

Millennium Development Goals

The region is set to achieve the income poverty target but needs greater efforts to meet the social and environmental goals

In September 2000, the international community adopted the Millennium Declaration, establishing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are now at the heart of the global development agenda. The goals require time-bound and measurable, country-specific results to be achieved on reducing poverty that involve social, economic, and environmental dimensions (*see box for details*).

Mixed Performance

Overall, the Asia and Pacific region is on track to achieve MDG 1 (reducing income poverty) and MDG 2 (basic education), but needs to do more to meet the other social and environmental goals.

MDG 1 (except hunger) and MDG 2 (for better basic education) seem likely to be met due to pro-poor policies and sustained economic growth.

However, recent data shows that many countries in the region are likely to miss vital health and environment-related targets. Twenty-seven out of 42 Asian Development Bank (ADB) member countries with available data are unlikely to meet 25% or more of the indicators studied. More than one third were offtrack on the main health, water and sanitation, and environment indicators.

Countries facing the greatest challenges in meeting the MDGs include the least developed countries in the region, some landlocked countries, and small island developing countries. The *2007 MDG Progress Report for Asia and the Pacific* also identified major intra-country disparities in MDG achievements, such as

between poor and rich households, and rural and urban areas.

Holistic Approach to Meet the MDGs

Inclusive, pro-poor, and sustainable economic growth is seen as a core instrument for achieving the MDGs, but while important, it does not—by itself—trigger sustainable poverty reduction. Achieving the MDGs requires a holistic approach that includes shared growth, equitable social development, management of the environment in a sustainable and pro-poor manner, and good governance.

The MDGs require time-bound and measurable country-specific results to be achieved on reducing poverty that involve social, economic, and environmental dimensions

The Millennium Development Goals

1. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, income poverty, hunger, and undernourishment
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce, between 1990 and 2015, child mortality by two thirds
5. Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability (including through access to safe drinking water and sanitation, climate protection, maintenance of biodiversity and conservation of forestland, and by addressing the need for slum development)
8. Develop a global partnership for development for sustainable poverty reduction

References

- ADB and the Millennium Development Goals
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- Strategy 2020
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- 2006/07 Poverty Reduction and Development Effectiveness Report
www.adb.org/poverty/progress-implementing-prs.asp

The new Strategy 2020 emphasizes education, climate change adaptation, livable cities, regional cooperation and integration, and development financing as core focus areas

ADB Strategies and the MDGs

In 2004, under its enhanced Poverty Reduction Strategy, ADB placed more emphasis on MDG achievement and it also adopted progress on the MDGs in the region as a means to assess the long-term combined impact of its operations, in partnership with its development partners.

ADB's new Long-Term Strategic Framework for 2008 to 2020 (Strategy 2020) will provide ample scope for ADB's continued support for the MDGs. Strategy 2020 stresses the need to make growth in the region more inclusive, which is essential for achieving the MDGs. ADB will also support investment in education and essential public services such as water and sanitation. Health is recognized as vital to development, and will be addressed in the

broader context of ADB's infrastructure and other projects. Gender equality and social inclusion are also emphasized.

Under Strategy 2020, ADB will do more to promote environmental sustainability, including support for climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. ADB will promote regional economic integration and trade, foster development partnerships, and seek to extend the reach of the formal financial system to the rural areas and the poor.

Promoting Partnerships for MDGs

Meeting the targets is the responsibility of partner countries, and development institutions like ADB—in tandem with other regional and global organizations—can assist them.

In 2004, ADB, United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific entered into a partnership to strengthen cooperation, monitor progress, help improve policies and institutions, and develop capacities for achieving the MDGs in the Asia and Pacific region. The partnership has produced regional MDG reports and updates, technical papers, and promoted regional advocacy and capacity-building forums. In April 2008, the partnership released its third regional report, which gives an update on the region's status in achieving the MDGs—midway between 2000 when they were adopted—and 2015 when they are expected to be achieved. ■

Country groups in the Asia and Pacific region on and off track for the MDGs

Goal	1	2	3	4	6	7															
	\$1/day poverty	Underweight children	Primary enrolment	Reaching grade 5	Primary completion rate	Gender primary	Gender secondary	Gender tertiary	Under-5 mortality	Infant mortality	HIV prevalence	TB prevalence rate	TB death rate	Forest cover	Protected area	CO ₂ emissions	ODP CFG consumption	Water urban	Water rural	Sanitation urban	Sanitation rural
The Asia and Pacific region	▲	■	▲	■	▲	●	▲	▲	■	■	●	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	▼	▲	■	■
Excluding PRC and India	●	■	■	■	■	▲	▲	▲	■	■	▼	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	▼	■	■	■
Southeast Asia	●	■	▼	■	▲	●	●	▲	■	■	●	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	▼	▲	▲	■
South Asia	■	■	▲	▲	■	▲	▲	■	■	■	●	●	●	▲	●	▼	▼	▲	▲	■	■
Excluding India	▲	■	■	▼	▼	▲	▲	■	■	■	▼	●	●	▼	●	▼	▼	■	■	■	■
Pacific islands				▼	■	■	▲		■	■	▼	●	●	▼	●	●	●	▼	▼	▼	▼
CIS in Asia	●		▲	●	●	●	●	▲	■	■	▼	▼	▼	▼	●	●	●	●	▼	■	■
LCDs in the Asia and Pacific region	■	■	▲	■	▼	▲	■	■	■	■	●	●	●	▼	●	▼	●	■	■	■	▲

PRC = People's Republic of China, CIS = Commonwealth of Independent States, LCDs = least developed countries.

Note: The table above indicates (a) countries that have already achieved the 2015 targets (dot), (b) countries expected to meet the 2015 targets (upward triangle), (c) offtrack countries that may, however, meet the MDG targets after 2015 (square), and (d) offtrack countries with progress or regressing in MDG targets (downward triangle). The data relates to 55 developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region. Source: ADB/ESCAP/UNDP, Nov 2007: The Millennium Development Goals: Progress in Asia and the Pacific 2007.

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