

Statistics Division

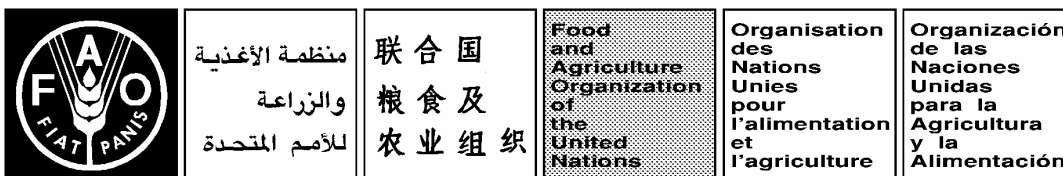
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Report on food deprivation towards the MDG on hunger reduction, 2006

May 2006





Report on food deprivation towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on hunger reduction, 2006

SUMMARY

Worldwide developing countries have reduced hunger since the MDG bench-mark period of 1990-92 to the latest available of 2001-03. A closer look at the proportion of population insufficient to their needs brings positive news on regional hunger reduction such in Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia and highlights concerns in other regions such as CIS in Asia. Some MDG indicators to monitor poverty and hunger show that progress on poverty and hunger is different among regions and subregions.

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I. Introduction

A closer look at the proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption, since the MDG bench-mark period of 1990-92 to the latest available of 2001-03, provides positive messages on regional hunger reduction in recent years. In addition to this news, the relationships among some of the MDG indicators show differential progress on poverty and hunger by regions and subregions.

II. Progress towards the MDG target on hunger reduction

Global and regional trends

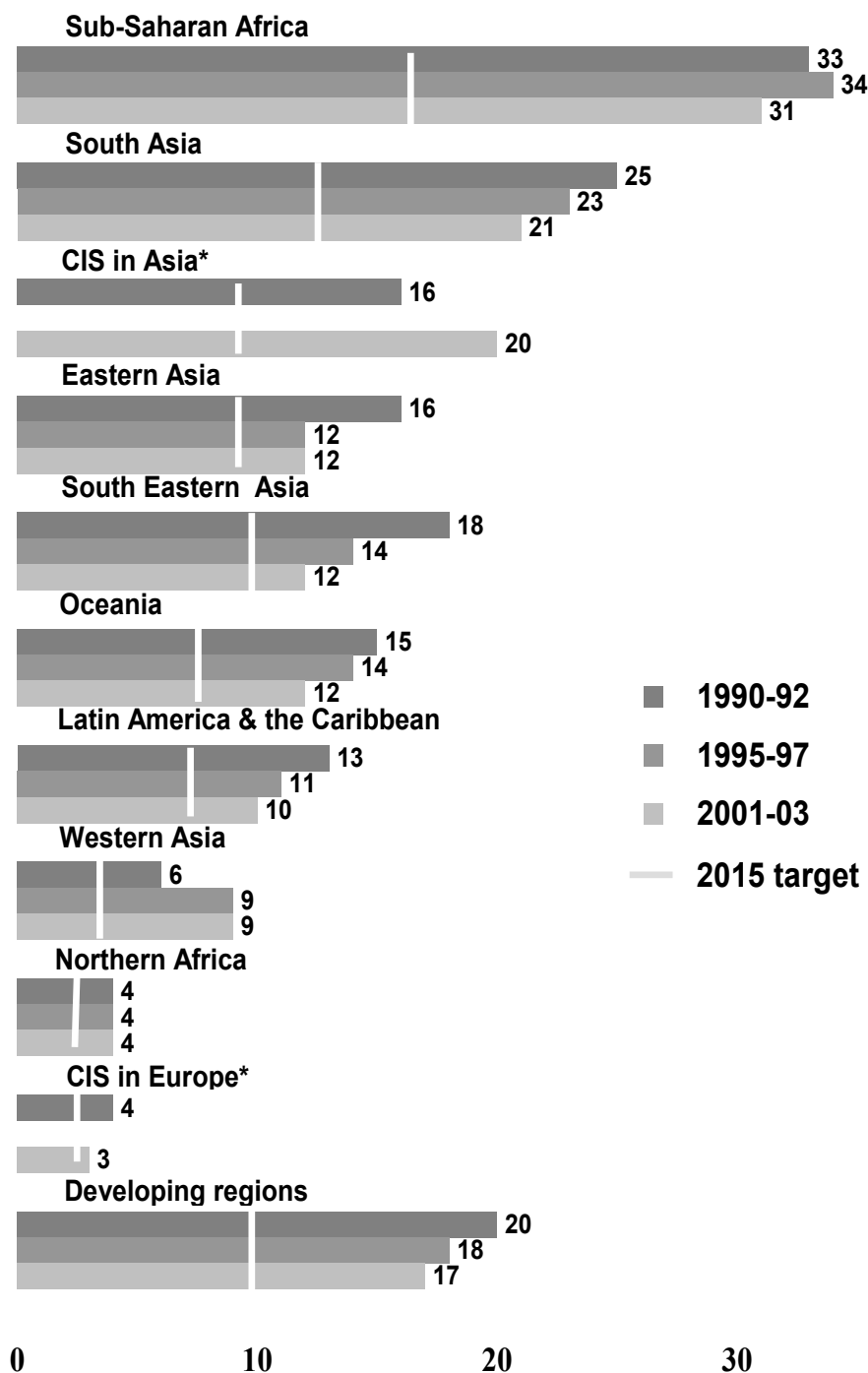
In the Developing World (DW) as a whole the proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (undernourishment) decreased from 20% in 1990-92 to 17% in 2001-03, while the regional trends depict progresses and setbacks towards the MDG target on hunger reduction. The MDG target in the DW calls for a hunger reduction from 20% to 10% with an implied reduction in number from around 800 to 600 million after accounting for population growth.

All regions, except Western Asia (WA) and Asian countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISA), have reduced hunger during the reporting period (see Graph 1 and Table 1). WA and CISA are heading to the opposite direction and need to reverse the hunger increasing trend. The modest progress observed in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) from 1995-97 to 2001-03 has not been enough to decrease undernourishment in number and the still high level in proportion. South Asia (SA) has decreased undernourishment in proportion throughout the reporting period but has increased in number. Eastern Asia (EA) has experienced an important hunger reduction in proportion mainly from 1990-92 to 1995-97 but yet an increase in number afterwards. In Northern Africa (NA), hunger reduction is at a lower pace mainly due to its low magnitude in proportion as for CIS countries in Europe (CISE).

Although significant progress has been made towards the MDG target on hunger reduction, an accelerated pace will be required to reach the goal by 2015 at global level. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) needs to accelerate slightly the hunger reduction pace over the next years. SSA and SA need to speed up the reduction trends in proportion to compensate for the population growth. EA has to catch up the pace in hunger reduction that was achieved from 1990-92 to 1995-97.

Graph 1

Proportion of people living with insufficient food
1990-92, 1995-97 and 2001-03 (Percentage)



* Data closest to the MDG bench-mark period for countries of CIS refer to 1993-95.

Table 1. Global and regional estimates on undernourishment for 1990-92, 1995-97 and 2001-03

	Number of people undernourished (millions)			Percentage of population undernourished		
	1990-92	1995-97	2001-03	1990-92	1995-97	2001-03
Developing World (DW)	827	801	824	20	18	17
Northern Africa (NA)	5	6	6	4	4	4
Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) ^{1/}	172	200	209	33	34	31
Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)	59	55	53	13	11	10
Eastern Asia (EA)	199	155	160	16	12	12
Southern Asia (SA)	301	303	314	25	23	21
South-Eastern Asia (SEA)	80	68	65	18	14	12
Western Asia (WA)	9	14	17	6	9	9
Oceania (OCE)	1	1	1	15	14	12
CIS in Asia (CISA) ^{2/}	11	..	15	16	..	20
CIS in Europe (CISE) ^{2/}	8	..	6	4	..	3
Other Eastern European countries ^{2,3/}	4	..	4	3	..	3
Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)	200	249	249	38	41	36
Least Developed Countries (LDCs)	732	719	751	22	20	19
Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	10	11	9	23	25	19

^{1/} Excluding South Africa.

^{2/} Data for 1990-92 refer to 1993-95.

^{3/} Includes Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

III. Relationship between indicators for measuring hunger reduction

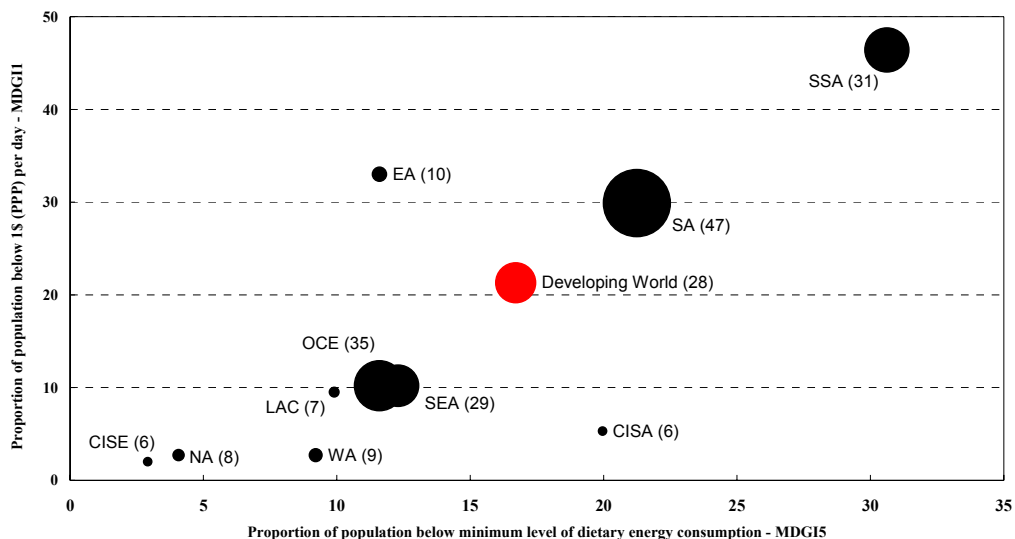
The progress of the MDG goal I on poverty and hunger reduction is monitored using the MDG Indicators 1, 2 and 3 for target 1 on poverty reduction and MDG Indicators 4 and 5 for target 2 on hunger reduction. Out of these five indicators, MDG Indicators 1, 4 and 5 deal with extreme poverty, child undernutrition and undernourishment in total population, respectively. In principle these indicators should be related; however, regions have experienced different situations as illustrated in Graphs 2 and 3. Graph 2 depicts different stages of development while Graph 3 shows progress towards the MDG.

The relationship between hunger and poverty as shown in Graph 2 is strong while the relationships between hunger or poverty with children underweight are not as strong as that between hunger and extreme poverty.

Indeed, if the relationships were high, the 17 percent of the hungry people in the developing world would be concentrated mainly in regions where poverty and child undernutrition are high as in the case for SSA; the region of most concern, with more than 46 percent of the population being extremely poor, 31 percent of food undernourishment (food deprivation), and 31 percent of children facing undernutrition.

Graph 2

Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age (percent in parenthesis) by poverty and hunger levels - MDG14

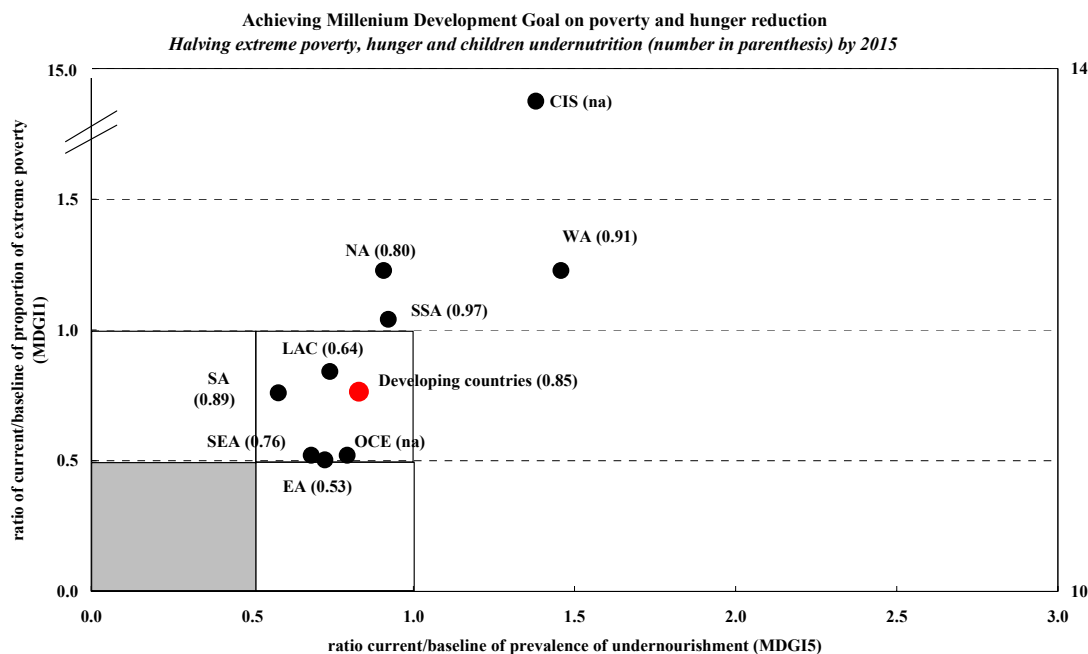


However, SEA and Oceania exhibit a high level of child undernutrition (close to that experienced by SSA), but moderate levels of extreme poverty and hunger. In contrast, EA shows a high level of extreme poverty and moderate level of hunger with low level of child undernutrition, while CISA showed a low level of extreme poverty and moderate level of hunger with low level of child undernutrition. CISE, NA, LAC and WA reveal low levels in all three indicators.

Progresses towards MDG on poverty and hunger reduction (MDG1) as measured by the ratios of current (2001-03) to baseline (MDG bench-mark) periods of indicators 1, 4 and 5 are shown in Graph 3.

A ratio from 0 to 0.5 means that the MDG targets have already been reached; a ratio ranging from 0.5 to 1.0 is indicative of improvements towards the MDG targets; a ratio between 1.0 to 1.5 means that regions are at risk of not meeting the MDG targets on food insecurity, while ratios higher than 1.5 are for regions where extreme poverty (income or expenditure deprivation), undernourishment (food deprivation) and child undernutrition are increasing and hence heading in opposite direction than MDG targets.

Graph 3



The graphic representation of the ratio of undernourishment (food deprivation) versus the ratio of poverty (income deprivation) and the ratio of children undernutrition, given in parenthesis, provides a quick assessment of the situation of the region regarding achievement of MDGI as measured by indicators 1, 4 and 5. Regions that have already halved hunger and poverty are located in the darkest square delimited by ratios of 0.5 close to the origin (0.0,0.0), while the light dark shaded area between ratios of 0.5 and 1.0 in both sides of the chart contain regions that are heading towards the achievement in reduction of both extreme poverty and hunger. Already achieved targets in extreme poverty reduction or hunger reduction but not both are delimited by the strip shaded areas between ratios of 0.5 and 1.0, the left hand-sided area refers to achieved hunger reduction, while the right-hand sided area refers to extreme poverty reduction. Failures in poverty or hunger reductions or both are depicted in the white area.

No region has already met extreme poverty and hunger targets as measured by the three MDG indicators 1, 4 and 5. Fighting against extreme poverty has proven to be more efficient than fighting against hunger; however all regions are moving towards the hunger reduction target in child population ; three regions (SEA, OCE and EA) have already halved proportion of extremely poor people while they are making progress in hunger reduction as measured by

both food deprivation and child undernutrition. LAC and SA are progressing in both extreme poverty and hunger reductions. In contrast, SSA and NA are making progress only in extreme poverty but not in hunger reduction; note SSA experienced the highest ratio child undernutrition (0.97) indicative of the lowest improvement towards the MDG target. In the extreme situation is WA where both extreme poverty and hunger reduction have failed and the decrease in child undernutrition has been the second lowest after SSA. However the situation in SSA is promising for reducing all three indicators of extreme poverty, undernourishment in total population and undernutrition of the child population

All regions have reduced child undernutrition, as shown by the value lower than 1 of all the ratios. The reduction by half of food deprivation (undernourishment) and poverty versus the reduction by half of proportion of children underweight are not related as one may hypothesize. Regions in the light-shaded area of Graph 3 are reducing children under nutrition as well as extreme poverty and food deprivation. However those sub-regions outside of the shaded area are heading in the opposite direction such as CIS, WA, SSA and NA. From those regions WA performed better in reducing the proportion of children underweight than in reducing food deprivation even though both targets are far from being reached. The same observation can be drawn for EA which has almost achieved reduction of the proportion of children underweight but still needs to increase pace of reduction of food deprivation.

IV. Conclusions

- Hunger has been reduced in Sub-Saharan Africa in recent years on line with the overall decrease experienced in the developing world as a whole.
- The increasing trend experienced by Western Asia has come to a halt in recent years.
- CIS countries in Asia have experienced a dramatic increase in hunger after 1997.
- The other regions in Asia (excluding Western Asia) and Latin America and the Caribbean have contributed significantly to the decreasing trend in hunger observed in developing world over the reporting period.
- The developing world as a whole is showing progress in reaching Goal 1's targets as measured by indicators 1, 4 and 5 on extreme poverty, children underweight and undernourishment (food deprivation) but yet still these decreasing rates need to be accelerated to reach the targets on poverty and hunger reduction by 2015.

