall in public infrastructure investment in buildings and roads, and also a lack of financing for private investment, both of which had a negative impact on the creation of alternative jobs in rural areas.

There are other demographic, educational and institutional reasons why poverty is mostly concentrated in rural areas. There is a higher chance of extreme poverty occurring where there are more dependents in a family, and it is in rural areas that families on average are larger and have more young children.<sup>7</sup>

### Illiteracy and fewer state services

The rural illiteracy rate is more than double the rate in urban areas. It is estimated that 80% of the rural population are functionally illiterate,<sup>8</sup> while in the cities the average number of years of study among people aged 25 and over is almost double that of people in rural areas.<sup>9</sup>

Poverty is mainly concentrated where Guarani (an indigenous official language together with Spanish) is the only language spoken and where the basic economic activity is agriculture on family small-holdings.<sup>10</sup> Another factor linked to poverty is the educational level of heads of households: more than 80% of the rural population have received only primary education or no education at all.

7 Lee, Haeduck. "A profile of poverty in Paraguay. A Background Report". *Economía y Sociedad*. No. 5. Year 2, September 2001, pp. 45-90.

8 Morley, Samuel and Rob Vos. *op cit*.

9 Fernando de la Mora. *Principales resultados*.

*Encuesta Integrada de Hogares 2000/01*. DGEEC, 2002.

10 Morley, Samuel and Rob Vos, *op cit*; Morley, Samuel, *op cit*.





The State provides fewer services in rural areas, and education, health and potable water services are more limited. For example, the second most common reason for non-attendance in schools is that they are a long way from people's homes. Only 15% of the rural population have access to potable water whereas 60% of city-dwellers have access to this service which is so important for preventing some of the transmissible and parasitic diseases which are the main causes of infant mortality.<sup>11</sup>

Government support for the rural population is not effective. The coverage of agriculture development services is limited and sporadic; the experimental stations do not have adequate resources and do not concentrate on developing new crops. Financing for production is problematic: in 1990 only a very small proportion of the rural population (around 7%) had access to formal credit facilities, and there are no credit lines for buying modern machinery, equipment or other inputs.<sup>12</sup>

### *The expanding informal sector*

The poorest urban households are those in which the main economic activity is agriculture or trade, while the informal sector in cities has grown considerably. It is characterized by low productivity, income instability and a lack of social security.

The economic expansion that took place in the 1970s, along with urbanization, made certain sectors more dynamic, and this raised the income levels of workers in those sectors. Households with the lowest incidence of poverty are those whose heads work in the financial, electricity and transport sectors.<sup>13</sup> The construction sector expanded at the start of the 1980s but then contracted in the 1990s and since only minimal training is required for this work a large number of workers were affected.

More than 50% of heads of poor households are independent workers or have small businesses with less than five employees. This sector of the workforce is one of the most vulnerable because their income is so erratic and because they operate outside the formal wages regulations, particularly social security benefits.

Other demographic and social factors also have an influence on the probability of being poor in a city. Again, being able to speak only Guaraní has a negative impact on household income.

An analysis of poverty in Paraguay shows that there are big differences between different regions: in the capital city of Asunción, only 18.9% of the people are poor but in the regional departments of Concepción and San Pedro more than half the population live in poverty, and next on the list are Caazapá, Misiones and Caaguazú, in which poverty levels exceed 40%.<sup>14</sup>

### *The positive impact of women heads of households*

When the sex variable is considered, it emerges that in Paraguay the link between women and poverty is not as marked as in other countries. Households

headed by women are not significantly associated with higher levels of poverty: while 33.3% of male heads of households are poor only 32.6% of female heads of households are in this situation, despite income differences. We should also bear in mind that, in their main job, employed women earn 28.1% less than men.<sup>15</sup> Higher levels of schooling and employment among mothers are associated with lower levels of poverty, and this underlines the importance of policies that include gender equity.

According to some preliminary studies, the fact that the head of household is a woman has a positive impact on the quality of housing and on the educational level of children. The household surveys show that, even in poor households, having a female head means that the infrastructure is better, that more children receive systematic education, and that repetition rates are lower.

### *Obstacles, government inefficiency and civil initiatives*

A basic factor that prevents people from improving their quality of life is lack of income, but there other factors like high illiteracy rates and low educational levels which reduce the chances of finding employment, of engaging in productive enterprises, or of incorporating new knowledge and technologies into work.

One of the main reasons for rural poverty is that land ownership is concentrated in the hands of a few big landowners. Therefore in order to combat this problem, clear rules must be made which give the rural population easier access to land, capital and technology. State support is also needed to redistribute wealth. This will lower inequality levels and foster economic growth, which will have a positive impact not only on rural poverty but also on urban poverty through rising consumption and the production of manufactured goods.

There is a close relation between poverty and the way democracy works. Extreme inequality conditions the functioning of democratic institutions and makes it more difficult to implement political decisions. In places where income is more equitably distributed, a higher proportion of people consider that democracy is preferable to any other form of government, and they also have more confidence in democratic institutions.<sup>16</sup>

### *Cronyism versus citizen empowerment*

The quality of a democracy is connected to the capacity of individuals to influence the authorities and public policies, and to have control of their own lives in terms of their physical, human, intellectual and financial resources, and beliefs, values and attitudes. Therefore the fight against poverty must be based on a process of empowerment which fosters effective social participation in public policies at the diagnosis, monitoring and evaluation stages.

The characteristics and causes of poverty are so complex that policies geared to eradicating it must have a focus that is equally complex. Money subsidies to

extremely poor households are only a temporary palliative if not accompanied by policies for structural change which guarantee access to the land, employment, credit, technology and human capital needed to achieve productive and sustainable work conditions.

In Paraguay the public sector is fraught with corruption and cronyism, and plans that are implemented outside the framework of organized participation not only fail to eradicate poverty but make the poor even more dependent on the political actors involved.

### *Unfruitful projects*

Although public spending has been increasing, the social and economic plans and projects undertaken have not achieved the results expected because spending has been irrational, management from the public sector is weak, and party politics have great weight in decision-making.

Only educational policies have survived various successive governments. Despite a big increase in the budget for education, all that has been achieved is a wider coverage of primary education, and there has not been much progress at other educational levels or in the quality and training of teachers.

Efforts to combat poverty in different regions and different institutions have been isolated from each other, and the many dimensions of the causes of poverty were not taken into account. Only in 2005 did the country finally adopt a national poverty and inequality reduction strategy, but it does not have the economic means, the trained human resources or the institutional infrastructure needed for implementation. Although the conceptual approach holds that poverty is a structural problem with different complex dimensions, the projects have been designed from the angle of merely providing aid and tackling problems in the short-term. They do not involve redistributing wealth, reactivating the economy, creating jobs or socio-demographic measures such as promoting reproductive health or providing quality education.

### *The creation of social capital by civil society*

The lack of a long-term national plan which specifies coordinated action for the fight against poverty is an obstacle to the potential benefits of isolated actions since available human, financial and natural resources are not taken advantage of.

In response to this situation civil society has created spaces for discussion and for formulating demands, and also for following up and evaluating public action so as to have an influence on government decisions and, ultimately, on the living conditions of the population. This is in line with international commitments including those made at the Earth Summit (1992), the World Summit for Social Development, the IV World Conference on Women (1995) and the Millennium Development Goals (2000).

Neighbourhood committees and rural, youth and other kinds of organizations are constantly making diagnoses and proposals, thereby creating social capital. The effectiveness of their efforts depends to a large extent on society as a whole, but the political and bureaucratic classes will also have to change their manner of relating to society in a way that is geared to improving the quality of democracy. ■

11 Fernando de la Mora, *op cit*.

12 Molinas Vega, José. "Principales ejes de discusión. Hacia una estrategia nacional de reducción de pobreza". Unpublished. Asunción: Social Action Secretary, UNDP and World Bank, 2001.

13 Morley, Samuel and Rob Vos, *op cit*.

14 DGEEC. *Resultados preliminares de la estimación de Pobreza y Distribución del Ingreso en Paraguay - Permanent Household Survey 2003*.

15 DGEEC. Calculations based on the Permanent Household Survey, 2003.

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## ■ PERU

# Not much of an economy for the people



The transfer of social programmes to the decentralization process, with new opportunities for citizen participation in local government, is a complex process that has just started in Peru under the presidency of Alejandro Toledo, while the lack of consultation with civil society in decisions relative to poverty alleviation plans has generated a sense of unease.

### Conferencia Nacional sobre Desarrollo Social (CONADES)

Héctor Béjar

During the 1995-2005 period Peru was marked by political changes, although at the macroeconomic level the neoliberal approach did not produce deep transformations. The first stage covers the end of Alberto Fujimori's administration (1990-2000)<sup>1</sup> and the second includes the administration of the temporary president Valentín Paniagua (2000-2001) and Alejandro Toledo (2001 to present). The latter stage represents a rather difficult attempt of transition to democracy.

### Fujimori: focused policies

Apart from selling a considerable number of national assets, dismissing civil servants, leading national enterprises to ruin and installing a corrupt regime together with secret, illegal procedures against subversion, the Fujimori administration implemented focused programmes to reduce extreme poverty; these programmes followed the guidelines of multilateral financial institutions and focused on the construction of schools, healthcare centres, sanitation systems and massive distribution of food.

At the end of the Fujimori period, poverty levelled off in relative terms but increased in absolute terms. In 1985, five years prior to the 1990 structural readjustment, 42% of Peruvians were affected by poverty. In 2001 the figure was 54.8%.<sup>2</sup>

Over this period, Peru adhered to the declaration and Action Platform of the IV World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995), and started plans to combat violence against women. However, the already existing National Family Planning and Reproductive Health Programme and its actions in Voluntary Surgical Contraception were contrary to commitments assumed in terms of women's rights.

In 2002, an investigations sub-committee from the Ministry of Health reported that during the Fujimori administration the programme had implemented a "voluntary" sterilization plan for men and women - especially in the poorest areas - and between 1990 and 1999 sterilized almost 340,000 people. It is estimated that between 1996 and 1997, more than 250,000 women were sterilized.<sup>3</sup>

### Toledo: more participation but little change

The administrations of Paniagua and Toledo, in turn, did not dare integrate social programmes into a comprehensive vision with clear objectives, which led to further fragmentation and overlapping. Though political manipulation was eradicated in most cases, an assistance approach to the provision of services kept the poor dependent on the State.

The process took place in the midst of citizenry's dissatisfaction given the continuation of the neoliberal macroeconomic approach, the weakness of the new authorities to try and punish the corruption of the previous Government, its reluctance to repair damage caused by the internal armed conflict (1980-2000)<sup>4</sup> and by new corruption cases.

The most outstanding aspects of the Toledo administration were the beginning of decentralization and regionalization<sup>5</sup> and the opening up of new coordination and participation instances for civil society, namely the local coordination councils and the regional and local participatory budgets.

In addition, other social participation forums were sought. Political parties, churches, business organizations and trade unions were convened to discuss a long-term national agreement. However no results were achieved as the agreement is not legally binding and has not been enforced. Moreover, it did not secure the participation of regional fronts<sup>6</sup> or left-wing parties.

The Mesa de Concertación de Lucha contra la Pobreza (Negotiating Committee to Combat Poverty) was made up of representatives from different State, church and civil society sectors, comprising over 1,000 provincial and district negotiating tables throughout the country integrated by representatives of the State and popular organizations, who design the objectives and actions relative to public intervention at different levels.

### Regionalization and decentralization

After the regionalization and decentralization laws were passed, elections were held in 2002 to choose presidents for the 25 regions. These presidents, who tend to have different social policy criteria, lack resources - together, they only receive 18% of the public sector budget, estimated in PEN 38,441 million (USD 12 billion) - and have not taken any remarkable steps. In addition, the majority of them are authoritarian in style, which means that the regional coordination councils are not working.

At the level of local governments the situation is different. The new General Law on Municipalities grants them broad powers, including the possibility to create and manage social programmes, while the new economic scheme increases their resources. In any case, the transfer of social programmes to the regionalization and decentralization framework is a complex and slow process that has only just begun.

### The Beijing agenda

Since 2000, Peruvian governments have not implemented any significant measure in relation to the Beijing gender agenda. Official recognition to participate in nutritional planning activities of women's organizations working in soup kitchens seems insignificant given the lack of official support to the National Plan on Equal Opportunities for Men and, which has not yet been approved.

The struggle against domestic violence has ceased to be a State policy since the institution in charge now ranks low in the hierarchy of the administration. Violence is present in many different ways, namely, in the national and international trafficking

1 Fujimori was inaugurated as president in 1990 and in 1992 led a coup. After his re-election in 1995 he amnestied members of the army and police convicted for violating human rights. In the April 2000 elections he once again ran for office despite constitutional impediments. After corruption scandals in November of the same year, he fled to Japan and resigned as president.

2 *National Survey on Living Standards (ENNIV) 1985, ENNIV 1991; National Household Survey (ENAHO) 1994, ENAHO 1997, ENAHO 2001.*

3 Ministry of Health, "Final report on the application of voluntary surgical contraception (AQV) in the 1990-2000 period". 8 June 2005. [www.trdd.org/PERU\\_Informe\\_Final\\_AQV.pdf](http://www.trdd.org/PERU_Informe_Final_AQV.pdf)

4 In 1980, the Partido Comunista del Perú-Sendero Luminoso (Peruvian Communist Party-Shining Path) and in 1984 the Movimiento Revolucionario Túpac Amaru (Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement), launched an armed uprising against the State. This war went on until 2000.

5 Law No 27680, dated 2002, regulates decentralization and municipal management.

6 Regional fronts are social movements that comprise, depending on the case, grass-roots organizations, trade union federations, labour unions, neighbours' groups, businessmen and micro-entrepreneurs' associations and others.

of women (particularly girls) for the sex trade; the lack of moral and material reparation of victims of guerrilla groups or State repression bodies; the absence of civil and social rights, the unrecognized labour of housewives, etc.

According to figures from the National Statistics and Information Institute, 44% of the economically active population are underemployed, of whom 54% are women.<sup>7</sup>

### Indebted to poverty

The need to spend more on social policies clashes with the restrictions imposed by repayment of the foreign debt. The Government defined the priority social programmes as Individual Health, Collective Health, Initial Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Social and Community Promotion and Assistance, allocating PEN 38 billion (USD 11.7 billion) to these programmes between 1999 and 2003. A high percentage of this amount goes to salaries, goods and services.<sup>8</sup>

In 2004 the Government developed 19,803 small projects to combat poverty, reaching out to 11.9 million beneficiaries with an investment of USD 1.5 billion.<sup>9</sup> This represents approximately 12% of the budget for the public sector, estimated at USD 12 billion.

More than twice that amount is allocated to paying off the foreign debt. Servicing the debt accounts for 27.5% of the public sector budget and competes with social investment and welfare expenses, which account for 19.6% of the budget.<sup>10</sup> The Public Social Security System is short of funds and tax contributions are inadequate for it to comply with its obligations. Over the past five years, the Treasury covered on average 81% of those payments.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, the Private Retirement Fund Administrators, controlled by monopolistic banks, handle individual savings without any type of control from the account holders themselves.

During the 1995-2005 period, social investment fluctuated between 30% and 40% of the Public Sector Budget, which represents a total social investment of approximately USD 35 billion.<sup>12</sup>

### Social policy by sectors

Public education faces serious problems in relation to access of rural and poor population to primary education. Also, it is not unusual to find one single teacher in charge of all primary education grades in rural schools, where only half of the boys and girls attend the school grade corresponding to their age. Only 20% of children who start primary school complete secondary education.<sup>13</sup>

In public health, the lack of State investment in prevention campaigns has led to an increase of malaria and dengue. The creation of a Comprehensive Health Insurance, aimed at providing attention to the poor population of the country, has run into infrastructure deficiencies: a shortage of doctors willing to work for low salaries in poor urban neighbourhoods and rural areas and a permanent financial deficit.

In a population of 26 million, only 7.7 million are in some type of paid health insurance system, 5.4 million non-poor people have no insurance at all and 13.3 million live in poverty without medical insurance.<sup>14</sup> In 2000, only 57.95% of childbirths were assisted by skilled health personnel.

For housing programmes, the Government resorted to citizens' contributions made during the previous decade. If the Fujimori administration abused the resources of the National Housing Fund to invest them in infrastructure works in poor neighbourhoods, the Toledo administration used them in programmes specifically directed at lower-income middle-class sectors. However no support is given to personal construction efforts by hundreds of thousands of families in the poor settlements mushrooming on the outskirts of main cities.

Regarding poverty alleviation, figures reveal that in 2002, around 14.6 million people (54.3% of the population) could not satisfy their basic needs. What is more, 23.9% of the population are extremely poor.<sup>15</sup>

Social policy is administered by three separate projects: the National Plan to Overcome Poverty, The Rural Development Strategy and the Food Security Strategy. The Glass of Milk Plan is still being carried out, managed by municipalities that distribute milk to committees made up of mothers from poor families; and the National Food Programme, that serves soup kitchens. Both have been criticized by the academic right-wing who considers them wasteful due to their excessive bureaucracy.

In reaction to this criticism, early in 2005 the Government announced the implementation of the Programa Juntos ("Together" Programme), under which beneficiary families would receive 30 US dollars a month provided they met certain obligations in relation to education and public health. The decision led to mixed reactions, as it was taken without participation of the National Agreement, the Negotiating Committee to Combat Poverty and sectors involved in social policies.

When current social indicators are compared with those of 1995, the year in which the World Conference on Women in Beijing and the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen were held, infant mortality drops from 55.5 per 1,000 live births (girls 48.8 and boys 68.8) in 1995 to 43 per 1,000 live births (girls 39.6 and boys 50.1) in 2000.<sup>16</sup>

In 1996, the maternal mortality rate was 252 for every 100,000 live births, while in 2000 it dropped to 185 for every 100,000 live births, and in 2005 to 180 per 100,000 live births (290 per 100,000 in rural ar-

reas).<sup>17</sup> Chronic malnutrition affected 24.8% of children under the age of 5 in 2000 (national average for the whole period), the rate reaching 60% in some rural areas.<sup>18</sup>

As a whole, though social indicators improved between 1995 and 2005, they leave much to be desired. Poverty and chronic infant malnutrition have not been overcome.

### Civil society demands

Civil society, in turn, has shown an intense activity in terms of social policies. Even before the preliminary sessions of the Copenhagen and Beijing conferences, a network of non-governmental organizations created the Conferencia Nacional sobre Desarrollo Social (CONADES) or National Conference on Social Development. Its objective is to open a forum for permanent debate around poverty and social policies, with participation of the State, private stakeholders and civil society. Since then, the movement has grown and held nine annual conferences with an average of 2,000 delegates per conference.

For the last ten years, CONADES has been building a platform around the most important topics in social policy. It has supported with determination the work of the Negotiating Committee to Combat Poverty, and participated in the discussions of the National Agreement. Also, it fostered the design of participatory budgets in the 25 regions of the country and in most of the country's 2,000 municipalities. In October 2004, it decided to support a citizens' initiative, the World Call to Action against Poverty, by creating a special committee to promote the campaign on a national level.

The core idea of CONADES is that macroeconomics should be at people's service. Its members contend that the main obstacle to Peru's full implementation of the Beijing, Copenhagen and Monterrey agreements<sup>19</sup> is the fact that a large share of national savings is being exported to creditor countries in payment for the foreign debt.

The macroeconomic programme launched by Fujimori and maintained by Toledo provides enormous benefits to transnational companies. These operate the few profitable sectors of the economy and prevent the State from using tax revenues to finance the struggle against poverty. It is a case of double levying: servicing foreign debt takes one-fifth of the annual budget and it is not possible to obtain further funds given the fact that large companies enjoy privileges. Under such conditions, it is clear that the Millennium Objectives and Goals will not be attained unless somewhere along the way the organized people and civil society exert enough pressure to bring about the political changes necessary for a deep reform of State policies and of the State itself. ■

7 ENAHO 1998.

8 Public Expenditure Monitoring and Evaluation System

9 Vega Carreazo, Rudecindo. "Policies to overcome poverty". Presentation before the Technical Secretariat of the Inter-Ministerial Commission on Social Affairs, 27 January 2005.

10 Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). www.mef.gob.pe

11 MEF; Banco Central de Reserva del Perú. 2005-2007 Multi-annual Macroeconomic Framework.

12 MEF.

13 Ministry of Education.

14 Ministry of Health. *Health Insurance Distribution 2001*.

15 MEF; BCRP, *op cit*.

16 National Statistics and Information Institute. *Demographic and Family Health Survey 1992 and 2000*.

17 Latin-American Demography Centre. *Demographic Bulletin*, No 65, 2000; United Nations Population Fund. *Status of the Peruvian Population 1997; Demographic and Family Health Survey 1996 and 2000*.

18 Ministry of Health, 2000.

19 International Conference on Financing for Development. Monterrey NL, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002.

## PHILIPPINES

# Ten years over, ten years to go



Ten years have gone by since the Copenhagen and Beijing summits and the Philippines is still struggling to deliver on its social commitments. The country may one day wake up to face a frightening scenario: a generation of malnourished, uneducated, unhealthy Filipinos living in insecure environments.

Social Watch Philippines

Isagani Serrano<sup>1</sup>

### A scary future

The Government is compromising long-term sustainability by not investing enough in human security. Instead of social cohesion we may have a more divided society by 2015.

Table 1 shows how the projections of Social Watch Philippines contrast with the Government with respect to the country's chances of achieving minimum entitlements for the poor.

### Exclusion by poverty and hunger

Poverty declined by 15.5% in the last 15 years, from 40.2% in 1990 to 24.7% in 2005. Over 21 million Filipinos remain poor today.

However official figures are contested, particularly the drop of almost 3% from 27.5% in 2001. The Government has been criticized for reducing poverty through statistics, changing its methodology by lowering the poverty line and reducing family size from six to five members. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) itself asserts that the new methodology resulted in a lower poverty headcount and the adjustment of trends. The ADB believes poverty worsened between 2000 and 2003.

Unemployment is another disputed area. Unemployment rose from 10.4% in 2003 to 11.3% in January 2005. These rates are already high enough yet many believe that the figures were adjusted to hide the reality of massive unemployment and underemployment. The new method of determining rates uses weeks instead of quarters as a time reference and as the basis for trend analysis.

Rural poverty has not improved at all and in some provinces it has even got worse. Living conditions for the growing urban poor are not much better either. Already more than half of Filipinos are city inhabitants and their numbers are expected to rise by 2015.

Inequality continues to fester. The Gini coefficient hovers at 0.48. The income ratio of the richest quintile to the poorest quintile was 16 to 1 in 2000 compared to 13 to 1 in 1990. Average household

TABLE 1

Projections on meeting the MDG targets			
MDG TARGETS	OFFICIAL ASSESSMENT	SWP ASSESSMENT	
		Overall prospects	Prospects for the poorest regions & provinces
Poverty	High	Less likely	Unlikely
Hunger/Nutrition	Medium	Unlikely	Very unlikely
Safe water	High	Access, Yes Quality, No	Unlikely
Education: Participation	High	Likely	Less likely
Education: Survival	Medium	Unlikely	Unlikely
Education: Gender	High	Parity, Yes Equality, No	Parity, No Equality, No
Child Mortality	High	Less likely	Unlikely
Maternal Health	Medium	Unlikely	Very unlikely
HIV/AIDS	High	Likely	Growing threat
Environment	—	Less likely	Unlikely
On Slum Dwellers	High	Less likely	Unlikely

income has declined by 10%, from PHP 175,000 (USD 3,230) to PHP 144,000 (USD 2,657). Household spending also went down by 8% accompanying shrinking incomes. The poor continue to be denied access to resources like land and capital.

The country is trapped by debt, with a perennial trade deficit and unable to raise sufficient revenue to finance its budget. The national debt has risen to USD 65 billion. Consolidated public sector debt is USD 107 billion.

Debt servicing eats up 85% of government revenues and if off-budget debt payments are included could run up to 51% of government expenditure for 2005.

Economic growth has been steady for 15 years, except during the 1997 Asian crisis. But it is a lopsided, narrow, inequitable and jobless growth.

The Philippines has been under-investing in basic education, at levels generally below 3% of GNP and lower than most neighbouring countries in Southeast Asia. UNESCO recommends an expenditure level of at least 6% of GNP.

The same is true for health. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the Philippines ranks among the lowest (161<sup>st</sup>) in health spending and 126<sup>th</sup> in its overall health level. It spends far less

than other middle-income countries and is therefore unable to generate comparable health conditions.

A World Bank study of 10 Asia-Pacific countries in 1993 showed that the Philippines had the second lowest per capita health expenditure and health spending as a percentage of GDP.<sup>2</sup>

Roughly the Philippine budget is spent as follows: 33% for debt servicing, 32% for government employee salaries, 12% to basic education, 1.3% for health services, with between 10-20% lost to corruption.

The 9<sup>th</sup> National Convention on Statistics estimated that it will take 41 years for the average poor Filipino to break away from poverty. In mid-2004, the ADB reported that about 12 million Filipinos were trapped in extreme poverty and surviving on less than one dollar a day. The Philippine incidence of extreme poverty was lower than the Asian average of 21.4% but it was the highest in Southeast Asia after Laos (30.4%) and Cambodia (34.2%).<sup>3</sup>

1 This report is based on various studies and local and national consultations done by Social Watch Philippines in 2004 and 2005.

2 Philippine Institute for Development Studies. "Health Care Financing Reform: Issues and Updates". *PIDS Policy Notes* # 98-06, 1998.

3 "Hunger stalks 15% of Pinoy households", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 5 October 2004.





A Social Weather Stations (SWS)<sup>4</sup> survey revealed that hunger rose to record levels in Metro Manila and Mindanao in 2004. Nationwide 11% of household heads surveyed said their family had nothing to eat at least once in the last three months, two percentage points higher than the previous year. In March 2005 this rose to 13% or an estimated 2.1 million families. Since SWS began monitoring the overall incidence of hunger in 1998, March 2001 registered a record high of 16.1%.

Hunger incidence in Mindanao rose to 16% which is the highest in the country. In the Visayas Islands it rose to 13%, almost doubling from 6% in September 2003.<sup>5</sup> Chronic poverty in Mindanao may be explained by the failure of export crop production to bring progress to the island. Agribusiness companies in Mindanao have brought benefits only to a few agribusiness capitalists and landed families. Half of all provinces in Mindanao are also among the country's 25 poorest. At least half the population in most of these provinces live below the poverty threshold.<sup>6</sup>

The Government admits a low probability of meeting the target of 50% reduction in the number of people suffering from hunger based on the following evidence:

- chronic dietary energy deficiency affecting particularly young children, and pregnant and nursing women;
- protein energy under-nourishment among pre-school and school children;
- micronutrient deficiencies particularly of Vitamin A, iron and iodine among a large group of the population across ages.<sup>7</sup>

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources says that close to 25 million Filipinos (33%) do not have access to safe drinking water while only 26.25 million (35%) have access to water for sanitation.<sup>8</sup> This explains the vulnerability of the poor to water-borne diseases, such as diarrhea, a leading cause of infant and child mortality.<sup>9</sup>

In some provinces only 30% or less of households have access to safe drinking water. Half of the provinces will not meet the target of improved access.

### Exclusion in education

There is hardly any improvement in school access, survival and learning outcome. Primary education participation rates remained virtually stagnant over the last three years. An estimated 10% of children 6-12 years old are not in the school system. Cohort survival and completion rates<sup>10</sup> improved marginally while dropout rates at both primary and secondary levels remain high at 7.2% and 12.8%, respectively.

Survival, more than participation, remains the bane of the education sector. A World Bank study noted that "for every 1000 entrants to Grade 1, 312 do not complete primary school, 249 finish the six-year primary at an average of 9.6 years due to repetition, and only 439 finish primary in six years." Even more alarming, of the "688 who complete primary school, only 7 graduates score at least 75% in achievement tests in English, Science and Math, which is the standard for mastery of required competencies."<sup>11</sup> Despite rising school attendance there has been no impact on functional literacy.

Based on the UNESCO Education For All (EFA) Development Index - a composite measure based on enrolment ratio, literacy rate, gender-specific survival rate up to grade 5 - the Philippines ranked 44<sup>th</sup>, falling behind Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and China. In quality of education as measured by survival rate, the Philippines fared no better than some of the poorest countries in Africa such as Burkina Faso and Ethiopia.

The Philippines is one of the few developing countries which has achieved basic parity between boys and girls in school access, retention and achievement. Girls have consistently out-performed boys in gross and net primary enrolment rates, cohort survival to grade 6, repetition and dropout rates and in learning achievement. This was observed throughout the 1990s and holds true generally for both rural and urban areas.

### Exclusion in health care

According to National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS)<sup>12</sup> statistics from 2003, the infant mortality rate declined from 34 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990, to 29 in 2000. However 40 out of every 1,000 children born in the Philippines die before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The Philippines has one of the highest maternal mortality rates (172 deaths per 100,000 live births) in the world. In 2000, 60% of pregnancies in the Philippines were considered high-risk due to poor health conditions and narrowly spaced childbirth. The 1998 NDHS<sup>13</sup> revealed that the risk of a Filipino woman dying from complications related

to pregnancy or childbirth is 1 in 100. The 1998 NDHS statistics also show that women in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Northern Mindanao face nearly double the risk, with maternal mortality rates at 200 and 300 per 100,000 live births respectively.

Social Watch Philippines and others have consistently asserted that the abovementioned maternal mortality rate masks the depth of the social problem located in many parts of the country where the figures are much higher. A fact sheet published by the Population Commission and the UN Population Fund<sup>14</sup> revealed that 3,650 women Filipino women die each year due to pregnancy-related causes.

The high maternal mortality rates in many parts of the country are the result of a lack of access to quality healthcare services and facilities, particularly in the rural areas and large communities of the urban poor. Most births are attended by traditional birth attendants or *hilots*, many of whom lack the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure safe and healthy deliveries.

Regional disparities in access to maternal care have been noted. The number of women receiving pre-natal care from a health professional registered highest in Western Visayas (93.4%) and in Metro Manila (92.1%). In ARMM, pre-natal care is available only to 49.9% of women and only 56% of deliveries were attended by skilled health professionals. Among the regions ARMM registered both the lowest percentage of births delivered by a health professional (21.7%) and births delivered in a health facility (10.7%).

The Philippines exports many doctors, nurses and caregivers yearly, yet many women and children in rural areas die without seeing a doctor. The average hospital bill is three times the average monthly income<sup>15</sup> despite the Generics Act of 1988, which intended to provide safe and effective but affordable drugs to low-income households. Prices of drugs and pharmaceutical products are the highest in Asia, 250% to 1,600% higher than in neighbouring Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.<sup>16</sup>

### Right to a healthy environment compromised

The rehabilitation of our environment has seen little progress since 1990. The Philippines continues to face serious challenges in urban air and water pollution, natural resource degradation, and declining quality of coastal and marine resources. The Philippines is among the richest countries in the world in biodiversity, but its rate of deforestation is also one of the highest. Laws intended to arrest, if not reverse, the decline have been failing.

(Continued on page 257)

4 Social Weather Stations was established in 1985 as a private non-profit social research institution. Its members are social scientists in economics, political science, sociology, statistics, market research, and other fields ([www.sws.org.ph](http://www.sws.org.ph)).

5 Collas-Monsod, Solita. "Low real income, more equal distribution", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 4 September 2004.

6 De la Rosa, Billy. "Food for all: Can we achieve it? (Hunger stalks the country's food basket)", *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 10 October 2004.

7 Herrin, Alejandro, et al, 1993 as quoted by Manasan, Rosario, et al. *Financing Social Programs in the Philippines: Public Policy and Budget Restructuring*. Makati City: Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 1996.

8 Lacuarta, Gerald G. "25M Pinoys have no access to clean water - DENR" *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 26 March 2003.

9 Department of Health. *Philippine Health Statistics*, 1998.

10 Cohort survival is the ratio of the number of students in a particular grade to the number of students in the previous grade the previous year.

11 Cited in the Education For All (EFA) plan, Department of Education, August 2004.

12 *Ibid.*

13 National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) data cited in the *Philippine Progress Report on the Millennium Development Goals*, January 2003.

14 Rina Jimenez-David's column in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 16 July 2004.

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16 Feria, Monica. "Fighting the high cost of health," *Philippine Graphic*, 27 September 1999.



## ■ PORTUGAL

# Poor internal and external policies



One out of five people live below the poverty line and the risk rate for persistent poverty is 15%. Women are discriminated against in high level positions and domestic violence is still a problem. Social welfare policies and practices are inadequate and development aid is concentrated on self-interest technical matters.

### oikos - Cooperação e Desenvolvimento

Adélio Fonseca / Catarina Cordas / Marisa Gonçalves  
Patrícia Melo / Rita Veig

Despite the efforts made by Portugal to improve social cohesion since its entry into the European Union (EU) in 1986, the performance of social policies in recent years is not very encouraging. The existence of a population at risk of poverty, unequal income distribution, discrimination against women in public administration and high level managerial positions, together with the lack of transparency and evaluation of social policies point to major structural problems and the inadequacy of social welfare policies and practices. Additionally, as a donor country, Portugal has a poor performance record in terms of the quantity and quality of its official development aid.

### More vulnerable to poverty

Portugal is the country with the highest risk of poverty rate<sup>1</sup> among the EU15.<sup>2</sup> In 2001 the proportion of the population whose income did not reach 60% of the median national income was 20%. The efforts made to combat social exclusion brought the poverty risk rate down from 23% in 1995 to 20% in 2001.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Portugal still has one of the highest rates in the EU, and is 5% above the EU average. The elderly (over 65 years of age) and children (0 to 15 years old) were most at risk with rates of 31% and 27% respectively. Households comprised of one elderly person have a rate of 46%, with women being the most exposed. Single-parent families are also at risk with 39% as well as large families which have a risk rate of 49%. The risk rate for persistent poverty is 15%, which remains worrying despite having fallen slightly. In 2001 roughly 22% of children fell into this category. Inequality in income distribution, as measured by the income quintile ratio, was also higher in Portugal (6.5) than anywhere else in the EU in 2001.

1 According to Eurostat, the risk-of-poverty rate is the share of the population with an equivalized disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, set at 60% of the national median equivalized disposable income (after social transfers).

2 EU15 stands for the original 15 Member States of the EU.

3 Eurostat. European Community Household Panel data.

The incidence of poverty is also very strong among households where social benefits such as pensions and unemployment subsidies are the major source of income.<sup>4</sup> We are therefore faced with a poverty situation characterized by the appearance of new at-risk groups including the handicapped, ethnic minorities and drug addicts, among others.

Over two million people, one out of every five, live below the poverty line defined by Eurostat. If we consider the proportion of poor people from the point of view of subjective analysis, which is a method where people declare the extent of difficulty they face meeting their needs, the values climb to about 35% of males and 44% of females nationally. There is also unofficial data<sup>5</sup> which states that there are over 200,000 people suffering from hunger in the country.

Recent economic circumstances have contributed to the deterioration of poverty conditions, especially due to the increase in unemployment as well as the growing influx of immigrants. At the same time, the high indebtedness levels<sup>6</sup> reached throughout the 1990s explain why numerous households find themselves in constrained living conditions.

Portugal's situation is characterized by the following structural problems:

- Shortcomings of the social protection system, which has the lowest per capita public expenditure in the EU.
- Low education levels: in 2002, only 20.6% of 25 to 64 year-olds had completed upper secondary education, and the early school-leaving rate of 45.5% contrasts enormously with the EU average of 18.8%.
- Sectoral restructuring is hampered by low skill levels, in an economy based on labour-intensive, low-paid work together with low participation in further training (2.9% in 2002), which also explains why productivity growth is so low (0.3% in 2002, unchanged since 2001).

The relationship between poverty and the policies developed to address it reveals that:

- The level of social public expenditure as a percentage of the GDP is lower than the EU average. In 2001, the social expenditure per capita on social benefits was only 56.9% of the EU15 level (EU15 = 100).<sup>7</sup>
- The social protection assured by the contributive subsystem of the Social Security System is more efficient than the protection provided by the solidarity and family subsystems. There is a high proportion of both persistent (22.8%) and chronic poverty (49.8%) in the overall poverty numbers. Of all social benefits, only pensions have a positive and significant impact on poverty reduction: 49.1% on persistent poverty, 19.8% on intermittent poverty and 22.9% on chronic poverty.<sup>8</sup>
- The impact of the minimum guaranteed income (RMG) on reducing the incidence of poverty is only 1.6%. Its impact on reducing the poverty gap and severe poverty is much greater, 17.7% and 36% respectively.<sup>9</sup> The expenditure of this programme as a percentage of the GDP was 0.25% in 2000 and 0.19% in 2001. In the latter year the RMG had already benefited 7.5% of the population, with 3.6% being beneficiaries.<sup>10</sup>
- The inter-generational reproduction of social inequalities is due to the scarce and deficient social safety net provided to children, the elderly and the handicapped.

### The gender gap

If compared to most developing countries, discrimination against women is not a major problem in Portugal. In legal terms, since the April Revolution in 1974 and EU membership in 1986,

4 Rodrigues, CF. *The Redistributive Impact of the Guaranteed Minimum Income Programme in Portugal*, Working Paper, Centro de Investigação Sobre Economia Portuguesa, Lisbon, September, 2004.

5 da Costa, Bruto. Social Economic Council, [www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/2003/05/feature/p03051021.html](http://www.eiro.eurofound.eu.int/2003/05/feature/p03051021.html)

6 In 2001, 96.6% of all families were indebted. Bank of Spain and Portuguese Consumers Association.

7 Ferreira, LV. *Social Protection and Chronic Poverty - Portugal and the Southern European Welfare Regime* Faculty of Economics, University of Oporto/Superior Institute of Economics and Management, Portugal, 2004.

8 Nunes, F. "Dinâmica de Pobreza e efeitos redistributivos das Prestações Sociais - uma aplicação a Portugal", Seminário de Programa de Doutoramento em Economia, Instituto Superior de Economia y Gestão, 2003.

9 Rodrigues, CF, *op cit*.

10 Ferreira, LV, *op cit*, p. 4.

there is a formal gender equality and women's rights commission (CIDM),<sup>11</sup> but there are too many cases of violence and oppression against women.

Domestic violence is a persistent problem and studies into this issue usually reveal a male pattern of aggression. In recent years, however, there is a growing number of male victims of psychological violence. In 2004 the Portuguese Association for Victims Support reported 6,459 cases of aggression against women (up from 3,914 in 2000) and 882 against men (up from 544 in 2000).

Women are entitled by law to equal pay for equal work as compared to men but as CIDM reports "inequalities still persist and are very difficult to deal with."<sup>12</sup> The salary gap decreased slightly in the last 12 years from 23.8% in 1992 to 22.6% in 2004. According to Eurostat figures, which report a 9% pay gap, Portugal has a much lower wage gap than the EU15. This is due to women being mostly employed in low income jobs, where there is less difference between the salaries of men and women than in higher income jobs.

According to the CIDM when it comes to nomination, women are often discriminated and segregated. In public and private administration women hold 29.4% of executive/director posts and 44.2% of middle level technical posts. The gender gap is significant both in positions of national and local political decision-making: in 2001 local elections 5% of the elected were women, in 2005 women represent 17.8% of the members of Parliament and there are only two women among 16 ministers in the current socialist cabinet.

The most controversial gender problem in Portugal is abortion. It is illegal except in cases where the mother's life is endangered, the foetus has serious problems or pregnancy is the result of rape. Thousands of women die every year or suffer serious health problems because they cannot get professional help and are forced to undergo unsafe abortions. For years there has been strong controversy in public opinion and among politicians, especially when women are prosecuted. Legal changes are urgent but they continue to be postponed.

### International cooperation

In February 2005 a new government was elected and its programme has taken the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as a reference for external politics and international cooperation. Portugal has ratified all of the agreements mentioned in the Millennium Declaration and is a member of the international donor community for official development assistance (ODA).<sup>13</sup> It is therefore committed to MDG 8, which aims to create a more effective system for

the rich countries to contribute to the eradication of poverty in developing countries. The ODA/GNI ratio grew steadily from 1998 to 2003, when it decreased to 0.22%. The preliminary data on 2004 indicates a further drop of ODA, in real terms, to 0.21% of GNI, if the large debt rescheduling operation to Angola is excluded.

In 2005, during the General Affairs and External Relations Committee meeting of the EU, Portugal committed itself to the following schedule in order to achieve the ODA target of 0.7% of gross national product: 0.39% in 2006, 0.51% in 2010, and 0.7% in 2015.

For the most part Portugal continues to direct ODA to its former colonies in Africa and East Timor,<sup>14</sup> which are among the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)<sup>15</sup> and therefore scores well in this MDG target.<sup>16</sup> Most of the Portuguese contribution is bilateral assistance to these countries. As for multilateral aid, Portugal contributes to the European Development Fund, which finances the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP). Portugal also gives financial and technical contributions to specific programmes of the UN, the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Another component of ODA is macroeconomic support such as budgetary deficit relief and debt forgiveness. Portugal's participation in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative includes a USD 22 million contribution to its trust fund and USD 218 million in debt relief in the form of debt forgiveness or rescheduling. In 1998 Portugal established the Monetary and Exchange Cooperation with Cape Verde, providing an annual line of credit of up to USD 50 million.

Portugal has subscribed to the EU's trade and development commitments. These include those made within the framework of the Everything But Arms initiative, the Cotonou Agreement,<sup>17</sup> and the Europe-Mediterranean Partnership which provides access to the EU market to North African products. With the objective of promoting a favourable investment climate for two-way trade, Portugal has also made Investment Protection and Promotion Agreements with Mozambique and Cape Verde, and Dual Taxation Agreements with Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde. In July 2004 the Business Council of the Portuguese Speaking Countries Community was created in order to promote trade, pursue economic development and work towards the eradication of poverty. Despite the efforts mentioned above, in 2003 the total ODA allocated to trade policy and trade development, was one of the lowest among the Developing Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD countries at only USD 3 million.

In spite of the importance of basic social services for the eradication of poverty in the LDCs, the proportion of public aid directed to this sector is significantly below the average of DAC members. Education, for instance, received 34% of the total bilateral ODA in 2003, but only 2.2% was allocated to basic education. Portugal's performance in this area is insufficient: priority is given to teaching the Portuguese language which is hardly essential to development, and the largest share takes the form of technical cooperation. In fact, as much as 95%<sup>18</sup> of the bilateral ODA allocated to education is for scholarships to universities in Portugal for students from Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and East Timor, or to send Portuguese teachers to these countries, or to finance training, technical advisors and studies. The effectiveness of this kind of development aid has not been evaluated and no doubt it is less of a priority than investments in basic education such as training primary school teachers or allocating funds to education budgets to pay local teachers and build schools.

In the health sector, a large part of aid takes the form of tertiary support (4.2%),<sup>19</sup> with only 0.2% invested in health infrastructure, basic nutrition, infectious disease control, health education, and health personnel development. With 78% of its bilateral ODA in 2003<sup>20</sup> going towards technical cooperation, the real nature of Portugal's contribution is clear.

### Conclusion

According to the Eurobarometer on "Attitudes towards Development Aid",<sup>21</sup> in 2004 the great majority of Portuguese (87%) had never heard about the MDGs. Oikos is committed to raising awareness on the issue and mobilizing civil society on Global Call to Action against Poverty initiatives, but it is difficult to capture the media's attention and to convince politicians to state their commitments. Also, as long as political and economic interests prevail in the Governments' orientations for development cooperation, the MDGs and other developed country initiatives for global poverty eradication will continue to fall short of expectations. ■

11 Comissão para a Igualdade e para os Direitos da Mulher.

12 UN Division for the Advancement of Women "Review and Appraisal in the Commission on the Status of Women in 2005. Portugal 2004", [www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/responses/PORTUGAL-English.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/Review/responses/PORTUGAL-English.pdf)

13 Represented by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

14 Instituto Português de Apoio ao Desenvolvimento (IPAD). In 2003, East Timor and the African Portuguese-speaking countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, S. Tomé e Príncipe) together received 80% of the Portuguese bilateral ODA.

15 Except Cape Verde and East Timor as of 2002.

16 The UN reference target for this indicator (ODA in proportion of the GNI) is 0.15%.

17 The Cotonou Agreement (2000) is a 20-year partnership agreement between the EU and 77 African, Caribbean and Pacific nations.

18 DAC/OECD in International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (2005), *Global Monitoring Report 2005 - Millennium Development Goals: From Consensus to Momentum*. The World Bank, p. 93.

19 DAC/OECD. For example, the area of medical treatment in Portugal for evacuated patients from the Portuguese-speaking African countries.

20 This percentage is considerably above the DAC average.

21 [http://europa.eu.int/comm/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_222\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_222_en.pdf)

## ROMANIA

# On the doorstep of European integration



Although the prerequisites for accession to the European Union and the financial support the EU provides to this end may encourage the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals, the costs of incorporation should also be taken into account at the time of reviewing these commitments, especially when it comes to increases in prices, the disappearance of small and medium enterprises and rural poverty.

Civil Society Development Foundation

### Millennium Development Goals in Romania

In February 2004 the Romanian Government, with strong support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published the national Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR). While the MDGR certainly represents a step forward towards fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), there are some areas of concern.

The most important issue is that there is no clear implementation authority for the MDGs. While eight ministries were engaged in the formulation of the MDGR, there is no indication that there is a genuine coordination effort by the Government and a centralized mechanism through which the implementation of MDGs is supervised. UNDP Romania had a decisive role in mobilizing resources and information from the state ministries and agencies for the report. Another aspect worth noting concerns the participation of national civil society organizations (CSOs) in the overall strategy for achieving the MDGs.

Although the foreword of the MDGR states that over 20 national NGOs took part in the publication, there is little trace of their participation. We were only able to find one concrete example of NGO involvement in MDG-related activities. The National Campaign "Leave No Child Out" run by the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations active in child protection in collaboration with UNICEF is cited in the English version of the Report<sup>1</sup> and is an example of activities aimed at meeting national Target 7 - "Increase the literacy rate of the Roma population". However this very example is missing from the Romanian language version of the MDGR.

### Health and environmental sustainability

The national MDGR clearly shows a series of positive trends towards achieving the MDGs on a national level. An important number of new policies have been established particularly in order to curb negative poverty and social exclusion trends. However it is also true that most of the commitments made in the MDGR were either national policies al-

ready in place, or are part of other international agreements and commitments. The specific targets were chosen so that the Government would not have to risk designing new programmes and measures. Just like other candidate countries to the European Union (EU), as part of the accession process Romania has had to prepare programmes to address issues such as social inclusion, access to services, protection of vulnerable groups, and development cooperation. The Millennium Declaration responds to concerns similar to those within the EU's Social Charter. Both documents seek to promote human development by expanding people's choices and opportunities.<sup>2</sup> In this way many of the commitments made to the EU can be regarded as vows that the corresponding MDGs will be carried out and that they will eventually be achieved.

Despite the work being done as part of the EU integration process, there continue to be areas of concern. The incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in the country is one of the highest in Europe. Although 2003 reported the lowest level of TB cases in 20 years, Romania continues to rank 4<sup>th</sup> among European countries in the number of people living with TB. The health system is struggling with serious problems (among them warnings that the system is on the brink of collapse<sup>3</sup>) and people living with TB tend to live in poverty. It is unlikely that the necessary progress will be made to curb this trend and to meet Goal 6 which aims to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS, TB and other diseases.

The social dimension of environmental sustainability is one of the weakest points in the MDGR. Access to safe drinking water continues to be a problem for the majority of the population living in rural areas. Authorities have set as an objective doubling the proportion of people with sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015, in order to meet National Target 19 of MDG 7 and ensure environmental sustainability. While this goal can easily be achieved for the population in urban areas where 92% of the population have access to drinking water provided by centralized water supply systems, the situation in rural communities is totally differ-

ent. According to the MDGR, only 34% of the rural population have access to such services. Limited access to drinking water is one of the causes of poor health levels.

Additionally a 2003 World Bank poverty analysis revealed that almost the entire rural population lacks access to sanitation services.<sup>4</sup> Several government bodies have already shown genuine interest in evaluating and finding solutions to this problem.<sup>5</sup> Integration to the EU may provide a solution since it is already providing substantial support through pre-accession financing programmes. Given the scale of the problem and the fact that investment in infrastructure in other sectors is regarded as more urgent, it is unlikely that this target will be achieved.

### Corruption

Corruption and a lack of administrative capability are two of the most serious problems affecting development and are considered serious obstacles to achieving the MDGs.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the 2000-2004 period a number of international institutions and watchdog organizations warned about administrative capability and corruption problems among public authorities, and how these problems affect all sectors of society.<sup>7</sup>

Several of the social programmes developed by the Government throughout this period have been criticized for being populist electoral tools of the ruling party, rather than sustainable social policy initiatives.<sup>8</sup>

### Gender prejudices

While interest in improving the situation of women has increased thanks to the activities of CSOs working in this field, there are still many obstacles to

1 Government of Romania - UN System in Romania. *Millennium Development Goals Report*. Bucharest, 2003. [www.undg.org/documents/3654-Romania\\_MDG\\_Report\\_-\\_English.pdf](http://www.undg.org/documents/3654-Romania_MDG_Report_-_English.pdf).

2 UNDP. MDG Report Central Europe, Sub-regional Chapter, 2004.

3 Institutul Pentru Politici Publice (IPP). *Criza În domeniul s, n, t, ii*, 16 April 2003.

4 World Bank. *Romania: Raport de Evaluare a Saraciei*. Vol. I. Main Report, October 2003.

5 Comisia Anti-Saracie si Promovare a Incluziunii Sociale (CASPI). *Raport de monitorizare CASPI. Volumul I: Monitorizarea la nivel national. Implementarea Planului National Anti-Saracie si Promovarea a incluziunii sociale - PNAinc*, December 2003.

6 World Bank - International Monetary Fund, *Achieving the MDGs and Related Outcomes: a Framework for Monitoring Policies and Actions*, 26 March 2003.

7 Reports by the European Commission, Transparency International, Amnesty International, the Romanian Academic Society (SAR).

8 Romanian Academic Society (SAR), *Romania in 2005. Raport de analiza si prognoza*, January 2005.

improving the status of women. Although various policies and measures have already been initiated by the Government, one of the most important obstacles is the traditional attitude within Romanian society which relegates women to positions of low status in public life.

Issues faced by women today range from a lack of access to quality health care services, which continues to endanger women's lives, to political under-representation. A May 2004 report by Amnesty International estimates that one in every five women is abused by her spouse or partner.<sup>9</sup> The report also stated that in general society regards these attitudes as normal.

Women's access to health care services is a large problem. Reproductive health indicators rank the country among the worst in Europe even when compared to neighbouring countries. The problems are even more serious in rural areas.

Women continue to have poor political representation despite some attention paid to women by certain political parties during the latest national elections in 2004. In statistics released by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Romania ranks 75<sup>th</sup> out of 191 states with a modest percentage of women occupying top political positions. Only 11% of parliamentarians are women.<sup>10</sup>

### Military presence in Iraq and the new National Security Strategy

Romania is allied with the United States in the military operations in Iraq. While other countries participating in the Coalition have started to think about gradually withdrawing their troops from Iraq, Romania has decided to reinforce its military presence and there are no plans to recall the troops.

In an interview on television in 1995, President Traian Basescu - then member of Parliament - admitted that Romania's presence in Iraq is equivalent to the occupation of another state.<sup>11</sup> Consequently the President tried to obtain legal justification for the country's military presence in Iraq by supporting the adoption of a pre-emptive strike security strategy which will allow national troops to attack a perceived aggressor without the UN's specific permission.

A poll taken in March 2005 shows that 55% of citizens disapprove of the presence of Romanian soldiers in Iraq, while only 36% support it.<sup>12</sup> However until now there have been no meaningful initiatives on the part of national CSOs questioning the country's involvement in Iraq.

9 Amnesty International, 26 May 2004.

10 "Deputatele PSD cer egalitate cu barbatii pe listele de parlament", *Adevarul*, 8 March 2005.

11 Andrea Dinescu. "Axa Washington-Londra, anulata de SUA si Uniunea Europeana, atunci cand interesele comune o cer. Dr. Derrin Smith: Romania trebuie sa mentina bunele relatii atat cu NATO, cat si cu UE", *Gardianul*, 19 April 2005.

12 Centre for Urban and Regional Sociology (CURS), "Sondaj de opinie reprezentativ la nivel national", 28 March 2005. [www.curs.ro/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=index&catid=&topic=3&allstories=1](http://www.curs.ro/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=index&catid=&topic=3&allstories=1)

In August 2002 Romania went against its commitments to the International Criminal Court (ICC) by becoming the first country to sign a bilateral agreement with the United States exempting American nationals from ICC jurisdiction.<sup>13</sup> While the decision was widely criticized abroad by foreign governments and international NGOs, there was little reaction within civil society.

Public opinion appears to accept official claims that national interest is at stake, and completely ignores international law and UN principles. As supporters and promoters of human security goals, CSOs must manifest their opposition of this political agenda based on practical rather than moral or ideological considerations.

### Integration into the EU and its prospects for the MDGs' achievement

As already mentioned, future membership in the EU constitutes an important vow that the MDGs will eventually be met by Romania. The EU structural and cohesion funds will allow for the development and improvement of infrastructure as well as for regional development. Also once within the EU there will be new pressures on the Government to work for environmental sustainability. There are also signals that EU membership will contribute to economic growth through direct investments by foreign companies.

These macroeconomic and medium to long term projections form the main group of arguments presented by advocates of EU integration. Nevertheless there are key elements missing from the mainstream debate which would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the implications of EU integration. The immediate social costs of EU membership are usually only presented indirectly but they are relevant to the MDGs agenda.

The MDGR based its predictions on the possibility of achieving National Target 1 of Goal 1 (halve the severe poverty rate by 2009, as compared to 2002 as the point of departure) on the World Bank's forecast of constant economic growth for the country<sup>14</sup> if other important indicators suffer no substantial modifications. The same report identifies "the possible outbreak of social crisis due to rising prices for certain basic goods and services and the adverse economic impact among those sectors already badly hit"<sup>15</sup> among the possible threats to achieving this target. According to the latest estimations of the National Bank of Romania, at the time of accession to the EU the prices for several crucial utilities will suffer substantial changes: the price of electricity will rise by 30%, while the price for heating will double.

Other economic agencies have already warned of increases in prices for foodstuff. In order to meet EU consumer and environmental standards private companies will need to invest. These integration

13 Coalition for the International Criminal Court. "ISA manoeuvre to weaken International Criminal Court". October 2002. <http://web.amnesty.org/web/wire.nsf/October2002/ICC>

14 World Bank. *Romania: Raport de Evaluare a Saraciei*, op cit.

costs will not only be felt by the private sector but will also be passed along to the consumer in the form of higher prices.

These price modifications will unlikely be matched by a corresponding increase in wages. These short-term negative transformations are likely to affect the part of the population already identified in the MDGR as being vulnerable. Moreover, there are also estimates that the cost of the changes necessary to become competitive in the EU market will lead to the disappearance of at least 25% of small and medium enterprises which, in turn, will lead to unemployment. Some industries will be harder hit than others. For example the textile industry, on which several regions are dependent, might shrink substantially after EU integration. This is of particular concern since most of the sector is highly feminized and women are more susceptible to unemployment and poverty.

Another vulnerable sector is the population working in agriculture. The severe poverty<sup>16</sup> rate in rural areas is at least twice as high as the severe poverty rate in urban areas for each year analyzed, with the distance between these values remaining constant. Although only 47% of the population live in rural areas, 73% of the people affected by severe poverty come from these areas.<sup>17</sup> The first years after European integration may prove to be a very difficult period for poor residents in rural areas.

CSOs at the same time argue that EU membership represents an opportunity for them to more effectively and globally engage in MDG initiatives.

The basis for cooperation has already been established and is likely to develop as integration within the EU occurs. However a Eurobarometer survey from February 2005 (Attitudes towards Development Aid)<sup>18</sup> showed that 88% of EU citizens had never heard of the MDGs. The situation is even worse in new member states, where the percentage is generally over 90%. It is very likely that a similar phenomenon is also taking place in Romania and it is for this reason that CSOs must take action.

### Conclusions

This has been the first attempt by a Romanian organization to write a national report within the Social Watch framework. The evidence produced by this report provides justification for the need for more proactive engagement on the part of CSOs to promote, support and contribute to the fulfilment of the MDGs. We therefore commit ourselves to work for the creation of a national platform of CSOs to support the agenda set forth by the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Millennium Summit as well as various human rights conventions. ■

15 *Ibid.*

16 Romanian MDG Report, *op cit.*

17 *Ibid.*

18 European Commission, *Attitudes towards Development Aid*. Special Eurobarometer, February 2005.



## ■ SPAIN

# New pronouncements. A new era?



In 2004 there was a big change in Spanish foreign policy and commitments to international cooperation, but the challenge remains to increase aid to the levels that have been set internationally, and to adopt a multi-disciplinary perspective for development. It is equally important to modify the system whereby foreign aid is conditional upon the acquisition of Spanish goods and services, and to cancel the foreign debts of the poorest countries.

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Pablo Martínez Osés

### New foreign policy

Since the beginning of the present administration in 2004, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's Government has taken Spanish foreign policy in a dramatic new direction by shifting to a multilateral stance and making serious commitments to the developing world.

The change has been particularly marked in the sphere of international cooperation, at least as a declaration of intent, and it is reflected in the leading role Spain has played in the Alliance against Hunger<sup>2</sup> presented to the United Nations in 2004. This is in complete contrast to the previous Government of José María Aznar (1996-2004), whose foreign policy was built around the coalition against international terrorism under the unilateral leadership of the United States.

The present Government gave an early signal of its intentions to give a greater importance to international cooperation when it re-named the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by adding to it the words "and Cooperation". It also reinforced the administration's policy planning and evaluation apparatus and upgraded the old Planning Office to the rank of Under-Secretariat of State. Some of the new posts have been filled by specialists in international cooperation for development.

The first results were not slow in arriving. At the start of 2005 a new Directing Plan for Spanish Cooperation (DPSC) for the period 2005-2008 was passed. This essentially embraces the principles of the international development agenda, which include combating poverty through specific and quantifiable commitments, support for public policies, and most importantly the will to contribute to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) outlined by the United Nations in 2000.

### Pending challenges, little progress

The agenda needed for Spain to reach the MDGs is clear. Donor countries will have to make an effort to increase the quantity and quality of their Official Development Assistance (ODA) and eradicate foreign debt from the public accounts of poor countries. They must do this in line with MDG 8 (promote a world association for development) and in the framework of the various norms and agreements (including the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development, the Barcelona Commitment of 2004, the 2005 Report on the Millennium Project, and the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonization).

Until then, current international trade rules constitute serious obstacles for impoverished countries, which can only be removed by the group of economic powers of which Spain is part.

Although the DPSC involves a public commitment on the part of the Government to increase ODA to 0.5% of GNP in 2008, the budgetary framework does not yet have the annual evolution needed to reach this figure, so there are no effective guarantees that the target will be attained.

In each national budget, ODA increases will have to be discussed and balanced against other areas of public spending that have traditionally been given priority. The new Government's first budgets to go through Parliament have run into serious difficulties reaching only 0.3% of GNP, basically because of resistance from the Government's own economic team.

The Minister of Economics and Finance must take responsibility for complying with the electoral commitments and public declarations made by Rodríguez Zapatero, who has said repeatedly that the aim is to reach 0.7% by the end of his (as yet unconfirmed) second term in office, in 2012. This is good news given that the MDGs should be reached only three years later.

Experience has taught us to be cautious about the chances of the Government actually reaching the levels of aid that it has promised. It has not yet implemented its first complete budget, and it is too soon to analyze its orientation or the extent to which it will be executed.

Spain has forged links with the countries that are committed to exploring the feasibility and suitability of new mechanisms for financing development through the Alliance against Hunger. Yet again,

we can only evaluate this from declarations of intent since little has been done so far in the framework of this alliance, and Spain seems to be concentrating on making studies and specific proposals about the possibilities provided by remittances from immigrants to their countries of origin.

The reorientation of ODA so that it can make a contribution to the MDGs will mean big changes in the whole Spanish system of cooperation including its direction and priorities, management capacity and the overhaul of some instruments.

### Assistance or conditions?

In Spain conditioned aid<sup>3</sup> still has too much weight in terms of the proportion of investment allocated to aid, as well as in terms of the influence over political decisions exerted by commercial interests related to the expansion of the national economy. On numerous occasions the analyses made by the Development Assistance Committee (of the Economic Cooperation and Development Organization) has pressed Spanish governments to reduce the specific weight of conditioned assistance.

The Development Assistance Fund is still coming in for a lot of criticism because of its inefficacy in the fight against poverty. This instrument has yet to be revised. Its regulations were passed by the previous Government without parliamentary debate, and in practice priority is given to support for internationalizing Spanish enterprises rather than to the development needs of the countries that receive aid.

In the new DPSC, assistance will continue to go mainly to middle-income countries, based on the comparative advantages that stem from historical, cultural and language links. Even accepting the virtues of these advantages, it is evident that to combine them with the MDG agenda, Spain would have to adopt specific strategies to combat the inequality and inequity that are devastating the lives of millions of people in this group of countries.

Although the fight against poverty and the fight against inequality have synergies, they each involve specific strategies that make them markedly different.

1 The Coordinator of NGOs for Development - Spain (CONGDE) is made up of 94 NGOs and 14 autonomous coordinators that together amount to more than 400 organizations working for international cooperation.

2 The Alliance against Hunger is an international initiative led by the President of Brazil, Luis Ignacio "Lula" da Silva, and supported by Chile and France.

3 Assistance that is linked or conditioned is any aid, donation or loan which is granted by the donor under conditions. Most commonly it is conditioned to the acquisition of goods and/or services from the donor country.





It is essential for the cooperation system to have precise tools to ensure that cooperation with middle-income countries is oriented to both these aspects.

The DPSC does not take these differences into account, so the geographical priority given to middle-income countries may mask cooperation that is still very focused on promoting Spanish commercial and cultural interests rather than on the needs of the beneficiary countries themselves.

### The question of quantity and quality

What is more alarming is that Spain's international commitment (Copenhagen 1995) to give between 0.15% and 0.20% of GNP to the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is very small. In recent years Spain has only allocated around 0.04% to these countries. To reach the proposed percentage its policy of giving priority to middle-income countries does not have to be abandoned, but it is essential to combine it with multilateral bodies and/or global funds, at least while the country does not have new capacities or specialists that could make up for its lack of experience in cooperating with this group of countries.

Spain has also failed to comply with the Copenhagen commitment to allocate at least 20% of total ODA to basic social services. At the moment only around 13% goes to these services. The Government recently announced new contributions to the Catalytic Fund of the Basic Education Fast Track Initiative and to the Global Fund against HIV/AIDS, and this is welcome and can be taken as an unequivocal and concrete sign of good intentions in this area. However, in the case of HIV/AIDS, it is worrying that while the DPSC gives priority to 23 countries only two of these, Mozambique and Namibia, have a high incidence of the disease.

There is no doubt that reforming the cooperation system requires an enormous improvement in administrative capacity, and it is essential to bring in multi-disciplinary teams. Development requires different focuses, and these have to be combined and coordinated intelligently to make intervention more effective.

The Government has made an effort to optimize planning capacity, but the expected results could be seriously jeopardized if this is not accompanied by investment in multi-disciplinary research and resources to sustain the implementation of the new plans.

### Cancelling the debt

When it comes to foreign debt, the explicit demands of the international agenda are only too clear: the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs) will only be able to reach their MDGs if 100% of their bilateral and multilateral debts are cancelled immediately. The HIPCs initiative has not worked so it is essential for main creditor countries to cooperate.

It would require no great effort from Spain to cancel its bilateral debt since it was mostly contracted by middle-income countries. The Government has announced agreements with Ecuador and Argentina to exchange foreign debt for investment in education. But before they are put into practice it is necessary that the funds that are freed are used to finance national education strategies instead of projects that are unconnected with this, or for aid to remain tied to the purchase of Spanish goods and services.

It is sad to see that foreign debt cancellation was not even mentioned in the general budget of 2005, and it seems that a special fund for this purpose will have to be set up. This would have its own annual budgetary allocation, and it would serve as another tool in the debt cancellation policy. It could receive resources not utilized by the Development Assistance Fund, and it would facilitate contributions to multilateral institutions and at the same time make it easier to plan the year. The Government would make twice-yearly reports to Congress and the Senate about the fund's operations.

### Commercial interests versus development

The big challenge that remains is for the present Government to make its policies more coherent particularly in the area of its commercial interests and its position in different trade negotiations connected to attaining the MDGs.

Spain has not made any great contribution to the task of creating a fairer system of international trade. In the ambit of European negotiations it has not challenged the dominating position of the interests of the big European producers or support for a production model that is intensive in the use of capital, toxic agro-products and labour rather than for the commitments arising from the IV Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which took place in 2001 in Doha, Qatar.

Spain has also opposed reform of the conditions under which cotton is traded. It has supported guaranteed prices and quotas for sugar, and this indirectly favours the developing countries, but these countries' access to European Union markets has not been facilitated. And Spain's position with regard to rice is sure to be very conservative because it is the biggest cereal producer in the European Union.

While the Government has been transparent as regards information on its positions in trade negotiations, it has not allowed non-government development organizations into official delegations, and it has only called meetings to give information, never for consultation. There is nothing to show that this stance will change.

### Urgent measures for a unique opportunity

To sum up, Spain must guarantee the adoption of more far-reaching objectives in its policies for ODA

cooperation, foreign debt and international trade: 0.7% of GNP, the objectives of the 2003 Rome Forum on Harmonization, cancellation of 100% of the foreign debt of the HIPCs, and proposals for changing the norms and the representation of poor countries in the WTO.

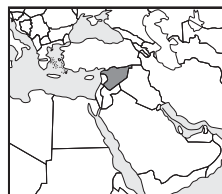
In the multilateral ambit, and specifically when it comes to cooperation through financial institutions for international development, Spain should make its trade policies more coherent by setting up some concrete mechanisms to implement the recommendations in the DPSC. In particular this means ensuring coordination among the different ministries involved, social participation, and dialogue with Parliament and with civil society.

To promote this, a very wide group of social organizations and movements across the country have joined the Poverty Zero campaign in the framework of the Global Call to Action against Poverty. The aim is to get a commitment from all political forces with parliamentary representation to support a State Pact for the Eradication of Poverty that includes the following measures:

- It is most urgent to increase ODA to 0.7% of GNP, with at least one fifth of this amount allocated to basic social services (education and health) and a fifth to the least developed countries. Conditional aid is to be avoided.
- To improve the quality of assistance by reforming the cooperation system to enhance its capacities and bring in multi-disciplinary teams specialized in the fight against poverty and in promoting sustainable human development.
- To cancel 100% of the bilateral foreign debt of the least developed countries of which Spain is a creditor, and to press the Government to take the lead in urging the international financial institutions to cancel these countries' multilateral debts.
- To take initiatives to exchange bilateral foreign debt for development so that the resources freed can be oriented to reaching the MDGs.
- To change international trade norms that currently favour rich countries and their businesses and prevent governments in impoverished countries from deciding how to combat poverty or protect the environment.
- To eliminate the subsidies that allow the products of rich countries to be exported at prices below production cost thus damaging the basic livelihood of rural communities in poor countries.
- To protect public services from liberalization and privatization so as to ensure the right to food and access to potable water and essential medicines. ■

## SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

# Gender equity: among the best of the worst



Poverty is strongly linked to human rights issues. Lack of economic growth, low human capacity and widespread corruption hinder poverty eradication efforts, while public participation to shape social and economic policies is very limited. Some attention, however, is being paid to women's empowerment in governmental decision-making.

Centre for Environmental and Social Development

Issam Khoury

### Economic overview

Syria's economic growth rate continues to struggle due to a weak fiscal and monetary policy, which concentrates on depriving the public sector of its economic surplus and disables it from renewing its factors of production. The per capita GDP growth rate averaged only 1.8% between 1990 and 2000.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile employment policies have led to structural deficiencies in the economy and to the emigration of most of the qualified workforce.

The 2005 General Budget for Syria has been confirmed for the fiscal year with total allocations of SYP 460 billion (USD 8.8 billion) compared to SYP 449.5 (USD 8.6 billion) in 2004. A budget draft law, which according to Prime Minister Najji Ettry aims to effectively balance government revenues and expenditures, has also been approved. The draft law hopes to balance the Government's finances while improving local production and the standard of living. Additionally, the draft law concentrates on growth while assigning adequate resources to investment projects. It also includes controls on current spending, especially administrative spending. Finally, the draft law aims to increase the ratio of tax revenue to national product.

The economic growth rate, however, is expected to rise due to:

- A rise in world oil prices, which would improve economic revenues and the balance of trade, and provide the state budget with extra revenue. Petroleum derivatives industry in Syria will produce 58% of public sector revenue in 2005 and 25% of the total national product.
- An increase in agricultural sector activity to 29% of national production
- Increased participation of the private sector. Private sector production reached 57.9% of total economic production in 2001, compared to 68.5% in 1970 and 57.4% in 1980. Most

agricultural products are produced by the private sector, whereas the processing industry represented only 8.6% of the private sector in 2001 compared to 14.1% in 1990.

- Improved private sector participation in capital markets as the result of policies which encourage this activity, despite a drop from 55% in 1990 to 53.2% in 2001.

### Eliminating poverty and hunger

The United Nations estimates that 25% to 27% of the population live below the poverty line. The population growth rate reached 2.7% between 1994 and 2002, and current growth rates mean that Syria's population will reach 25 million by 2010. Meanwhile, the economy only grew at a rate of 3.4% in 2002 up from 2.5% in the mid-1990s. This growth has not benefited all citizens, since the wealthiest 20% of the population receives nearly all of the national income and the unemployment rate is estimated at 20%. Disguised unemployment is even higher, and roughly 12% of university graduates and 30% of high school graduates are unemployed.

A family income study by the Central Office of Statistics reported that average family spending per month rose from SYP 17,900 (USD 345) in 1997 to around SYP 20,600 (USD 397) in 2005. The same study identifies 9.9% of the population as poor. The proportion varies between the city and the countryside, with the poverty rate reaching 12.1% in rural areas.

During 2004 in its efforts to join the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, the Government raised the real income levels of state workers by raising salaries and fees by 20%. The Government was also obliged to raise private sector wages, which improved economic growth by 1% in addition to the 2% attributed to the rise in oil prices. The Government also raised teachers' salaries in remote provinces by 30% compared to 1991 salaries. Unfortunately these increases do not compensate for the poor working conditions of teachers, the long distances they must travel or the high housing costs and taxes they must pay.

Despite these wage increases, teachers can be included in the disguised poverty rate. Perhaps the average poverty rate of 9.9% estimated by the Central Office of Statistics is too optimistic; however an accurate poverty rate is difficult to estimate due to the lack of independent survey data.

Hunger is not prevalent although the situation of many families has caused some children to become homeless, forcing them to scavenge for food to survive. There is fear that the number of these cases will increase due to economic difficulties such as a sudden collapse of the currency or the failure of oil production to improve economic performance.

Poverty is strongly linked to human rights issues. Economic growth is required in order to pull Syrians, exhausted by high taxes, out of poverty. Low human capacity levels and widespread corruption in the public sector have also contributed to poverty. The Government's anti-corruption publicity campaign had little effect. Some groups believe that the campaign was a ploy to avoid the real change called for by scholars, researchers, members of Parliament and government ministers.

The Government does not possess the instruments needed to bring about reform and it does not allow any public participation in these matters. New economic projects survive only because of foreign assistance and management - this fact itself points to the failure of Syria's economy to protect citizens from the growing poverty cycle.

### Women in government

The UNDP Gender-related Development Index, which measures the same three dimensions as the Human Development Index - a long and healthy life, knowledge and a decent standard of living - but adjusts them for inequalities between men and women, ranked Syria 88<sup>th</sup> among 144 countries in 2002. Despite its low ranking, the country fairs well for an Arab state, since many states do not even figure on the list due to a lack of gender-related data.

Syria is considered a pioneer among Arab nations since women have been allowed to vote and stand for election since 1953. In the League of Arab Nations, Syria is second only to Djibouti in giving women the constitutional right to vote.

Women's participation in Parliament has steadily increased from 2.2% in 1973 to 12% in 2005.<sup>2</sup> With the Government's support, Syrian women expect to reach a 30% level of political participation. Women's participation in Syria is near the rates of women in the United States, where they represent

1 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*. 2004. [hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/](http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/)

2 Inter-Parliamentary Union, "Women in national Parliaments". [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

15.2% of the House of Representatives and 14% of the Senate. Syrian women still lag far behind Rwandan women who have the highest level in the world with 48.8% representation in Parliament.<sup>3</sup>

The first woman minister to be appointed was the Minister of Education and National Instruction in 1976. Two women ministers were appointed in 1991 - Dr Najah El-Attar as Minister of Culture and Dr Salha Sun'ur as Minister of Higher Education. Currently there are two women ministers - the Ministers of Immigration and of Social Affairs and Labour - out of a total of 32 ministers. These two ministries are usually assigned to women. To date, women have not been appointed to any of the more powerful ministries even though there are many women who are qualified and experienced for the positions.

Women joined the diplomatic corps in 1953 and the first woman ambassador was appointed in 1988. Currently there are three women ambassadors. Dr Buthaina Sha'baan, Expatriate Affairs Minister, formerly held a high post in the Foreign Ministry. The ratio of women to men in the diplomatic corps is 1 to 10.

Judicial law has been in effect in Syria since 1961 and does not discriminate between men and women. Woman can work in the judicial system in the same way as men and are subject to the same conditions when it comes to appointment, promotion, compensation, rights and duties. Women became part of the Judiciary in 1975, and are now active in civil, criminal and commercial law, working at all levels of the courts, including the magistrate, the first instance, and the appeals courts. A woman has also served as attorney general and as a member of the Court of Cassation (the highest court) since 1998. Nine percent of judges are women, as are 14.5% of state lawyers and 19% of general lawyers. There are no women judges in the religious courts or in the Court of Probate.

The laws which govern local city and village governments also give men and women the same right to vote. In 1975 there were only 27 women on the councils whereas in 1999 the number reached 189 or 21.1% of all local council members. In 2005 elections will be held and a considerable increase in the number of women candidates is expected.

### Women in professional unions and popular organizations

Women began to join popular organizations and professional unions as a result of their participation in the labour market in a variety of trades and professions owing to their higher rates of education.

Women's participation in the labour force is 19%. Approximately 20% of the members of trade union associations are female. There are women union leaders and women participate in the formulation of policies and programmes. Working women became members of the Council of Trade Unions Association in 1982. In 2005 there were 13 women

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

**TABLE 1**

Human development indicators	
Annual population growth rate (%), 1975-2002	3.1
Life expectancy at birth (years), 1970-75	57
Life expectancy at birth (years), 2000-05	71.9
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 1970	90
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 2002	23
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 1970	129
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births), 2002	28
Maternal mortality ratio reported (per 100,000 live births), 1985-2002	110
Maternal mortality ratio adjusted (per 100,000 live births), 2000	160

Source: UNDP. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World, 2004.*

on the Association's council, 16 women in the executive offices in the provinces, and one woman leading an association of trade unions.

Despite Syria being an agricultural country with a rural population of 39%, women's participation in rural unions is only 1.2%. Statistics show that women's participation in agriculture in 2000 stood at 58.7%. In 2004 they represented 54% of agricultural workers. However many working women in the countryside are not included in agricultural statistics. This brings to light the discrimination many rural women suffer, and suggests that they are not allowed to participate in any decision-making in the agricultural sector.

Women also practice law but their membership in the Bar Association remains low. Although the majority of women lawyers work in Damascus, there are no women in the Damascus branch of the association. There are, however, some women members in provincial branches of the Bar Association. Some women lawyers have run in Bar Association elections but have not been successful.

### Government actions to promote women's empowerment

Compared to other Arab nations, Syrian women have increased their social participation but there is still a lack of women's representation in decision-making organizations. This is despite the position many women have reached in the scientific and academic world and the Syrian Government's policy to promote women's empowerment. The Government included women's empowerment in its Ninth Five Year Plan for the first time by setting priorities for women's economic participation and increasing women's involvement in the executive, legislative and judicial branches, as well as in other decision-making positions. Additionally, the National Committee for Women's Affairs created a national strategy to empower woman. One of its objectives is to increase women's participation in decision making-positions to 30% in 2005.

Legislation regarding women's rights in Syria is scarce when compared with most other nations, but when compared to other rights issues in Syria, there have been notable advances.

Despite the legal provisions mentioned above, women's participation - especially in the provinces - is poor and in some cases is worsening. Many licensed civil organizations are carrying out development projects with rural women, sometimes offering small loans for projects. Meanwhile, independent and unlicensed civil organizations are involved in education projects and awareness-raising activities.

The Government should find ways of opposing the discrimination that many Syrian women still face.

### Recommendations

In order to effectively and efficiently work towards improving gender equity and eliminating poverty, the following must occur:

- A comprehensive survey on poverty and gender-related poverty must be undertaken in all parts of the country, with the participation of both civil and government agencies.
- Licenses must be given to all civil society development agencies.
- Development plans that consider the reality of different regions and different groups of the population must be formulated.
- The expertise of social and psychological professionals must be tapped.
- The help of foreign economic and development experts from countries with similar conditions as Syria must be sought.
- All loans and donations must be supervised in order to eliminate corruption in development institutions.
- The use of emergency law and martial law must be eliminated to encourage freedom.
- The local press should play a role in the development process. ■

## TANZANIA

# Some steps forward, some steps back



With over a third of the population still living below the basic needs poverty line, and faced by the possibility that only two of the Millennium Development Goal targets will be met by 2015, civil society members are beginning to understand that sound macroeconomic performance is not enough to address quality of life and equality issues in Tanzania.

African Youth Development Alliance - Tanzania Chapter  
 Association for Prevention of Torture (APT)  
 Centre for Promotion of Human Rights  
 Disabled Organization for Legal and Social Economic Development (DOLASED)  
 Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC)  
 Tanzania Centre for Women and Children Welfare  
 Tanzania Media Women Association (TAMWA)  
 Tanzania Women Lawyers Association (TAWLA)  
 The Leadership Forum  
 Women Advancement Trust (WAT)  
 Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF)  
 Women's Legal Aid Centre (WLAC)

Poverty, along with ignorance and disease, is a scourge which Tanzania has been fighting against since the Mainland gained independence in 1961 and the 1964 Revolution in Zanzibar. During the past 40 years Tanzania has implemented a number of policies and programmes aimed at achieving victory in this war against poverty.

Its macroeconomic environment greatly shaped the pace and outcome of its efforts. After starting off with a mixed economy strategy in the early 1960s, Tanzania embarked on a more socialist path in 1967. Its achievements up to the early 1970s were neutralized by global recession and policy challenges which denied the country a quick recovery. Critical self-assessment of policies and performance led to the adoption of a full-scale economic reform programme in 1988 in order to restore both the internal and external balances. Macroeconomic balances were restored to reasonable levels and signs of recovery began to show in the early 1990s.

### Situational analysis

#### Poverty context

According to the 2001-2002 Household Budget Survey (HBS), in Mainland Tanzania 35.7% of the population live below the basic needs poverty line (upper poverty line) and 18.7% below the food poverty line (lower poverty line). Ten years earlier the proportions were 38.6% and 21.6% respectively.<sup>1</sup> Results for Zanzibar's most recent HBS (2003) are still being processed.

1 United Republic of Tanzania (URT). 2002-01 Household Budget Survey. Dar es Salaam, National Bureau of Statistics, 2003. [www.nbs.go.tz/HBS/index2.htm](http://www.nbs.go.tz/HBS/index2.htm)

TABLE 1

	MAINLAND 2000			MAINLAND 2004		
	E(V)	Status	Assessment	E(V)	Status	Assessment
Extreme poverty (food) (%)	10.3	31.5	off target	8.7	20.1	off target
Primary education net enrolment (%)	72.5	59.5	off target	82.1	90.5	on target
Under-five mortality/1,000	106	159	off target	89	154	off target
Maternal mortality rate/100,000	371	529	off target	311	529	off target
Population with access to safe water (%)	67.2	65.7	off target	58	63	on target
HIV/AIDS prevalence in adult population (%)	< 5	8	off target	<8	11	off target

Note: E(V) = Expected Value Computed as 40% time passage for 2000 and 56% for 2004, since 1990, towards 2015.

Sources: URT (various), for 2004 information: NSGRP, December 2004.

Grassroots consultation in rural areas<sup>2</sup> on both the Mainland and Zanzibar, found that poverty was associated with low income and low expenditure, food insecurity, high vulnerability to diseases and natural disasters, low productivity, poor nutritional status, low education attainment, limited access to transportation and exclusion from economic, social and political processes. In urban areas poverty was associated with appalling overcrowding in slums or squatter settlements, bad sanitation, loitering, high morbidity, unemployment and under-employment, and low earnings in both the formal and informal sectors.<sup>3</sup>

#### Intervention: national policy frameworks

The Government has developed different policy measures and strategies to tackle poverty in the country. These include: the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP), and a

home-grown and widely consulted<sup>4</sup> Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS),<sup>5</sup> which departs radically from its predecessor, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), crafted within the context of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. The NSGRP was prepared using a rich experience of policy formulations such as the National Poverty Eradication Strategy,<sup>6</sup> the PRSP, the Tanzania Development Vision 2025,<sup>7</sup> the Local Government Reform Programme,<sup>8</sup> and land reforms. Zanzibar also

4 This is a successor programme to PRSP drawn up through wide consultations at the grassroots level. It spans 2005-06 to 2009-10.

5 The overall objective of PRS is to direct resources to the priority areas and make sure that national policies are being implemented. The PRS is considered to be instrumental in attaining the NPES and Vision 2025 goals.

6 The overall objectives of NPES are to provide a framework for poverty eradication initiatives in order to reduce absolute poverty by 50% by 2010 and eradicate it by 2025.

7 The Vision 2025 main objectives are: high quality of livelihood, good governance and rule of law, and a strong, competitive economy.

8 The goals of the LGRP are to improve the quality of and access to public services, increase the accountability of local authorities, allow users to express how they want the services managed and delivered and develop service partnerships between the public and private sectors.



has the Vision 2020<sup>9</sup> and the five year-old Zanzibar Poverty Reduction Plan (ZPRP)<sup>10</sup> which have led to the implementation of the second PRS and ZPRP. Different measures were taken in order to achieve these objectives.<sup>11</sup>

### Intervention results

Official government statistics indicate that there are some improvements in poverty eradication, as well as in some MDG targets as shown in Table 1. The data reveal that interventions have succeeded only with respect to two targets: net enrolment in primary education and access to safe drinking water. The status for these goals has changed from being off-target to being on-target, which raises the feasibility of reaching the targets by 2015.

### Primary education

The educational system's patriarchal style has led to poor performance by girls at different levels. Interviews with members of civil society reveal that advances in enrolment must be considered alongside drop out rates and poor parental support. Quality of education is another issue since class densities are as high as 150 pupils<sup>12</sup> when the prescribed national standard is 45 pupils per classroom.<sup>13</sup>

The crash course programme implemented for primary school teachers has not been successful either. The programme involves recruiting new teachers from among students leaving grade 9. Nevertheless recruits are found even among students with low marks and retrenched workers with no training as teachers.

The programme ends up producing poorly qualified teachers, who are only given basic teaching skills and not the knowledge of the subject that they will have to teach after being trained. Teachers and parents interviewed declared that the quality of education was affected not only by the lack of learning materials, but by the lack of adequate teaching.

### Safe drinking water

According to data from the Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, the country as a whole appears to be on its way to halving the proportion of the population that has no access

to safe drinking water. In 2002, 73% of the population had access compared to only 38% in 1990.<sup>14</sup>

Members of civil society contest official statistics on access to safe drinking water. In both urban and rural areas there are persistent water problems. Even in the commercial capital of Dar es Salaam, half the population has no access to safe water. In most rural areas the situation is worse and people must walk more than ten kilometres to reach water in streams and rivers.<sup>15</sup>

### Improving macroeconomic performance

Staying the course of economic reforms has been the preoccupation of the Government. Macroeconomic indicators have improved considerably with a sustained positive economic growth rate, low inflation rates, a stable exchange rate and an improved business environment. A stable and predictable macroeconomic environment has stimulated and restored the confidence of the private sector, development partners and foreign direct investments. As a spin-off, Tanzania reached the HIPC completion point in November 2001.

In the face of the above success, civil society members now understand that good macroeconomic performance *per se* is only a necessary and not a sufficient condition for poverty reduction. It is also clear from the rapidly widening gap between the very few rich and the many poor that the benefits of macroeconomic improvements have not reached all sectors of society equitably. There are also glaring inequities depending on geographical location and gender.

### Gender context

Women outnumber men on both the Mainland and Zanzibar. According to the 2002 population census, women make up 51% of the population.<sup>16</sup>

### Women living in poverty: the rural-urban dichotomy

The 2000-2001 HBS estimates the incidence of basic needs poverty at 39% for rural areas compared to 18% in Dar es Salaam and 26% in other urban areas. Compared to their urban counterparts, women in rural areas are more disadvantaged and more often live below the poverty line. There are many variables which emphasize this dichotomy although the unequal distribution of land holdings and assets can be identified as the main cause of women's poverty.

Tanzania's agricultural pattern basically thrives on small holders' farms and single households.<sup>17</sup>

The long-standing belief that households are homogeneous entities has been worn down by empirical research, which has revealed conflicts in terms of production and consumption. The fact that there are many more women with no education (32.5%) than men (16.9%) and that women-headed households have risen from 12.3% of the poor in 1991-1992 to 18.6% in 2000-2001,<sup>18</sup> are further proof of women's disadvantages.

### Addressing gender equality

The Government's main goal is to achieve equal access for boys and girls to primary schools, secondary schools and higher learning institutions. The move is also focused on achieving equal opportunities for women and men in political, economical and social matters. To that effect, the Government has formulated policies and passed legislation which provides equal opportunities to women vis-à-vis men.<sup>19</sup>

### Impact of government actions

Despite the Government's efforts, women - especially in rural areas - still remain underrepresented in political, economic and social decision-making. This is due to the poor implementation of legislation and traditional practices and laws which make women vulnerable to discrimination in the ownership of productive assets, especially at village level, where they are prevented from owning land. In the events of separation, divorce or death of a spouse, women face discriminatory cultural practices which deny their rights to own the assets left behind. Women are far behind in higher and tertiary education, and bear the brunt of a weak health system experiencing high maternal and child mortality, high incidence of HIV/AIDS and high morbidity.<sup>20</sup>

In Tanzania there are only 4 women Ministers among 24 men, 18 women District Commissioners among 85 men and only 22.5% of members of Parliament are women. There are marginal increases in the number of women in some decision-making bodies such as Parliament. Unfortunately in some cases these women do not represent women's interests but rather the interests of those who appointed them, namely men with links to the Government.

(Continued on page 257)

9 The overall objectives of the Vision 2020 are to reduce poverty by improving purchasing power, ownership of productive resources, freedom and peace.

10 The ZPRP focuses on reducing income poverty, improving human capabilities, survival and social wellbeing.

11 Orienting the budget towards poverty reduction, mainstreaming the MDGs in the national policy frameworks, inclusion of MDGs in the poverty monitoring process and expanding and consolidating global partnership (MDG 8).

12 Department for International Development. "The education and training of artisans for the informal sector in Tanzania". October 1995; [www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/edtrainedpaper18.pdf](http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/edtrainedpaper18.pdf)

13 UNESCO. "National Report of the United Republic of Tanzania". June 1996; [www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/rtanzani.htm](http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/Databanks/Dossiers/rtanzani.htm)

14 WHO and UNICEF. "Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation". July 2004; [www.wssinfo.org/pdf/country/tanzania\\_wat\\_02.pdf](http://www.wssinfo.org/pdf/country/tanzania_wat_02.pdf)

15 Social Watch Report, "Fact Finding Mission, Iramba and Kibondo District as a case study". Lack of alternative energy sources means that wood is the only fuel available and hence there is rampant deforestation around water sources. Widespread poverty in rural areas forces people to overexploit their surroundings and natural resources in order to survive.

16 URT. 2002 Population and Housing Census General Report. 2003.

17 Security of tenure continues to be a determining factor in all decisions concerning land. Women cannot access credit to achieve more productivity on the land because of lack of collateral. Lack of security of tenure also impacts the investment, environment, access to new technologies and extension of services as well as land use. Furthermore, the patriarchal system which discriminates against women is very strongly practiced in the rural areas. WLAC's Gender and Poverty Programme. "Women, Land and Property Rights, Report on Facts and Lessons Learnt from the Ground."

18 These poverty calculations use the headcount ratio method.

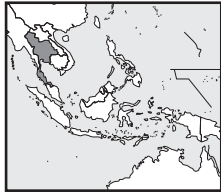
19 Land Act 1999, Village Land Act 1999, Election Act and the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania.

20 URT. Poverty and Human Development Report 2002. 2002.



## THAILAND

# In the shadow of economic priorities



Being poor is not only about lacking money or production resources. It is also about being dominated by a development policy focused on financial interests and resource management that relies exclusively on foreign capital and markets. This is the challenge faced by Thailand's poor whose government fails to give them priority nearly 10 years after the 1997 economic crisis.

### The Social Agenda Working Group

Ranee Hassarungsee

Lack of access to resources, low agricultural prices and increased consumerism make it difficult for the agricultural sector to support farming households. Between 1995 and 1996, farming households earned only 37% of their total income from farming. The remaining 63% was earned in non-agricultural activities, with almost half (43%) coming from the wages and remittances of migrant workers, many of them women.<sup>1</sup> The top five export earners during the economic boom before 1997 were textiles and garments, computer appliances and parts, jewellery and accessories, canned food and frozen shrimp, and integrated circuits, with women making up the majority of the workforce in these sectors.

Thailand adopted the Copenhagen Declaration and Action Plan on Social Development and incorporated aspects of it into the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001).<sup>2</sup> For the first time civil society played an active role in the preparation of the Plan, as people began to realize that development was overly focused on economic factors and did not take social considerations into account.

Civil society then proposed a local development strategy focused on the people's self-determination. This focus emerged from the conflict over natural resources between local villagers and the Government, and drew attention to community rights and the protection of local ways of life.

After the economic crisis in 1997,<sup>3</sup> part of the non-agricultural labour force took refuge in rural areas. Those who remained in the industrial sector were forced to work harder while their working and living conditions worsened. Women workers suffered most due to employment insecurity and weakened welfare programmes. The employment pattern also changed dramatically from industrial employment to more subcontracted work.

The follow-up of the Summit on Social Development<sup>4</sup> was organized in 2000, three years after the economic crisis. Although the Government agreed to include the outcomes of the follow-up summit in the Ninth National Economic and Social Development Plan (2002-2006), the Plan was predominantly influenced by an economic development strategy focused on globalization and conditioned by International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreements.

The economy has been trapped by the policy conditionalities stipulated by the IMF standby arrangement and the World Bank and Asian Development Bank structural adjustment loans. The government agencies entrusted with economic policy-making, such as the Ministries of Finance, Commerce, Communication, and the Bank of Thailand, have all chosen this development direction. Some sections of the National Economic and Social Development Board and the Ministry of Agriculture would like a more local development focus based on self-sufficiency but their minority voice fails to be heard.

Nonetheless over the past 40 years, during the implementation of the economy-focused development plan, poverty problems and the number of poor households have decreased. However every time an economic crisis emerges, the number of poor households rises, as was the case in 1997.

### Poverty after the 1997 economic crisis

The 1997 economic crisis sent a warning signal to Asia and the world about the "self-destruction" of capitalism but the country's elite and the world in general appear to be oblivious to the warning.

The promulgation of the 1997 Constitution followed on the heels of the economic crisis, and aimed to bring about political reform but resulted in the increased monopolization of political power.<sup>5</sup> The new Constitution invests more power in the Prime Minister than ever before. It also requires that parliamentary candidates have a bachelor's degree, a requirement that coupled with the party list system means that members of Parliament (MPs) tend to come from

the urban elite rather than from other classes. Political monitoring by independent organizations and civil society was not as successful as expected and the private sector took advantage of this political impotence to establish the Thai Rak Thai Party<sup>6</sup> with ambitious plans to change Thai society and politics.<sup>7</sup>

The economic crisis did not change income distribution in the country, and the poorest 20% of the population earn only 5% of the national income while the richest 20% earn 56%. What is more worrying is that there is no clear sign that this income gap will narrow.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, the gap between the urban and rural sectors is widening

Land access is a serious issue and a contributing factor to poverty. Thirty million *rai*<sup>9</sup> or 4.8 million hectares, of land have been left idle while the number of landless farming families is estimated at 800,000.<sup>10</sup>

Land speculation in 1997 is one reason for the concentration of land during the economic boom but it is also what essentially caused the economic bust that same year since it led to massive non-performing loans (NPLs).

Figures from the Bank of Thailand showed that at the end of May 2000 the NPLs were as high as THB 2.92 trillion (USD 71 billion) and mostly in the real estate sector. Land speculations caused at least THB 2 trillion (USD 48.6 billion) worth of damage to the economy, and contributed to landlessness, poverty and social malaise.<sup>11</sup>

### The globalization of poverty

The importance of foreign direct investment increased following the economic crisis. In 1998 foreign investment in the banking and finance sector

1 Phongpaichit, Pasuk and Chris Baker. *Thailand: Economy and Politics*, cited in Chris Baker's paper on Project for the Economic Community of the Thai Villages, "The future of rural Thai society: suggested ideas". Thailand Research Fund, 2002, p. 40.

2 National Welfare Promotion Commission, Department of Social Welfare. *Summary of the UN Special Session to Follow up the Social Development Summit*. 2000, p. 1.

3 The economic crisis which hit in Thailand in 1997 lasted throughout the following year, devalued the currency and led to an 8% decrease in gross national product.

4 World Summit for Social Development and Beyond June 2000 Follow-Up. International Monetary Fund initiatives in support of social development. Submitted to the U.N., 6 December, 2000.

5 Boonlong, Piyawat. *Constitutional Economy: Analysis of the 1997 Constitution*. Vol 3. Bangkok: Matchon Publishing in cooperation with the Thailand Research Fund, 2003, p. 18.

6 A right-wing populist personalist party formed in 2001 by telecommunications billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra. It has combined populist policies with strong support for United States foreign policy.

7 Phongpaichit, Pasuk. *Democracy, Civil Rights, Reconciliation*. Bangkok: Political Economy Center, Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University, 2004, pp. 3-4.

8 Chitsuchon, Somchai. "Reflection on 20 years of Thailand's socio-economic setting". Presented to the annual conference of the Thailand Development Research Foundation, 27-28 November 2004, p. 5.

9 1 rai = 1,600 square metres

10 Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law & Development. [www.apwld.org/wrwd\\_thailand.htm](http://www.apwld.org/wrwd_thailand.htm)

11 Land Institute Foundation. *The Occupation and Use of Land*. Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund, March 2002, p.16.



was at its highest while investment in the industrial sector reached THB 89.6 billion (USD 2.2 billion) - 53.4% higher than in 1997.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that a large number of joint ventures and Thai enterprises became cash-strapped and were burdened with increasing NPLs brought on by currency devaluation and higher interest rates contributed to the crisis.

Between November 1997 and March 1999, the majority shares of 135 companies promoted by the Board of Investment<sup>13</sup> were purchased by multinational corporations, in accordance with new laws which allow this practice. A 1997 statistical report on domestic industry showed that two-thirds of total export value came from export companies operated by foreign investment capital. These multinational corporations made up around 80% of the total export volume of the industrial sector, when the food and rubber sectors were excluded.<sup>14</sup>

After the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation's summit held in Thailand in 2003, the Government quickly went ahead with its negotiations on bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, India and Peru. Many issues in the FTAs will negatively affect consumers, farmers and small-scale producers but the hasty negotiations were made without paying attention to the voices of these groups. Senators, academics and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have voiced their opposition to the FTA negotiations.

The Bangkok-based NGO FTA Watch has monitored Thailand's negotiations with other countries and found that the Government paid no attention to the subsequent impacts of the agreements, that the negotiations lacked transparency and public participation, and that no public hearings were held as required by Article 57 of the Constitution. Information on the negotiations is in English and considered confidential by the government ministries involved. Without information in Thai, people cannot inform themselves of the process. The Government may have consulted private sector groups, but that does not mean that they seriously listened to the opinions of those consulted. Nor has it responded well to the concerns of civil society.<sup>15</sup>

### Natural disasters

Until recently Thailand had never suffered any serious natural disasters but droughts and floods are now severe and widespread. The poor, whose livelihood is dependent on natural resources, have been placed in a precarious situation.

The country's most recent natural disaster was the series of tsunamis that struck and ravaged Thailand's six provinces on the Andaman coast in late December 2004, taking over 10,000 lives, and affecting 53,203 people and 12,293 households.<sup>16</sup> Indigenous fisherpeople mostly Malay Muslims - were hardest hit, as well as Buddhist Thais and other ethnic minorities, such as the Moken and Urak Lawoi. These last groups are the poorest and they live along the coast. Their way of life and culture are closely linked with coastal resources and thus they were severely affected. Additionally, thousands of migrant workers from the north-eastern region and Burma also died.

Housing and resettlement are the biggest problems facing tsunami victims. Government policies and plans have focused on organizing the communities and moving fishing villages further away from the coasts. The use of coastal land for tourism purposes is at the centre of these plans even though the fishing communities need to live along the river banks and coasts to be able to gain their livelihood. Conflict over land use was inevitable and it points to the existence of a chronic problem long before the catastrophe occurred.

### Poverty and macroeconomic policy

Past governments tried to solve poverty problems through microeconomic policy which targeted the poor with relief efforts that were highly unlikely to eliminate poverty. Macroeconomic policy implementation would solve the poverty problems more effectively, but it is more difficult for these policies to gain acceptance. There are three principal phenomena that have influenced public perception of poverty problems and that need to be changed before poverty can be eliminated.

- Development strategy: Thai development strategy is unbalanced and transfers economic surplus from the agricultural sector to the industrial sector. Neoliberal approaches not only connect the economy to the global market but also make it dependant on it. Only a handful of people benefit from this strategy while the farming sector is faced with numerous risks, such as global market price fluctuations. The local development concept of self-reliance is an alternative development strategy across, which focuses on self-sufficiency, economization and production diversification.
- Economic policy-making: National economic policy has the two prominent objectives of achieving economic growth during strong periods and maintaining economic stability during crises. It is biased towards the interests of the urban, the industrial and the service sectors and disfavours the agricultural sector. Poverty eradication and fair income distribution have never been the main objectives of economic policy.
- Legislative procedure: The procedure lacks public participation and two major issues need to be corrected. Firstly, the law-making process needs to include public hearings when it deals with resettle-

ment, transfers economic surplus from one sector to another, or destroys natural resources and environmental quality. The process also needs to take away some power from top government officials. Secondly, the voting rules need to be modified. Although the Constitution requires a supermajority, most of the time a 50% majority vote prevails. This 50% is really a minority rule system since it represents the number of MPs at a meeting rather than the total number of MPs, facilitating the consolidation of interests by well-organized groups that push through self-serving laws. Over 50% of the total number of MPs should be required to vote in order to pass laws that affect the transfer of economic surplus from one economic sector to another; government revenue and financing; income distribution; natural resources and the environment; and the displacement of people.

Poverty problems such as the concentration of land and land occupation should be addressed using tax measures. Researchers from the Land Institute Foundation suggest the use of progressive tax rates which reflect economic rent, based on property size and price. Land tax collection should be done in a transparent manner while land information should be available to the public and computerized for easy access. In addition, community organizations which are well aware of land conditions should have an active role in land management and land tax collection.<sup>17</sup>

### The disempowered

Since Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra started implementing his poverty eradication policy, the poor have become even more disempowered. As long as the poor are not provided with adequate access to natural resources and empowered to manage them, it will be impossible for them to escape poverty. Freedom to organize peaceful demonstrations, to express opinions and communicate freely, are directly related to poverty eradication. It is vital for the public to participate in policy-making. Democracy is the most important pre-condition for eliminating poverty since it truly empowers the poor.

Being poor is not only about lacking money or production resources. It is also about being dominated by a development policy focused on financial interests and resource management that relies exclusively on foreign capital and markets.

In order to solve poverty problems local communities need to be given more power and granted the right to manage their own natural resources. The conventional learning culture must be contested and a new perception of poverty must also be encouraged. Only with adequate knowledge and understanding can people develop a public policy that will effectively rid society of poverty. Using this knowledge, political parties and politicians can be kept in check and urged to undertake policy changes that will allow the poor to live a better life.<sup>18</sup> ■

12 Therd-udomtham, Thammawit et al. "Thailand's Industrial and Technological Development over the Past Five Decades". Presented to a 2002 annual seminar on "Five Decades of Thailand's National Economic and Social Development Plan," held at the Faculty of Economics of Thammasat University, on 12 June 2002, p. 7/20.

13 The Board of Investment falls under the Ministry of Industry and aims to attract investment to Thailand.

14 Therd-udomtham, Thammawit et al, *op cit*, p. 7/33.

15 Council of the NGO Coordinating Committee on Development. Paper № 10 presented to a seminar held in January 2005, p. 13-14.

16 Department of Environmental Quality Promotion, Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment. *Restoring new life: Post-tsunami Andaman*, 28 January 2005, p.10.

17 Land Institute Foundation, *op cit*, p. 26.

18 lawsriwong, Nidhi. "Multi-dimensioned Poverty". 20 December 2003, www.midnightuniv.org



## ■ UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# When social welfare is not a priority



A planned federal budget cut of USD 143 billion to social development programs to offset a deficit that still may grow due to an increase in military spending of almost USD 200 billion jeopardizes social safety net programs such as food stamps, student loans, and state-provided medical services. For many people employment is not enough to escape poverty and sexual and racial discrimination continue to suppress women's earnings.

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
Center of Concern/US Gender and Trade Network  
Inter-American Forum & Global-Local Links Project  
American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

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### Poverty threatens the nation's security

The United States of America is far from achieving its commitments to poverty eradication and social inclusion, especially for women, as agreed to 10 years ago at the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995) and the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women. One of every eight adult women living in the US was living in poverty in 2004.<sup>1</sup> As a result of increased pressure to end government assistance to low-income mothers, more poor women have jobs but their lives and the lives of their families have not improved. The cost of living in the US has risen steadily without corresponding wage increases. Minimal health care has become unaffordable and women have less time to spend at home. Poverty and social exclusion are not just women's issues but affect all families and communities. More than six million children are left home alone after school each day. Almost 900,000 children each year are victims of abuse or neglect and approximately one American child or teen is killed by gunfire every three hours.<sup>2</sup> Until the Government acknowledges that 13 million children live in poverty and takes corrective action, the security and well-being of the country is threatened from within.

### The working poor

For a large and growing number of families, employment is not enough to escape poverty. Although citizens are earning more, with real per capita income growing 66% between 1973 and 2000, the percentage of impoverished families remained roughly the same at just over 11%.<sup>3</sup> Poverty persists in part be-

cause the prices of basic necessities such as food, housing and transportation are increasing faster than wages. In 2004 most workers' wages (adjusted for inflation) either stayed the same or decreased while just the top 5% saw their earnings increase.<sup>4</sup> Workers earning the federally mandated minimum wage (USD 5.15 per hour) have not seen an increase since 1997. The law does not index the minimum wage to inflation and so its value erodes over time. Minimum wage workers today earn one-third the average hourly rate considered by the US federal Government to be sufficient to keep a family of four out of poverty (USD 8,000 less in annual income). A total of 15 states have established higher minimum wage laws, with 5 states requiring at least USD 7.00 per hour,<sup>5</sup> which still is not enough to lift a family of four above the poverty line.

The number of people in working poor families has grown significantly in the last decade. President Bill Clinton's 1996 welfare reform program pushed former welfare recipients into workforce jobs - employment typically without health care benefits and wages so low they keep workforce employees in poverty. By 2003 the welfare reform measures left 35.9 million US citizens and residents living below the national poverty line.<sup>6</sup>

For three years in a row, the number of women below the poverty threshold has increased. Today 13.8 million adult women - one out of every eight - live in poverty. For non-white women and single mothers, it is far worse. Approximately one out of every four live in poverty due to racial discrimination, occupational segregation, decreased access to quality education and disproportionately high levels of unemployment.<sup>7</sup>

On average women aged 65 years and above live six years longer than males in the same age group. Therefore they are typically widowed, live alone and struggle to make ends meet on a small, fixed income. Less than one third of retired women in 2000 received a pension compared to 47% of all

men, usually because the women worked part-time and therefore did not qualify for this benefit. The federal Social Security program is the only source of income for one out of every four elderly women, and two out of every three depend upon Social Security for at least half of their personal income.<sup>8</sup> Studies predict that without Social Security, two-thirds of unmarried women over 65 years of age who live alone would be living in poverty.<sup>9</sup>

### The gender and racial wage gap

A decade ago the US accepted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and committed itself to achieve equality between women and men. Yet today, the average woman makes just 76 cents for every dollar made by the average man, which is up from 71 cents in 1995.<sup>10</sup> The wage gap for minority women is even greater when contrasted against the 1999 salaries of white men. African American women earned 62.5%, Native American women earned 57.8% and Hispanic women earned 52.5% of the average salary earned by a white man.<sup>11</sup> Racial discrimination combined with occupational segregation creates formidable barriers to employment, promotion and higher earnings. Non-white women are still grossly underrepresented in a number of high paying jobs. Discrimination based on sex and race continues to suppress women's earnings.<sup>12</sup>

Laws addressing wage and gender inequity enacted since the 1960s but they are not adequately enforced. The George W Bush Administration has cut initiatives to fund the enforcement of pay discrimination laws and is discontinuing the collection of data on women workers - even going so far as to remove information on the wage gap from the Department of Labor website.<sup>13</sup> Inequality and discrimination will continue to occur if the sex-disaggregated data needed for a gender analysis is not generated.

1 Women's Environment & Development Organization. *Beijing Betrayed*. March 2005, p. 162.

2 "Children's Defense Fund Action Council Scorecard Ranks Lawmakers on How Well They Protect Children". Children's Defense Fund Press Release. 23 March 2005, [www.childrensdefense.org/pressreleases/050323.aspx](http://www.childrensdefense.org/pressreleases/050323.aspx)

3 Mishel, Lawrence; Jared, Bernstein and Sylvia Allegretto. *The State of Working America*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2005, p. 12.

4 Greenhouse, Steven. "Falling Fortunes of Wage Earners." *The New York Times*, 12 April 2005.

5 American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations. *State Minimum Wage Rates*. 6 June 2005.

6 US Census Bureau. *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2003*. August 2004, p. 9.

7 Institute for Women's Policy Research. *The Status of Women in the States*. 2004, p. 31.

8 Lee, Sunwha and Shaw, Lois. Institute for Women's Policy Research, *Gender and Economic Security in Retirement*, 2003. pp. 23-24.

9 *Ibid*, p. iii.

10 US Census Bureau, *op cit*, p. 34.

11 Institute for Women's Policy Research, *op cit*, p. 20.

12 *Ibid*, p. 22.

13 Women's Environment & Development Organization. *Beijing Betrayed*, March 2005, pp. 156, 161.

## Wal-Mart's burden on society

Wal-Mart has been sued more often than any other private company in the US. In 1991 six women started one of the most notorious lawsuits against Wal-Mart, which grew into the largest civil rights class-action suit in history, involving more than one million women who all accuse Wal-Mart of systematic pay and promotion discrimination. Less than 15% of all store managers, at present, are female even though women make up two-thirds of the company's workforce.

As the nation's largest employer with approximately 1.3 million employees, Wal-Mart has changed the landscape of the American retailer, going to great lengths to prevent employees from unionizing, minimizing their health plans and paying wages below the poverty level. Wal-Mart requires its employees to sign forms agreeing not to unionize, in blatant violation of US labor laws.<sup>14</sup> Compared to other retailers, Wal-Mart has a greater percentage of employees who are not covered by its health plan. Nationally, 66% of all workers receive health benefits from their employer, but fewer than 46% of Wal-Mart's employees are covered by its insurance plan.<sup>15</sup> Wal-Mart's personnel department distributes documents explaining to employees how to apply for government food stamps and state-provided health care insurance.<sup>16</sup> A study by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce determined that in 2004, Wal-Mart employees were eligible for USD 2.7 billion in federal assistance.<sup>17</sup> Essentially, US taxpayers are subsidizing the company's bottom line.

## Fostering insecurity

President Bush's proposed 2006 federal budget slashes USD 143 billion in discretionary spending over the next five years by eliminating 150 domestic programs. The budget also cuts USD 30 billion from several programs mandated by law - known as entitlement programs.<sup>18</sup> These draconian cuts not only hurt schools, community development, transportation, scientific research and the environment, but also undermine long-standing social safety net programs such as food stamps, student loans and Medicaid.<sup>19</sup>

Over 45 million people do not have health insurance. The 40-year-old Medicaid program which provides medical benefits to 35 million people is targeted for USD 45 billion in cuts over the next 10 years. States are already predicting that they will be

forced to end their Medicaid programs because of a lack of funds. Almost half (45.3%) of all non-citizen immigrants are uninsured compared to the national average of 15.6%.<sup>20</sup> The Institute of Medicine estimates that the lack of health insurance coverage causes approximately 18,000 unnecessary deaths each year and costs the nation USD 65 to 130 billion in lost resources annually.<sup>21</sup>

These cuts to social development programs have been proposed to offset the budget deficit of more than USD 400 billion created in just four years despite a surplus of over USD 200 billion in 2000. However, even with the elimination of these programs, the deficit is expected to grow by USD 168 billion over the next five years due to an increase in military spending of almost USD 200 billion, USD 106 billion in tax cuts to the wealthy and USD 36 billion in interest expense on the debt. Over half of the tax cuts will go to households with annual incomes over USD 1 million (0.2% of households), and nearly four-fifths of the tax cuts will go to the 3.1% of households which make more than USD 200,000 per year.<sup>22</sup> As a direct result of these and previous tax cuts, federal revenues as a share of the economy are the lowest they have been since the 1950s. If the proposed cuts are extended, they will reduce government revenues by USD 2.1 trillion by 2015.<sup>23</sup>

## Leaving children behind

Severe reductions in federal support for the poor aggravate the problems faced by the 50 states, which must deal with the hungry and homeless. Spending overruns in 2005 budgets were reported by 31 states. Regarding the 2006 proposed federal budget, the National Conference of State Legislatures identified at least USD 30 billion worth of cost shifts from the federal to state governments, including a one percent overall cut in the Department of Education budget.<sup>24</sup>

President Bush's "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB) legislation requires all primary and secondary school children to meet yearly scores on national standardized tests. If the goals are not met the school suffers repercussions in the form of "restructuring," "defunding" or "corrective action." State legislatures, teachers and child advocates have appealed for adjustments to the Act. They requested that the federal Government remove the one-size-fits-all measurement method, recognize special challenges faced by children with disabilities and non-native English speakers, remove obstacles that stifle successful state innovations, and fully fund the program.<sup>25</sup> For pri-

mary schools, it is estimated that for 2006, the NCLB Act is underfunded by at least USD 12 billion, with the cumulative shortfall reaching almost USD 40 billion since the legislation passed in 2002.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the Bush Administration is cutting numerous out-of-school programs which affect the ability of students to learn. For example, the 2006 budget cuts funding for 25,000 children in the Head Start<sup>27</sup> program and 300,000 fewer children will receive childcare assistance by 2009.

In 2002, approximately 7% of whites aged 16 to 24 had not completed secondary school, whereas 12% of blacks and 26% of Hispanics had dropped out.<sup>28</sup> Studies have found that young adults with low educational achievement or who have not completed secondary school are more likely to live in poverty, receive government assistance and become involved in crime.

## Fulfilling a dignified future

Over the past several years, the US has experienced the greatest job loss since the Great Depression (1930-1939). From January 2001 to March 2005 more than 2.7 million people lost their jobs in manufacturing and another 850,000 were put out of work in the professional services and information sectors.<sup>29</sup> Small firms have been driven out of business by transnational corporations which have greater economies of scale and the capacity to sell products below cost in strategic markets. Labor unions have lost members and their collective bargaining power as multinational corporations bid down wages by shifting jobs offshore or threatening to move to other countries. Nationwide, new jobs pay on average 21% less than the jobs lost. And in trying to compete with Wal-Mart, rival grocers are claiming they can no longer cover health care insurance.

Traditionally Americans were able to meet their basic needs with a combination of benefits provided by their employer and a salary that allowed them to purchase fundamental necessities. In situations of dire circumstance, the Government provided assistance to help one get back on their feet again. Unfortunately neither the Government nor corporations are providing the benefits, salaries or programs that many working families and women, particularly in non-white communities, need today to live on without going to bed hungry.

(Continued on page 257)

14 Featherstone, Liza. "Will Labor Take the Wal-Mart Challenge?" *The Nation*. 28 June 2004.

15 Representative George Miller. "Everyday Low Wages: The Hidden Price we all Pay for Wal-Mart." 16 February 2004. [www.wakeupwalmart.com/facts/high\\_costs.html](http://www.wakeupwalmart.com/facts/high_costs.html)

16 Featherstone, Liza. "Down and Out in Discount America." *The Nation*. 3 January 2005.

17 Representative George Miller, *op cit*.

18 Horney, James. "Assessing the Conference Agreement on the Budget Resolution." Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. 6 May 2005. [www.cbpp.org/4-28-05bud.htm](http://www.cbpp.org/4-28-05bud.htm)

19 State-provided medical benefits for the poorest people.

20 US Census Bureau, *op cit*, p. 17.

21 Institute of Medicine Press Release. 14 January 2004. [www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=17632](http://www.iom.edu/report.asp?id=17632)

22 *Ibid*.

23 Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 9 February 2005. [www.cbpp.org/2-2-05tax.htm](http://www.cbpp.org/2-2-05tax.htm)

24 <http://nclsl.org/programs/press/2005/pr050412.htm>; 14 April 2005.

25 "State Legislators Offer Formula for Improving No Child Left Behind Act". NCLS News. 23 February 2005. <http://ncls.org/programs/press/2005/pr050223.htm>

26 CHN Human Needs Report. 25 February 2005. [www.chn.org/dia/organizations/chn/humanneeds/050225a.html](http://www.chn.org/dia/organizations/chn/humanneeds/050225a.html)

27 A program for early childhood development.

28 [www.childtrendsdatatank.org/indicators/1HighSchoolDropout.cfm](http://www.childtrendsdatatank.org/indicators/1HighSchoolDropout.cfm).

29 Women's Environment & Development Organization, *op cit*, p. 161



## URUGUAY

# New scenario to achieve equity



The first left-wing government in Uruguayan history has generated great expectations. The new authorities have defined an emergency plan to counter poverty, which in the last five years registered a significant increase. Public programmes should also give greater prominence to gender equity policies with the purpose of modifying the roles traditionally assigned to women and men while ensuring equal opportunities for both.

Comisión Nacional de Seguimiento (CNS) - Mujeres por Democracia, Equidad y Ciudadanía<sup>1</sup>

Lilián Abracinkas<sup>2</sup>

In terms of its poverty indicators Uruguay has been considered an exceptional case in Latin America. However, in the last few years processes of exclusion and social alienation have rapidly shaped a new reality. Currently, almost a third of the population and more than half its children live in poverty.

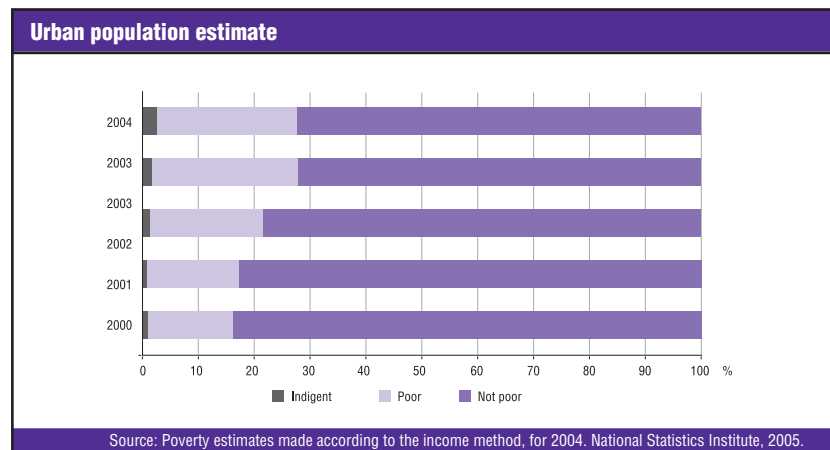
In March 2005, when the elected left coalition took office<sup>3</sup> and in May when they won almost half the local governments of the country, they generated much expectation in the majority of the population. The new authorities have defined as top priority for the first years of their administration the Plan for Nationwide Attention to Social Emergency (PANES) aiming at articulating services and state activities and services to people in conditions of social and economic exclusion.

Organized civil society is trying to visualize participative state mechanisms for channelling proposals that widen the concepts of inequity and exclusion. These types of proposals did not figure prominently in the electoral platform of the new authorities and might not even be included or prioritized by the current Government.

### Poverty on the rise

The 1999<sup>4</sup> Report on Human Development in Uruguay emphasized that the country stood out among its Latin American counterparts for taking a development path that protected its social dimensions. But the economic crisis in 2001-2002 generated unemployment and work instability further weakened the health and education systems, deteriorated public finances, worsened the country risk assess-

CHART 1



ment, caused capital flight that drained up to 46% of bank deposits in dollars and tripled the public sector's gross debt.

The National Statistics Institute<sup>5</sup> estimates that in 2004 income poverty affected 32.1% of the population rising from 30.9% in 2003. Extreme poverty rose by more than 100% in relation to 2000 and tripled in Montevideo, the capital city. Likewise, there was an increase in the number of members of indigent households, which reverses the downward tendency of the previous few years.

The income of poor households is about a third less than is necessary to cover their needs. In 2004, 32% of inhabitants were poor. Fifty seven per cent of children aged up to six, 54% of children aged between six and twelve, 45% of minors aged between thirteen and seventeen, 29% of adults and 11% of elderly people are poor.<sup>6</sup> (Chart 1)

### The most exposed

Poverty in Uruguay affects children mostly: more than 50% of the population aged between 0 and 5 are poor.<sup>7</sup> The feminization of poverty is not men-

tioned and little is known about the impact of discrimination in questions of gender.<sup>8</sup>

One of every two female heads of household of working age with children aged 0 to 5 is poor.<sup>9</sup> Fifty-five per cent of the women in Montevideo and the metropolitan area who were in the labour market had stop working at least once during a period of over six months for reasons related to childcare or family life. Housekeeping tasks still fall on the shoulders of adult women and so far no substantial changes are noted in the distribution of housekeeping tasks between the sexes.

In the case of marital separation, the links with the father of the vast majority of children are restricted to weekend visits. After separation, around 25% of children aged between 0 and 12 lose contact completely with their father and barely a third receives child support regularly from their father.<sup>10</sup>

The situation of young women is polarized in terms of their possibilities of empowerment. At one end of the spectrum are the young women who are

1 Beijing Follow-up National Commission - Women for Democracy, Equity and Citizenship was created during the course of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.

2 Executive Coordinator of CNS, expert in women's health, gender, sexual and reproductive rights. She is also a member of the non-governmental organization Women and Health in Uruguay.

3 For the first time the left-wing forces of the "Encuentro Progresista-Frente Amplio-Nueva Mayoría" won the national elections and in March 2005 they took office with Dr Tabaré Vázquez as president.

4 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report in Uruguay, 1999*.

5 National Statistics Institute, *Estimaciones de pobreza realizadas de acuerdo al método de ingreso, para 2004*. Montevideo, 2005.

6 *Ibid.*

7 UNDP. *Human Development Report in Uruguay*, UNDP/CEPAL (Economic Commission for Latin America), 2001.

8 Bucheli, Marisa, Wanda Cabella, Andrés Peri, Georgina Piani and Andrea Vigorito. *Encuesta sobre situaciones familiares y desempeños sociales de las mujeres en Montevideo y el área metropolitana. Sistematización de resultados*. Montevideo: University of the Republic and UNICEF, 2001.

9 Operti, Renato. Report presented to the Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives. Montevideo, 2003.

10 Bucheli *et al* (2001), *op cit.*



at university (enrolment at the State University of the Republic has reached 68% of total matriculation). These young women will have high chances of diversifying their plans for the future by prioritizing education and training over the traditional roles assigned to women. They will aspire to better employment conditions, greater economic independence and will be able to decide on how many children they have and when to have them. At the other extreme are the young women in the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society. They become mothers at an early age and have a high probability of being economically dependant, totally or partially, for the rest of their lives. It is unlikely that they will achieve any kind of empowerment.<sup>11</sup>

Adolescent fertility is the outstanding change registered in the reproductive behaviour of Uruguayan women. While in 1963 the contribution of women aged between 10 and 19 to the global fertility rate was 9.67%, by 1996 that rate had increased to 14.76%.<sup>12</sup> In 1999, 82.7% of adolescent women's childbirths took place in the public health sector and 17.3% in the private sector.<sup>13</sup>

### Limited exercise of citizenship

Education is the variable with the greatest bearing on the formation of opinions about gender equity. Less educated women are more likely to adhere to a traditional gender role models, while those with university education depart from this model.<sup>14</sup> In the group of young mothers, 80% have not completed secondary education and 78.98% are not involved in economic activities.<sup>15</sup>

Women are particularly affected by labour market flexibility, loss of clear work standards, fear of unemployment, labour segmentation between the sexes, unequal remuneration for the same work, exclusion from decision-making positions due to gender stereotypes and sexual harassment. To this can be added a social security system that does not respond to the needs of an aging population or to the realities of the informal labour market.

Life expectancy is 75 years and women, on average, live 8 years longer than men. Mortality among men is higher at all ages. Nevertheless, morbidity is higher in women and is not adequately registered.<sup>16</sup>

### Discriminatory cultural patterns

Gender violence, as much in public as in the private, is supported by cultural patterns and structurally embedded practices of abusive power relations between

men and women. Violence is exercised against any person whose gender option transgresses or does not fit neatly into culturally defined patterns of what it is to be a man or a woman. In Uruguay a woman dies every nine days due to domestic violence, and unsafe abortions are the principal cause of maternal mortality.<sup>17</sup> Among poor women in particular, to break away from traditional models of woman and woman-as-mother is a high risk practice.

If to this situation we add the dimensions of inequity generated by ethnic background, age, race, sexual orientation and geography, we will get a wider and more complex picture of the characteristics that poverty adopts in the country. Inequalities caused by the intensification of the economic crisis are combined with structural inequalities caused by gender inequity. Therefore changes in the models of development that do not include the gender dimension and do not seek to overcome gender inequity simultaneously with poverty eradication policies, will not bring about the conditions needed to attain equal opportunities between men and women.

### Two decades with little equity

Gender policies developed by the different national governments and the left local government of Montevideo between 1995 and 2005 aimed to overcome some of the situations of discrimination that affect women. But their policies and actions were not specifically directed towards gender equity. Also, they were discontinuous, fragmented, temporary and unstable when faced with a change of government or the authorities of the moment.<sup>18</sup> Many did not respond to clearly identifiable goals and were not evaluated for their impact and the majority were directed only towards the most vulnerable sectors of the population. This occurred with the inclusion of contraceptive methods in public health services, the income generation programme for women in the rural sector and the policies for the eradication of domestic violence.

These state programmes did not include the male population and did not have as their target the modification of inequitable power relationships or the empowerment of women. On occasion, these actions tended to solidify the traditionally assigned gender roles.

Since the beginning of democratic reconstruction in 1985,<sup>19</sup> it has not been possible to achieve a system with the capacity, strength and adequate resources to make progress in the design of public policies that promote gender equity throughout the country. To this day, the National Institute for Women and the Family within the Ministry of Education and Culture, is a weak state mechanism low in the insti-

tutional hierarchy, which lacks the funds and resources needed to become a leading organism of policies for women and gender equity.<sup>20</sup>

The development of the National Plan for Equality in Employment (2004) and the approval of the National Plan for the Fight against Domestic Violence (2003), as well as the Plan for Equal Opportunities and Rights (2002) drawn up by the Municipal Government of Montevideo, are encouraging measures adopted by past governments that should be strengthened by the new administration.

### New policies, new roles?

In the first months of the new Government's administration the authorities have not given signs that they will bring about positive changes in the problems affecting women's quality of life. PANES, identified as the Government's "flagship" of social policies, will be implemented by the new Ministry of Social Development and the National Institute for Women and the Family was changed into a National Bureau and made part of the new ministry with the explicit objective of incorporating gender equity into public policy. This could have positive repercussions in PANES if it incorporates measures contained in the National Plan for Equal Opportunities, announced as a mechanism that will guarantee women their status as subjects of law.

President Tabaré Vázquez recently announced that he will veto the bill for the Defence of Reproductive Health if it is passed by the legislature.<sup>21</sup> This bill enables and regulates the practice of voluntary abortion until the twelfth week of pregnancy, among other measures that will guarantee the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights. The President's decision could well be an obstacle to the legislative treatment of the issue and the search for solutions to unsafe and clandestine abortion practices, the principal cause of maternal death, mainly among the poorest women.

The organized participation of civil society was a novelty introduced by the series of international conferences held by the United Nations in the 1990s and it allowed civil society to influence action platforms and recommendations made by international conventions and conferences. Likewise, it promoted active participation of social organizations in the monitoring and control of commitments assumed by national governments. The recommendations made and the consensus reached at the Millennium Summit to eradicate poverty by 2015, could become reality if there is synergy between the actions developed by policy makers, organized civil society and the people. The ethical framework of these interventions must be one of unconditional respect for human rights without discrimination of any kind. Under this premise, it will be worthwhile to join forces to strengthen democracies, transcending and overcoming all interventions wishing to impose themselves in a hegemonic manner. ■

11 UNDP (1999), *op cit.*, pp. 23 and 55.

12 Varela, Carmen. "La fecundidad adolescente: una expresión de cambio del comportamiento reproductivo en el Uruguay". *Revista Salud Problema - Nueva Época*. Year 4, No 6. Autonomous University of Mexico, 1999.

13 Perinatal Computing System, Latin American Centre of Perinatal Care, Panamerican Health Organization.

14 Bucheli et al (2001), *op cit.*

15 Varela, *op cit.*

16 Brioso, Leonel et al. "Unsafe abortion in Uruguay". *International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics*, September 2003.

17 Ministry of the Interior data, National Bureau of Crime Prevention. Also see: Abracinskas, Lilián and Alejandra López Gómez. *Mortalidad materna, aborto y salud en Uruguay. Un escenario cambiante.* Mujer y Salud en Uruguay. Montevideo, 2004.

18 CNS - Women. "El Estado uruguayo y las mujeres. Monitoreo de políticas públicas", *Cotidiano Mujer*, Montevideo, 1999; CNS - Women. "Agenda de las mujeres, una propuesta política", Montevideo, 2004.

19 Uruguay was governed by a military dictatorship between 1973 and 1985.

20 CNS (1999), *op cit*; CNS (2004), *op cit.*

21 Declarations made by President Vázquez in a press interview in May 2005.

## VENEZUELA

# An active role for development



The programmes designed to strengthen the so called “endogenous development model” and to fight poverty continue to give priority to the cooperative organization of work, distribution of subsidized food, literacy programmes, housing credits and agricultural conversion based on reclaiming land for rural inhabitants and members of cooperatives. As regards gender equity, the Women’s Development Bank stand out, offering small credits with the aim of encouraging women to take a leading role in society.

Comité de Base Juana Ramírez la Avanzadora  
Frente Continental de Mujeres  
Red Popular de Usuarías del Banco de Desarrollo de la Mujer<sup>1</sup>

Since Hugo Chávez was elected president in 1998, profound changes have been included in the constitution; the Outlines of the National Plan 2001-2007, the 49 decrees passed in 2001, the socio-productive programmes known as “Missions”, the boosting of the micro-financial public system and the strategic objectives formulated by the President of the Republic at the end of 2004.

The intention is for these changes to agree with the international commitments to fight poverty and to achieve equal opportunities for the world’s citizens made by the country at several summits and conferences. Their aim is to create capacities so that all Venezuelans realize their human right to quality of life.

This intention of equity is reflected in the new Constitution’s text beginning with the Preamble, which declares that it is the intention of the people of Venezuela to “rebuild the Republic to establish a democratic, participative and active, multiethnic and multicultural society”. Article 3 of the Charter establishes as essential State objectives “the defence and development of individuals, and respect for their dignity, the democratic exercise of the people’s will, the construction of a fair, peace-loving society”, and specifies that “education and work are the fundamental processes to attain these objectives”.<sup>3</sup>

Likewise, the Constitutional Law on Hydrocarbons (one of the decrees of 2001) regulates the activities aimed at “promoting the integral organic and sustained development of the country, paying attention to the rational use of this resource and to the

preservation of the environment”. The law points out that “the income the Nation might receive from hydrocarbons will be mainly assigned to finance health, education, the building of macroeconomic stabilization funds and investment in production”.<sup>4</sup>

### National programmes to fight poverty

Legislation has been put into effect through specific programmes and measures aimed at fighting poverty which, according to 2002 data, affects 48% of the population, including 22% indigents.<sup>5</sup>

To guarantee people’s right to food, the national Government created the Mercal Mission in 2003, a food distribution network which sells more than four thousand tons of food daily. Since April 2005 the plan has had a monthly subsidy of USD 24 million which enables network price stabilization and ensures savings of up to 35% in the purchase of quality food. Currently, there are 13,563 shops which supply food to more than 10 million people throughout the country without having modified any prices.

The programme to fight illiteracy (Robinson Mission) is aimed at eradicating a problem which affects 6.9% of adults in Venezuela.<sup>6</sup> According to data provided by the Ministry of Education and Sports, since July 2003 more than 1.4 million Venezuelans have completed this programme, a figure that is very close to the goal of 1.5 million. Almost 700,000 people, among them disabled persons, indigenous people and senior citizens, take advantage of the programme, which offers them up to sixth grade of primary school and is implemented in 81,000 venues under the supervision of 87,377 facilitators.<sup>7</sup>

As regards housing, state credits are being provided to community organizations that have been fighting for many years for dignified housing and already have land and developed projects. The State becomes a facilitator of technical, credit and material aspects through the New Constructive Model plan, based on the use of popular organization and

knowledge, and on collective and shared work. Another phase of the housing programmes, together with Urban Land Committees (popular organizations led mostly by women), provides land for people to build their homes in working-class neighbourhoods.

A profound agrarian transformation is underway, through the consolidation of what is known as endogenous development, which includes reclaiming land in diverse regions of the country with the aim of giving it to rural inhabitants and members of cooperatives, and providing them with technical assistance, credit and aid for product commercialization. At the same time, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land (MAT) and the Ministry of Science and Technology are working on a National Seed Plan. The MAT and the Ministry for Popular Economy (MINEP) are making progress in the National Winter Planting Plan with the objective of favouring farmers and achieving food sovereignty.

### Endogenous development

The strategic horizon defined by the Government for 2005-2006, to which President Chávez has given the name the Leap Forward or Revolution within the Revolution, proposes 10 basic objectives to direct the actions of all institutional, social and political actors:

- Advance in the configuration of a new social structure.
- Articulate and optimize a new communicative strategy.
- Advance rapidly in the construction of a new model of democratic popular participation.
- Accelerate the creation of a new institutionalism within the State.
- Activate an efficient strategy to fight corruption.
- Accelerate the construction of a new productive model, moving towards the creation of a new economic system.
- Continue the implementation of the new territorial structure.
- Accelerate the configuration of the new national military strategy.
- Continue to promote the new multi-polar international system.<sup>8</sup>

1 This report was prepared by these three groups and had the support of staff of the Communications and Marketing, and Planning and Budgeting Areas of the Women’s Development Bank (Banmujer)

2 In December 1998, Hugo Chávez was elected president with 56.4% of the vote. In July 1999, elections for the National Constituent Assembly gave the absolute majority of votes to Chávez’s 5th Republic Movement, and a new Constitution was approved. In April 2002, troops loyal to Chávez aborted an attempted coup d’état supported by a sector of the army and the oil industry. In 2004, a referendum to decide if Chávez remained in power provided him with the support of 58.2% of the voters.

3 Official Gazette No 5.453. Caracas, 24 March 2000.

4 Official Gazette No 37.323. Caracas, 2001.

5 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). “Statistics and Indicators Database”, [www.eclac.cl/badeinso/consulta.asp](http://www.eclac.cl/badeinso/consulta.asp)

6 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). “Cultural liberty in today’s diverse world”, 2004, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

7 Ministry of Communications and Information, April 2005.

8 El Troudi, Haiman. *The Leap Forward*. Caracas: Presidency of the Republic Publishing, 2005, pp. 25-26.

Linked to the seventh objective is the creation of MINEP in September of 2004. The task of the Ministry, in coordination with other national, regional and local government agencies, is the implementation of a new development model. "Its cross-cutting objective is the consolidation of the *Vuelvan Caras Mission*<sup>9</sup>, as well as the direction of policies linked to the transition towards a new model of endogenous development"<sup>10</sup>

This new form of development has as its dynamic socio-economic focus the Nuclei of Endogenous Development, which gives priority to the cooperative organization of labour. The authorities consider that cooperatives should be much more than a mere organizational form of productive labour, and become a life project in which "the individual must abandon behaviours, attitudes and expectations learned in a society that rewards competitiveness and individual action"<sup>11</sup>

Various autonomous institutions that had depended on other ministries were linked to MINEP, among these are; the Sovereign People's Bank, the Micro-financial Fund, the Women's Development Bank (Banmujer), the Development Fund for the Promotion of Agriculture and Fishing, the National Institute for Small and Medium Businesses, the Industrial Credit Fund, the Institution for Cooperatives Supervision, the Institute for Rural Development and the National Institute of Educational Training (INCE).

MINEP created a decentralized agency in the 23 federated states and the Capital District, with representatives from all the associated entities and a coordinator designated by MINEP. These agencies promote the certification of "lancers" and "lancers" (facilitators) from the *Vuelvan Caras Mission*, after they complete a one-year training course with INCE and Nuclei of Endogenous Development. With the aid of consultants MINEP also promotes the creation of cooperatives and an investment project for obtaining assets and financing. The *Vuelvan Caras Mission* is presently at this stage. Primary data indicate that 63% of cooperative members are women and 37% men.

### Promotion of gender equity

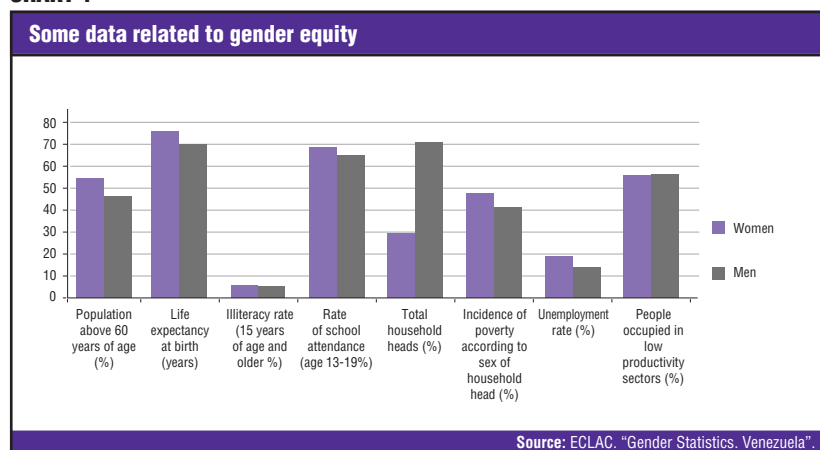
The INCE training plan incorporates a gender module and MINEP, sensitized to questions of gender inequality, will possibly attach a budgetary item to projects that promote equity between men and women. On the Gender-related Development Index, Venezuela ranks in 58<sup>th</sup> among 144 countries. Although in some indicators, such as life expectancy and literacy, there are no great differences, in others there are clear disparities. The case of empow-

9 The *Vuelvan Caras Mission* seeks to add popular participation to government management with the goal of social and economic transformation of the country through education and work, and to achieve a dignified quality of life for all citizens.

10 Ministry for the Popular Economy. *How to constitute a Nucleus of Endogenous Development*. Caracas, May 2005, p. 5.

11 *Ibid.*

CHART 1



erment, for example, shows that only 9.7% of parliamentary and 27% of top official and management level positions are occupied by women. In the area of economic activity, 43.9% of women are economically active, as opposed to 54% of men.<sup>12</sup>

Diligent work is being carried out to coordinate follow-up on cooperative members, taking into account culture, identity, existing gender relations and ethnic background, among other elements.

The creation of Banmujer is one of the principal measures for promoting equity. Through the financing of micro-businesses, women's economic autonomy and an active role in society are made possible. The project involves combating extreme poverty and its feminization. In 2002 the rate of female poverty was 18.8% while the rate for men was 14.4%. In homes where women are heads of household (28.8%) the poverty rate is 48%, while in homes run by men (71.2%) the rate is 41%.<sup>13</sup>

### Banmujer

As a public micro-financial agency attached to MINEP, in 2005 Banmujer published a *Guide to Forming Cooperatives*. According to the Guide the Government has created a new economic model based on humanism and solidarity, promoting "a strategy for democratization of the economy, an alternative development model that contemplates gender equity and a new project for the country. It is a popular economy that promotes local development and creates the conditions for the active participation of women and men, of all the enterprising and creative working people..."

According to the Guide, the popular economy includes "productive and self-managing activities, joint micro-businesses, cooperatives and Associative Economic Units in general", favouring the participation of women, who are generally excluded from public policy and strategic development plans".

12 UNDP, *op cit.*

13 ECLAC. "Gender statistics. Venezuela", [www.eclac.cl/proyectos/perfiles/paises/venezuela/venezuela.htm](http://www.eclac.cl/proyectos/perfiles/paises/venezuela/venezuela.htm)

In the section on cooperatives and gender equity it states that in Venezuela, 70% of the poor are women, a percentage registered in the country's statistics, which also recognize the increasing feminization of poverty. Also noted is the fact that women have traditionally been disadvantaged given their conditions of subordination and are therefore unprepared to face the economic world and the job market, resulting in increased rates of poverty.

Alternatively, the Government empowers the social economy incorporating traditionally excluded sectors like popular communities and women affected by poverty, unemployment and informal employment.

The Guide ends by pointing out that in cooperatives financed by Banmujer, women tend to be a majority and occupy the main management positions.

Banmujer is financed with resources from the National Treasury together with special resources provided in national and multilateral agreements. The financial and non-financial services that it offers favour the economic and social roles of women and stimulate their active role in the creation of a new society with gender equity and justice. At the same time, it supports the *Vuelvan Caras, Plan Café*, Handicrafts for Export and Seed Capital programmes. Banmujer has agreements with the Ministry of Labour and the Mercal Mission, supports the Banded-Banmujer Agreement, Mission Guacaipuro (for indigenous peoples) and gives help to women of African descent in the Barlovento area as well as to disabled women, among others.<sup>14</sup> ■

14 Banmujer. *Popular Economy in Action from a Woman's Point of View*. Caracas, April 2005

## ZAMBIA

# Far away from the 2015 goals



A gender perspective needs to be incorporated into the Millennium Development Goals in order to make real progress in social development and equity. The Beijing Platform for Action and the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme for Action were stronger commitments to these areas than the Millennium Development Goals, which will most likely not be met by Zambia before 2015.

### Women for Change

Lucy Muyoyeta

### Government programmes after Beijing, Copenhagen and the Millennium Summit

The Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women in Zambia was adopted as a blueprint for the effective implementation - in the period 1996-2001 - of the Platform for Action (PLA) resulting from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

In 2000, the Government adopted the National Gender Policy to encourage the participation of women and men in the development process at all levels and to ensure sustainable development and the attainment of equity between the sexes. However its implementation plan was only adopted in 2004.

Zambia has ratified the CEDAW and the African Union Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. It also signed the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State Declaration on Gender and Development (1997), which reaffirms the commitments of the PLA and includes a target of at least 30% women's representation in the political and decision-making structures of member countries by 2005.

Zambia participated in the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen (1995), which promised to work to eliminate poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. The Government's commitments are expressed in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) 2002-2004, which is a requirement of the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.

The PRSPs stated purpose is to promote sustainable economic growth through agriculture, tourism, industry and mining and to improve social services (health and education) and infrastructure for energy, transportation, communication, water and sanitation. HIV/AIDS, gender and environment were identified as cross-cutting issues affecting all other sectors.

Through the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Zambia committed itself to overcoming its human development challenges. According to the Minister of Finance and National Planning, Ng'andu Magande, the domestic targets of the PRSP include the MDG targets.

### The little progress made since 1995

#### Poverty and hunger

During the last decade, poverty has been on the rise and the trends are not very encouraging. In 1998 the poor constituted 73% of the population, 58% of whom were extremely poor,<sup>1</sup> with poverty being worse among women. Zambia's Human Development Index (HDI) ranking fell sharply between 1984 and 1994, to pre-1975 levels and it has continued to worsen since then. Zambia is the only country to have experienced such a regression among the 79 countries for which data is available since 1975. In 2004, the country ranked 164<sup>th</sup> out of the 177 countries on the HDI with a value of 0.36.<sup>2</sup>

Extreme poverty is much higher in rural areas (71%) than in urban areas (36%), but it has been rising faster in urban areas following the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) of the 1990s. Youth unemployment is high, especially in the cities where it increased from 34% in 1991 to 51% in 2000.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of hunger is more acute in rural areas, where it particularly affects children. Roughly 28% of children under five years of age were underweight in 2001-2002, a rise from 25% in 1992.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, 47% of children in the same age group are below the average height for their age.<sup>5</sup>

The country's debt is one of the major causes of poverty. Zambia is among the most highly indebted countries per capita with a debt of approximately USD 7 billion in 2004,<sup>6</sup> which translates into approximately USD 6,500 per person.

The proportion of the GDP spent on debt services rose from 6.2% in 1990 to 8.3% in 2002. To contrast this public expenditure with social spending, in

the period of 1999-2001 Zambia spent 1.9% of the GDP on education and in 2001 only 3% of GDP was spent on health.<sup>7</sup>

On 8 April 2005, the country reached the HIPC completion point. This will result in debt relief of approximately USD 3.9 billion.<sup>8</sup> It remains doubtful, however, whether this will lead to Zambia having a sustainable debt burden judging by the experience of other countries that have gone through the same process. Total debt cancellation is really the only way forward for Zambia.

The national MDG Progress Report 2003 states that both the goals relating to reducing extreme poverty and to those who suffer from hunger are unlikely to be met.

Although the PRSP is in some way an important departure from the past because of its participatory nature, it assumes that the macroeconomic framework is consistent with poverty reduction. However a study on 10 countries, including Zambia, by the Africa Forum and Network on Debt and Development<sup>9</sup> highlights the incompatibility of the macroeconomic policies of the SAPs with the objectives outlined in the PRSP.

The emphasis on market-driven policies avoids any analysis of power relations, which are ultimately what determines poverty, deprivation and inequality. Unequal access to resources such as land and capital is largely responsible for these conditions.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy has come to an end, yet evidence suggests that there have been no radical improvements in the poverty situation. Monitoring by the Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) of the Poverty Reduction Programmes (PRPs) found that the funds set aside for this purpose are inadequate for making significant progress in this area.<sup>10</sup> Serious doubts about the Government's commitments to poverty reduction are raised not only because actual disbursements are less than allocations but also because institutions only remotely

1 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Zambia Human Development Report. The Reduction of Poverty and Hunger in Zambia: An Agenda for Enhancing the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals*, 2003.

2 UNDP. "Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World." 2004, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/>

3 Government of the Republic of Zambia and the United Nations System in Zambia. "Millennium Development Goals. Progress Report 2003. Zambia", 2003, p. 11. [www.undp.org/mdg/MDGRZambia.pdf](http://www.undp.org/mdg/MDGRZambia.pdf)

4 UNDP (2003), *op cit*.

5 Government of Zambia. *National Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)*, 2001/2.

6 Eurodad Country Update: Zambia's Poverty Reduction Strategies in 2005", 2005.

7 UNDP (2004), *op cit*.

8 International Monetary Fund. "IMF and World Bank support USD 3.9 billion in debt service relief for Zambia." 8 April 2005. [www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2005/pr0580.htm](http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2005/pr0580.htm)

9 The African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD): *Africa's Experience with the PRSP: Content and process*. Harare, 2003, p. 6.

10 Civil Society for Poverty Reduction. "The Path away from Poverty: An easy look at Zambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper 2002-2004". [www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000280/index.php](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000280/index.php)



connected to poverty reduction continue to receive more than their scheduled allocations. In 2002 the cabinet office received 512% of the funds allocated to it, and the State House received 264.2% while PRPs received only a quarter of what was allocated to them.<sup>11</sup>

### Gender disparity

The MDGs include the modest goal of eliminating gender inequality in primary and secondary education by 2005 and in all levels of education by 2015. Gender disparities in the education system become higher at the secondary level and widen considerably at the tertiary level, manifesting their highest disparity in the labour market. The share of women in paid employment dropped from 39% in 1990 to 35% in 2000.<sup>12</sup> Although the MDG Progress Report for Zambia states that the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary schools will probably be met, all available evidence suggests this will not be case.

There has been some improvement in terms of women's representation in political office and decision-making positions. Between 1991 and 2001 the percentage of women in Parliament rose from 6% to 12%. With women holding 12.7% of seats in 2005, these figures still fall far short of the SADC requirement of 30% women's representation.<sup>13</sup> Negative societal attitudes are among the greatest challenges faced in trying to ensure more women are involved in decision-making positions. In March 2004, member of Parliament Patricia Nawa introduced a motion to compel that the 30% be reached in accordance with the SADC Gender Declaration. Hostility from men in the Government forced her to withdraw the motion.

Since he won the election in 2001, President Levy Mwanawasa has shown some political will in terms of appointing women to very senior positions in the public service including the position of Auditor General. However the Constitution of Zambia gives the President too much power and all appointments are dependent on his will. There are no constitutional or other provisions to guarantee women's rights to decision-making positions.

Women also face increasing levels of violence both inside and outside the home, but the police, courts and hospitals are totally unprepared to deal with the situation.

### Education

Educational attainment in the country is declining. Although there have been small gains, the educational situation is poor. The primary net enrolment ratio dropped from 79% in 1990/91 to 66% in 2001/2002.<sup>14</sup> In 2001 an estimated 620,000 children were not in school at grades 1 to 7. The problem is particularly acute in rural areas, where over 55% of children over

7 years of age are not enrolled in school. Across the country more girls than boys are out of school.

Literacy among 15-24 year-olds dropped from 74.8% in 1990 to 70.1% in 2000. Female literacy rates are lower than those of males and the gender gap has not narrowed between 1990 and 2000.<sup>15</sup>

The education system is constrained by the lack of teachers and low morale among them, as well as by the poor condition of schools. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has also had a devastating impact on the educational system leading to less contact hours between pupils and teachers. The pupil-teacher ratio which stood at 46:1 during 2000-2002 rose to 52:1 in 2003. In rural areas some schools only have one teacher only who is responsible for teaching all grades.

Both the education and health budgets increased in 2005. Unfortunately, according to the CSPR the nominal increases of 3.5% and 0.46% for education and health will be offset by inflation.

According to the MDG Progress Report 2003, it may be possible to achieve the goal of universal primary education. However severe problems remain at the secondary school level. Less than 30% of grade nine pupils who sat exams last year moved on to high school.

### Children

MDG 4 aims at reducing the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds by 2015. The MDG Progress Report 2003 states that Zambia has the potential to meet this goal. This is because infant mortality rates decreased between 1992 and 2002 from 107 deaths per 1,000 live births to 95. The under-five mortality rate also dropped by 5%, from 191 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1992 to 168 in 2002.<sup>16</sup>

The number of orphans in Zambia was estimated in 2003 at 1.1 million or 19% of all children. The figure may rise to 30% by 2015. Sixty percent (630,000) of them have been orphaned by HIV/AIDS.<sup>17</sup> An estimated 625,000 children, orphans and non-orphans, live on the streets and the number is growing. Children are also facing increasing violence. One of the reasons attributed to the increase in child sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS is the myth that sex with a virgin will cure the disease.

### Health

In the early 1990s the Government launched health reforms. Despite its efforts, it is evident that vulnerable groups and those residing in remote areas still have difficulties accessing services. A lack of skilled staff, medicine and basic medical equipment and supplies are the major problems faced by public health services.

The target of MDG 5 is to reduce the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters. An increase from 649 in 1996 to 729 per 100,000 live births in 2002 means that this goal will most likely not be met.<sup>18</sup>

As for MDG 6 (halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases), the MDG Progress Report 2003 indicates that this goal will potentially be met. However malaria is still a major public health problem which accounts for 37% of hospital patient attendance and is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality among pregnant women and children under the age of five.<sup>19</sup>

The overall HIV infection rate among the adult population (15-49 years) in 2000 was estimated at around 20%. The rates have dropped to 16% with infection rates being higher among women (18%) than among men (13%). The public health system has embarked on a programme to roll out anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) with the aim of reaching 150,000 people by the end of 2005. At the end of March 2005 an estimated 22,000 people were served by the programme. The drugs and the necessary tests cost approximately ZMK 135,000 (USD 29) per month, which is clearly unaffordable for most Zambians. Free provision of ARVs must be considered.

### Water and sanitation

There is a critical need to improve access to water and sanitation. In 1990, only 17% of the households had access to improved sanitation and this had declined to 15% by 2000. Improving sanitation is crucial for sustainable human development when one considers its effects on health. Access to drinking water (MDG 7) increased slightly from 48% in 1992 to 51% in 2002, but it is lower (37%) in rural areas.<sup>20</sup>

### Employment

Zambia's employment record is unimpressive. Implementation of SAPs has had adverse effects on employment levels. Massive job losses in urban areas resulted from the privatization and liquidation of previously state-owned enterprises. As a result, formal sector employment declined from 27% in 1975 to 10% in 2000.<sup>21</sup>

### Conclusion

The Beijing PLA and Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action are much stronger commitments to social development than the MDGs. They are also more attentive to unequal economic structures and policies and the human rights dimensions of poverty and gender inequality. The MDGs are not explicit enough on these dimensions or on the unequal power relations between rich and poor countries. There is a need to mainstream gender in all of the MDGs if real progress is to be made since they include a rather weak gender equality goal. Unfortunately in the last ten years there has been less commitment to the Beijing PLA and Copenhagen Consensus both by governments and donors, which is not very encouraging if we wish to make measurable progress by 2015. ■

11 Southern Africa Regional Poverty Network. "Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR) submission to the Constitutional Review Commission." 7 September 2004. [www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000923/index.php](http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0000923/index.php)

12 Government of the Republic of Zambia and the UN System in Zambia, *op cit*, p. 16.

13 Inter-Parliamentary Union. [www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm](http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm)

14 UNDP. Human Development Reports Statistics Zambia. [http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/cty/cty\\_f\\_ZMB.html](http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/cty/cty_f_ZMB.html)

15 Government of the Republic of Zambia and the UN System in Zambia, *op cit*.

16 UNDP (2003), *op cit*, p. 18.

17 UNICEF/UNAIDS/USAID. "Children on the Brink 2004. A Joint Report of New Orphan Estimates and a Framework for Action", July 2004.

18 UNDP (2003), *op cit*.

19 Government of the Republic of Zambia and the UN System in Zambia, *op cit*, pp. i, 24.

20 *Ibid*.

21 International Labour Organization. [www.ilo.org/public/english/region/afpro/mdtharare/country/zambia.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/afpro/mdtharare/country/zambia.htm).



## BOLIVIA

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In spite of not being explicitly stated, the demands made by social movements point the way to substantial changes in the reforms implemented since 1985. The different conflicts the country has gone through in the last five years show that Bolivian society and its social organizations have set themselves challenges:

- To recover ownership of hydrocarbons in general and of gas in particular. Bolivian society demands a new state and regulatory framework in which the exploration, exploitation and ownership of deposits, the privileges, taxes and opportunities of industrialization are defined by the authority of Bolivian people, in terms of their national interests.
- To change international trade rules to allow the State to provide new conditions for national production. National industries and small producers should be protected to afford a more inclusive vision and development, which will not subject equity to the protection of foreign investments and to the interests of national companies linked to international trade, thus promoting the overexploitation of labour.
- To implement State reform, expressed in the demand for a Constituent Assembly, which would modify the state's structure in order to include the participation of representatives from ethnic and regional groups and challenge the socio-economic basis of the political system as well as the legitimacy of representative democracy. In other words, a reform that would seek the true participation of workers, rural and indigenous organizations, as well as the use of productive resources and a system of social protection that will allow changes in people's material living conditions.
- To de-commodify basic services. The intention is to cancel contracts that privatized water and sewage services and subjected an essential service to the profitability of multinational companies.
- To cancel the external debt. The State's fiscal feasibility requires the total cancellation of external debt. Until now, ineffective relief mechanisms have proved insufficient to achieve macroeconomic balance and reduce poverty.
- To implement tax reform. The current system only requires minimum contributions from transnational companies and high-income sectors of the population.

The fulfilment of these objectives would draw Bolivia closer to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. ■

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Arze, Carlos. *Fin de la era neoliberal en Bolivia: las rebeliones populares y la demanda de nacionalización de los hidrocarburos*. Inédito. La Paz: CEDLA, 2004.

Several social organizations. *Manifiesto de las organizaciones e instituciones de la sociedad civil frente al próximo Grupo Consultivo para Bolivia*, La Paz, 2005. [www.wemos.nl/Documents/cg-bolivian-manifiesto-march-2005.pdf](http://www.wemos.nl/Documents/cg-bolivian-manifiesto-march-2005.pdf)

## CANADA

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### Missing in action: National unity of purpose

For the first time in 25 years, Canadians are governed by a minority federal government,<sup>16</sup> and the possibility of progressive social policy has been catapulted again onto centre stage.

At the same moment, the very *raison-d'être* of the Canadian federation is being challenged by political representation that is regionally divided. There is no national party that can win seats in all parts of the country, when not so long ago there were two. Canada has been wracked by regional static: Quebec separatism,<sup>17</sup> Western alienation,<sup>18</sup> Ontario's new what's-in-it-for-me attitude. Each provincial protest has resulted in more federal cash for the jurisdiction in question.

National programs have been jeopardized. After more than a decade of bitter disputes between federal and provincial authorities, the federal Government increased cash transfers to the provinces for health care and childcare but it has been reluctant to specify the terms and conditions of the new cash. The federal Government is turning into a head waiter to the provincial demands of the day. Each province has different views on how to address social needs. But virtually all provinces want to deliver balanced budgets and tax cuts. Over the past decade, all provinces have reduced tax rates and reigned in the growth of spending just like the federal Government. Taken together, provincial and federal governments offered USD 205 billion in tax cuts between 1996 and 2004. In contrast, USD 88.5 billion went to new health expenditures, the single greatest social priority for Canadian citizens.<sup>19</sup>

There is, however, some hope. Current political dynamics have shifted the balance towards more spending. While staying within its self-prescribed 12%-of-the-economy limit, the latest federal budget was relatively heavier in spending than past budgets, including a USD 4.1 billion package for childcare. Budgetary amendments ultimately reallocate some elements of the original plan - notably deferring some corporate tax cuts - to add another USD 3.8 billion over two years for housing, infrastructure, student assistance, the environment and international assistance.

What impact will this have on Canadians living in different parts of the country? Housing, childcare,

tuition fees are controlled by the provinces, which see the balance between markets and public provisions in these domains quite differently. The only nationally consistent rhetoric around improving access to basic needs is to shorten waiting times for health care. Even this objective is unfolding through a range of public initiatives and public-private sector deals. Will the new money improve access for all?

Without a coherent vision based on key human rights objectives, Canada may collapse into a loose collection of balanced budget states. The devolution of responsibility for public provisions has made it difficult for Canada to set and meet key national priorities. Until we unite in our purpose, it will be difficult to gain ground on the big ideas of our time - the reduction of poverty and inequality, at home and around the world. ■

## INDIA

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### Women in politics

In the field of political empowerment we find that while there is indeed a revival at the grassroots level, the representation of women is still very minor at higher levels of decision-making. Despite all the economic and social structural hurdles, some organized and unorganized women's groups are taking initiatives in political and social fields.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments of 1992 have proven to be a major step towards the political empowerment of women. By these amendments one-third of positions in local institutions at all levels are reserved for women.<sup>31</sup>

The Panchayati Raj<sup>32</sup> institutions have become effective vehicles for the political empowerment of women by broadening women's leadership and giving them statutory powers of decision-making at local levels. "Women head about 175 District Panchayats,<sup>33</sup> more than 2,000 Block Panchayats and about 85,000 Gram Panchayats".<sup>34</sup> Some states, such as Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh, have more

16 On 28 June 2004 Paul Martin's Liberal Party won a minority government - a government in which the ruling party has not elected more members than all other parties and Independents combined - with 135 seats in the House of Commons.

17 The Quebec nationalist movement which has led to 2 provincial referendums on the region's sovereignty.

18 The sentiment in Canada's western provinces that the federal Government does not properly address their concerns.

19 Armine Yalnizyan, *Can We Afford to Sustain Medicare?* Ottawa: Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, July 2004, p. 8.

31 Statement by the Hon Dr Murlidhar Joshi Minister for Human Resource Development at *Women 2000: Gender Equity, Development and Peace for the Twenty First Century*, 5 June 2000.

32 The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1992 introduced the concept of Panchayati Raj - that villagers should think, decide and act for their own socioeconomic interests. It is a form of village self-governance.

33 A *panchayat* is a council. Each state in India is divided into districts, each district into blocks and each block into *grams*, and councils exist at each level.

34 Kumar, Shradha and Sanjay Upadhyaya, "Grassroots Democracy: Local Governance Watch", 28 December 2004; [www.socialwatchindia.com](http://www.socialwatchindia.com)



women members than the statutory 33% of all seats. Again, “the Southern states are faring better in promoting leadership compared to Northern States.”<sup>35</sup> In some states there are all-female Panchayats doing commendable work, especially in the field of primary education. However there are serious impediments to women leaders’ work due to illiteracy, patriarchal traditions and restrictions resulting from the social structure. Some of the problems emanate from the reluctance and lack of confidence of governmental officials at higher levels. Fiscal decentralization is the most commonly experienced problem faced by Panchayats.

The new Panchayati Raj institutions have brought women into local governance institutions but political empowerment is unable to flourish because of male-dominated political process, institutions, social structures and norms.

At higher institutional and decision-making levels women’s representation remains extremely limited. A recent ranking of countries according to the percentage of women in national parliament placed India 93<sup>rd</sup> on the list of 185 countries.<sup>36</sup> In the *Lok Sabha* (House of the People) there are only 45 women out of 543 parliamentarians, approximately 8.3%. Out of a total of 242 *Rajya sabha* (Council of States) members, only 28 are women, a mere 11.6%.

## Conclusions

In spite of definite improvements in the status of women since independence, the picture remains bleak. This is especially true with respect to poverty, employment, health care and education. Social and political empowerment has indeed taken place but in the absence of complementary economic empowerment, women remain impoverished and excluded. Development agencies advocate the “creation of an enabling legal, social and economic environment (as of utmost importance) for achieving poverty alleviation and women’s empowerment goals”.<sup>37</sup> ■

35 *Ibid.*

36 Inter Parliamentary Union. “Women in National Parliaments”. 28 February 2005.

37 United Nations. “Poverty in a Globalizing World at Different Stages of Women’s Life Cycle”, 19 November 2001.

## KAZAKHSTAN

(continued from page 197)

Gender inequality is one of the structural socio-cultural causes hampering development in Kazakhstan. This inequality stems from the legacy of past historic periods along with factors such as a traditional culture with weak democratic values,

paternalistic relations in society, peculiarities of economic activity, dependence on mining industries, weak infrastructure, regional disparities, and unsustainable use of environmental resources. These causes lead to insufficient participation of women in different sectors of society, their exposure to various risks, and a growth in discrimination and sexism.<sup>10</sup>

Kazakhstan has the potential to achieve gender equality by 2015. The issue now is how this potential will be developed and used, how deep the institutional and cultural changes in the society will go, and whether new threats to equality might arise. ■

10 *Kazakhstan: Achievement, Issues and Prospects. A Perspective by the United Nations*. 2004, p. 50.

## LEBANON

(continued from page 203)

### Conclusion

Lebanon is still far from completing its commitments to the CEDAW due to the large number of violations of women’s rights, both in law and in practice. Even the legal amendments made to reduce gender bias need monitoring mechanisms to ensure their proper implementation. Reducing poverty and poverty feminization are not yet a priority for the Government.

This absence of governmental will combined with an infrastructure which does not cater to women’s needs and rights, assigns non-governmental organizations (NGOs) a major role in this respect. NGOs have made significant efforts in the enforcement of international conventions in Lebanon. The national action plan focused on women’s empowerment through services and activities provided by NGOs, such as private and micro-credit, education, and training.

Although the NGO sector was responsible for much of the progress made in this field, its work remains controversial. In general, the work of NGOs is a micro-effort focused on specific communities. Many NGOs are religious institutions and provide welfare in the form of charity to the mothers, daughters or sisters of men on religious grounds and not as women in their own right. Also due to the large number of NGOs in Lebanon, their efforts are scattered and often overlap. This is compounded by the fact that the priorities of many NGOs are imposed by their funding institutions and are therefore not based on prevailing needs.

Welfare and charity are simply not enough to create sustainable change. Structural changes are required which no actor can undertake alone. The State, which is the only legislator and guarantor

of responsibilities and rights, must provide a suitable environment so that the private sector, civil society organizations, the media, and men and women, can realize their share of responsibility and create incentives that will enable women to change the reality around them and to actively claim their rights as equal human beings. ■

## NETHERLANDS

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### Conclusion

In order to achieve the MDGs by 2015 we must learn from the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo 1994), the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women. The UN MDG Review Summit is the arena for deciding on the relevant issues which have cropped up during other world conferences. The Netherlands is a key player in the preparation phase of the MDG Review Summit and therefore CSOs call on the Government to become a true leader. The emphasis must lie on the following:

- The seven strategies on gender must be incorporated. CSOs demand that these strategies also be integrated into Dutch policies, including those on development cooperation.
- In education world leaders should focus more on countries where girls do not go to school and on situations in which girls are restrained from attending school due to child labour and HIV/AIDS, for example.
- HIV/AIDS has created an unprecedented situation, which needs a strong response. Socially sensitive subjects related to the disease must be openly discussed.
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights must be incorporated into MDG 5 as a new target.
- World leaders should counteract neoconservative forces which promote the ABC Approach and resist abortion, thus hindering the success of MDG 5.
- There are still inadequate funds available to meet the MDGs and therefore the many countries who do not yet meet the set goal of 0.7% ODA should do so as soon as possible. ■

## PAKISTAN

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- democracy should be restored in the country
- the rights of the provinces should be honoured
- human rights must be protected
- violence against women should be stopped by all legal and administrative means
- freedom of expression should be enforced
- fundamentalism and religious extremism should be eliminated
- poverty and unemployment should be reduced
- debt bondage<sup>31</sup> should be eliminated
- the gap between the rich and the poor should be narrowed
- social development, employment and poverty alleviation should be given priority in the Government's development policies
- a detailed Millennium Development Goal work plan is needed, complete with investment allocation
- a social security programme should be started for poor, vulnerable groups and poor women
- child labour should be eradicated with social support from the Government
- defence spending should be reduced and the funds spent on social development
- the agricultural sector should be developed to increase income and employment opportunities for rural people
- industrialization should be promoted in rural areas to generate employment
- the rights of fishermen, herdsmen and rural communities should be protected with respect to common natural resources
- government lands should be allotted to the landless
- access to health, education, electricity, water supply, sanitation, public transport and other basic needs should be increased for the poor. ■

29 Ministry of Finance, *op cit.* "Poverty". [www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/05-Poverty.pdf](http://www.finance.gov.pk/survey/chapters/05-Poverty.pdf)

30 Nadeem Malik. *The News*. "4.2% reduction in poverty, claims Economic Survey." 12 June 2004, [www.jang.com.pk/thenews/jun2004-daily/12-06-2004/main/main1.htm](http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/jun2004-daily/12-06-2004/main/main1.htm)

31 Paying off a family's loans via the labour of family members or heirs.

## PALESTINE

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The 2005 Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) of the Palestinian Ministry of Planning includes a substantial section on poverty alleviation. The document does not articulate any gendered notion of poverty, although it declares that "MTDP projects and programmes that are gender sensitive and contribute to female empowerment will receive special attention".<sup>18</sup> While the MTDP "recognizes the role of women in furthering Palestinian development... as dynamic members of the labour force... and... active political players in the democratic process", there are no plans or suggestions of how to operationalize these values.

A National Committee for Poverty Eradication has been established by the Palestinian Cabinet and is comprised of representatives from various civil society bodies, ministries, and private sector institutions. Its purpose is to develop a national strategy for poverty alleviation, to monitor policy documents to ensure an appropriate poverty focus, and to lobby the donors to allocate more resources for poverty eradication.

The PCBS is also working to integrate a gender component into all of its research in order to complement the ministries' move towards addressing gender issues.

### The role of civil society

With hundreds of millions of dollars of assistance destined for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, civil society is committed to poverty alleviation programmes that link relief with development in order to encourage productive, responsible, and accountable state-building measures; promote indigenous development priorities; and combat heavy dependence on foreign aid despite the ongoing occupation.

Civil society is participating in a UNDP initiative in partnership with the PCBS to localize the Millennium Development Goals through the development and monitoring of indigenous poverty indicators. There is also an attempt to establish a credit bank for the poor which currently has a seed fund of USD 10 million. Palestine now boasts its own annual Human Development Report, and the 4 year-old national Palestinian Participatory Poverty Assessment Project is currently entering its second phase. Regionally Arab and Palestinian civil society actors have joined together in a United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia initiative to rehabilitate socio-economic infrastructure in Palestine; and internationally the Palestinian NGO Network is participating in the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP). With the optimistic vision that peace negotiations are imminent with Israel, there are also a large number of new programmes promoting meaningful employment for youth and women, as well as microcredit, and microenterprise.

With men unable to find employment, many women are turning to home-based businesses as a means of coping with both the need for income and the social restrictions that discourage women from working outside the home. Local and international NGOs are working to increase and strengthen microcredit and microenterprise programmes since many women lack access to information, resources or credit services.

Recommendations for local and international action include:

- To develop and implement an international advocacy plan to implement international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- To conduct effective international advocacy campaigns to end the illegal Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jerusalem.
- To link the poverty alleviation agenda to global agendas.
- To involve civil society organizations in the GCAP campaigns.
- To pressure the Palestinian Authority to modify the MTDP to be gender sensitive and appropriately operationalize the focus on poverty.
- To involve and engage local communities and grassroots organizations in the development of poverty alleviation strategies and programmes and to increase the role of women and other marginalized groups in decision-making processes.
- To expand the institutional and organization capacity of NGOs working in poverty alleviation programmes.
- To encourage rigorous and participatory research on poverty and gender.
- To strengthen and enhance networking and cooperation among organizations working to fight poverty, incorporating all stakeholders including Arab and regional counterparts. ■

## PHILIPPINES

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The 2002 environmental sustainability index developed by Yale and Columbia Universities ranked the Philippines 117<sup>th</sup> out of 142 countries studied.<sup>17</sup> In environmental quality (water, air, biodiversity), the Philippines ranked third to last.

Liberal policies have led to the relaxation of investment rules and non-compliance with environmental standards. The Government is in denial and insists that natural resources are under-exploited despite mounting evidence of overexploitation and abuse. It has opened the door wide to extractive industries, especially mining. Mining is seen by the Government as a solution to the country's fiscal crisis.

There is no shortage of environmental policy and legislation; however attempts to integrate sustainable development principles into the country's policies and programmes have failed to bring about a fundamental shift away from what many believe to be an unsustainable path of development.

### What to do

The Government must realize that commitments are less about targets and more about honouring human rights obligations and commitments to social and environmental justice. Development policy must be reoriented from a human rights perspective.

Also, the Government must be held accountable for the disastrous outcomes of its liberalization, privatization and deregulation policies. A comprehensive public review is in order. Curbing corruption is urgent.

More and stronger popular mobilizations are necessary to get the Government to change policy and deliver on its promises. The Global Call to Action against Poverty is one such opportunity to raise the level of public awareness and mass action.

Statistics and their interpretation are a continuing concern for social watchers and activists. Disaggregating national figures by gender and location reveals the different realities of poverty and exclusion. Here, Social Watch Philippines has shown leadership and this should continue.

Social Watch Philippines must continue engaging local governments to translate social and environmental commitments into local development plans, budgets, and investment priorities. Success stories and lessons must be documented and spread around to serve as examples to be emulated. ■

<sup>17</sup> Environmental Sustainability Index 2002.  
[www.ciesin.columbia.edu/indicators/esi/rank.html](http://www.ciesin.columbia.edu/indicators/esi/rank.html)

## TANZANIA

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### Challenges

- Inadequate agricultural policies do not address the core problems of farmers. Poor implementation of policies leads to poor production, thereby intensifying poverty.
- A strong patriarchal system is still in place, contributing to women's discrimination, subjection and subordination, and their weak position in all development sectors.
- Stakeholders have not yet addressed equity issues in relation to the MDGs. Reports so far have focused on national averages, but it would be more helpful to explore how MDG indicators differ by gender, rural/urban setting and region.
- Corruption hinders the implementation of development projects and the provision of services to the poor majority of Tanzania.
- HIV/AIDS is also a major challenge since it creates poverty and reduces the size of the workforce.

### Recommendations

- The Government, civil society and development partners must join hands and develop fiscal policies which support poor farmers, who make up the majority of the population. Sufficient production will be achieved when poor farmers have access to credit, access to affordable agriculture inputs, and access to regional and global markets. This can be achieved by improving infrastructure and access to market information.
- Cultural and traditional practices which discriminate against women and subject them to exploitation and oppression must be opposed by raising awareness in society and changing its perception of women.
- Policies must be formulated to address the quality of education, low performance levels, low enrolment, and high dropout rates, which compromise girls' educational achievements.
- The relaxation of trade barriers by rich countries can significantly increase the incomes of poor Tanzanians, and the encouragement of public and private partnerships in financing social services and infrastructure could lead to better results.

### Conclusions

The Government should adopt a participatory approach and formulate different poverty eradication strategies as an essential part of poverty analysis. In this way, more regionally focused poverty strategies can be adopted which reflect the realities of poor people.

The conceptualization of poverty from a gen-

der perspective is also necessary in order to understand how men and women experience poverty differently. Although many men and women are poor, when analyzing the way poverty is both shared and distributed within families, it is evident that "all suffer but some suffer more than others".

This perspective emphasizes the role that both men and women must play in analyzing and developing strategic options in the fight to eradicate poverty. When poor men and poor women are consulted, it becomes obvious that current macroeconomic policy is limited in its ability to eradicate poverty and develop alternative development approaches which take the needs of these people into account. Therefore gender must be integrated into poverty analysis in national and international poverty debates and into the appropriate economic, political and social policies, programmes and projects for poverty eradication. ■

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

(continued from page 247)

There are several immediate actions the Government must take to fulfill its human development commitments made 10 years ago. First and foremost, the Government must reinstate the collection of sex-disaggregated data at every level. Without a gender analysis, it is impossible to design a package of policies that meets the specific needs of the poor, provides an array of services to the general public and ensures that the private sector does its share. For example, policies addressing paid maternity leave, childcare and specific ergonomic needs cannot be created without first having the data which reflects the extent of discrimination in the workplace.

The federal Government must enforce equal opportunity laws and raise the minimum wage. Federal and state lawmakers must strengthen their commitments to affordable housing and public health insurance while minimizing the escalation of health care costs. They must also devote sufficient funds to provide childcare for low-income working mothers and guarantee every child access to a high quality education. Welfare policies need to address the reduction of poverty with fully funded welfare benefits which compensate for inflation.

Finally, corporations must pay a wage above the poverty line, provide affordable health insurance including pre-natal care, offer sufficient retirement benefits to all of their employees including mothers who work part-time, and train women to fill managerial positions. By adequately providing for their workers, corporations can enable the Government to help those really in need; then we can truly claim to be a nation of dignified and secure women, men and children. ■







