
World Development Indicators 2010

Highlights from the 2010 WDI include:

Economy

The world economy grew by 2.8 percent in 2008 measured in purchasing power parity terms, down from 5.0 percent in 2007. Low- and middle-income economies grew faster than high-income economies, increasing their share of world output by more than a percentage point to 43.3 percent.

Trade fell in almost every region under the impact of the global recession. South Asia was the only exception. Developing economies now account for 33 of merchandise exports and 21 percent of service exports. But low-income economies are largely left out, providing only 1 percent of world exports.

Educational attainment

The MDGs call for all children to be able to complete primary school by 2015. This goal is close to being achieved. At the end of the 2007 school year, 7 out of 10 people in the developing world lived in countries that have achieved full primary school enrollment or are on track to do so. Still this leaves 72 million primary school-age children not enrolled, most of them in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Gender equality

- Education opportunities for girls have expanded everywhere, but gender gaps remain large in low-income economies, especially at the primary and secondary levels.
- More women are in the workforce, although they are more likely than men to be in vulnerable jobs, without regular salaries or benefits.
- More women are entering national parliaments. The largest gains have been made in South Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, where women now occupy more than 20 percent of the seats.

Child health

- Increasing immunization rates, better management of diarrheal diseases, and malaria prevention programs have all contributed to falling mortality rates for children under age five. In developing countries, the child mortality rate declined from 101 per 1,000 in 1990 to 73 in 2008.
- Thirty-nine countries, representing 45 percent of the population of developing countries have achieved or are on track to achieve a two-thirds reduction in child mortality before 2015.

Mothers' health

- New estimates of maternal mortality, which became available after the WDI went to press, show substantial decreases in maternal deaths for the first time since setting the fifth MDG target of a 75 percent reduction in the mortality ratio from levels prevailing in 1990. Official estimates from the United Nations later this year are likely to confirm this trend.
- The proportion of pregnant women who had at least one antenatal visit rose from 64 percent in 1990 to 79 percent in 2008. But the proportion who had the recommended four or more visits is still less than 50 percent in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, where most maternal and infant deaths occur.

Combating disease

- New HIV infections have fallen by 17 percent since 2000, and wider access to antiretroviral treatment has contributed to the first decline in AIDS deaths since the epidemic began. But there are still 33.4 million people – two-thirds of them in Sub-Saharan Africa living with HIV/AIDS and most of them women.
- Tuberculosis prevalence has fallen, but the target of halving the 1990 prevalence rate by 2015 is unlikely to be met. In 2007 there were 13.7 million cases globally, down only slight from 2006.
- There were nearly 1 million malaria-related deaths in 2006. Ninety percent of malaria deaths occur in Sub-Saharan Africa, and most are children under age 5. Progress has been made in scaling up the use of insecticide-treated bed nets among children, which rose from 2 percent in 2000 to 20 percent in 2006.

Environmental sustainability

- Net forest losses since 1990 have been substantial but recent data show a slowing in the global rate of deforestation. In East Asia, China has added to its forest cover by converting marginal crop lands.
- While economies have become more efficient in their use of energy, reducing carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP produced, carbon dioxide emissions per capita continue to rise.
- More people have access to improved (protected and accessible) water sources, and at least 65 developing countries are on track to reduce by half the proportion of people lacking access to water source. But more than 1.5 billion people lack access to toilets, latrines and other forms of improved sanitation and there has been little improvement since 1990.

Development partnership

- Aid flows from the member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee have increases – from \$69 billion in 2000 to \$122 billion in 2008 – but even with further increases in 2009 and 2010 they will fall short of the pledges made five years ago.
- Better debt management, trade expansion, and, for the poorest countries, substantial debt relief have reduced the burden of debt service.
- Average tariffs have been falling and countries are trading more freely, but many obstacles remain for developing country exporters. Some are imposed by their trading partners – such as high peak tariffs applied selectively to certain good and subsidies paid by rich countries to domestic agricultural producers – and some are the result of poor infrastructure and inefficiencies that limit the ability of developing countries to compete in the global market place.

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