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Strictly embargoed until 12.00 GMT, 8 July 2003

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Millennium Development Goals in Reach by 2015: Proposed “Compact” Charts Way Forward

In a call for partnership between rich and poor countries, UNDP’s Human Development Report 2003 outlines new approach to aid and development

New York, 8 July 2003—The pledge by world leaders to lift hundreds of millions of people out of extreme poverty by 2015 can be achieved—but only if poor countries pursue wide-ranging reforms and wealthy nations respond with improved trade terms and increased aid, according to the United Nations Development Programme’s *Human Development Report 2003*.

The Human Development Report introduces a new plan of action—the *Millennium Development Compact*—to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The Goals, endorsed by all members of the United Nations, set out a series of time-bound and quantifiable targets ranging from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

Among the Report’s findings is that the first of these global targets—reducing by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day—is likely to be reached, due to sustained economic growth in the two most populous countries, China and India. In the last 10 years, China’s dynamic economy moved 150 million people out of poverty. And in India, per capita growth averaged a robust four percent annually from 1990 to 2000.

“There is nothing inevitable about human poverty,” said the report’s lead author, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr. “History shows us what is possible. Over the past three decades, life expectancy in poor countries increased by eight years and illiteracy was cut in half.”

Yet, despite global progress in many countries, the *Human Development Report 2003* documents an unprecedented backslide in human development indices in some of the world’s poorest nations. More than one billion people still live in extreme poverty, and for many living standards are getting steadily worse. This development crisis must be

Timeline: when will the Millennium Development Goals be achieved if progress does not accelerate?							
	Poverty	Hunger	Primary education	Gender equality	Child mortality	Access to water	Access to sanitation
ACHIEVED	Arab States ^a East Asia & the Pacific	Central & Eastern ^a Europe & the CIS	Latin America & ^a the Caribbean Central & Eastern ^a Europe & the CIS East Asia ^a & the Pacific	Latin America & ^a the Caribbean		Central & Eastern ^a Europe & the CIS	
2000	World South Asia	East Asia & the Pacific			Latin America & the Caribbean	South Asia World Latin America & the Caribbean	
2015					East Asia & the Pacific	East Asia & the Pacific	South Asia World Latin America & the Caribbean
2020		Latin America & the Caribbean		East Asia & the Pacific			East Asia & the Pacific
2020		World	South Asia	Arab States South Asia	South Asia Arab States	World Sub-Saharan Africa	
2050			Arab States World				
2100		South Asia Sub-Saharan Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa		Sub-Saharan Africa		
2200					Central & Eastern Europe & the CIS		
REVERSAL	Latin America & the Caribbean Sub-Saharan Africa Central & Eastern Europe & the CIS	Arab States					Sub-Saharan Africa

a. Region is considered to have achieved the Goal because it has low human poverty (below 10%) in the most recent year for the relevant Goal (see technical note 2).
Source: Human Development Report Office calculations based on feature 2.1.

addressed head on by rich and poor countries alike if the world is to meet the 2015 development goals, the Report argues. “We are not calling for a blank cheque,” said UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch Brown. “There is a new partnership at work here, and it says that aid has to be a two-way street. Poor countries have to implement pro-poor reforms. Rich countries have to provide more support.”

The *Human Development Report 2003* identifies 59 priority countries where, unless urgent action is taken, the Millennium Development Goals will not be met. In 31 “top priority” countries, income and other human development indicators remain very low and progress towards the goals has stalled or begun to reverse. In 28 “high priority” countries, the situation is less dire—advances are being made in some areas, but resources or policy deficiencies are blocking progress towards several key goals.

Many of these 59 priority nations face endemic problems related to geographical and other factors often overlooked in previous development strategies. It is not coincidental that 24 of these countries suffer from a high incidence of HIV/AIDS, 13 are embroiled in armed conflict, and 31 have unusually high foreign debts.

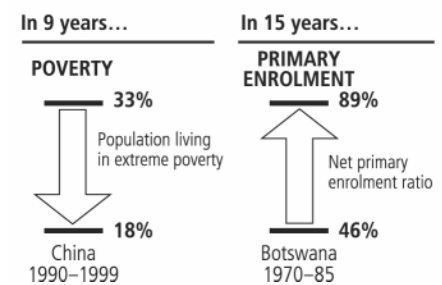
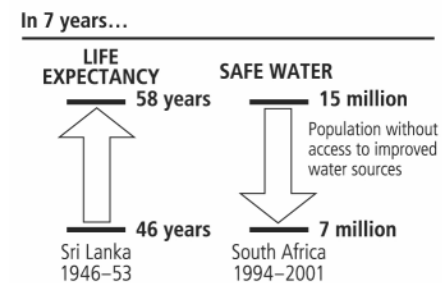
The political framework for achieving the Millennium Development Goals was provided by the new global deal struck in 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico, between North and South. The rich nations represented at the Monterrey “Financing for Development” summit pledged to remove trade barriers and provide more aid and meaningful debt relief to developing countries that undertake tough political and economic reforms.

The *Human Development Report 2003* features a detailed “Millennium Development Compact” with concrete proposals for making the Monterrey deal a reality.

“We should all be asking what it would take to achieve the Millennium Declaration, not what can we afford to do,” Malloch Brown said.

The new Millennium Development Compact urges strategic action in the fight against poverty and calls on: Developing countries to adopt pro-poor policies that reinforce each other and are targeted to the Goals; Donor countries to back these reforms with more resources and trade opportunities; and, for nations both rich and poor to put the Goals at the centre of national and global decision-making.

Great leaps forward are possible in years —not decades



“If rich and poor countries alike set their minds to the practical tasks recommended in the Human Development Report, we can foresee the absolute end of poverty within a generation,” said Jeffrey Sachs, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals, and the guest contributing editor of the 2003 Report. The Millennium Development Compact detailed in the *Human Development Report 2003* draws on the work of the Millennium Project—an initiative that marshals the expertise of more than 300 leading policy makers and practitioners under the leadership of Sachs.

Using existing technology and more targeted financial resources, many of the problems faced by much of the developing world could be resolved—among them low soil fertility, isolation from trading routes, the prevalence of preventable diseases, and the burden of unsustainable debts.

The Millennium Development Compact recommends substantial additional assistance from the rich world to developing countries. By UN estimates, yearly aid flows must be doubled to US\$100 billion, at a minimum, in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Increased aid—contingent on domestic efforts to raise more local revenue and reallocate resources to poverty reduction—could put the poorest countries on track to reaching the Goals, the Report concludes.

The *Human Development Report 2003* also proposes that all poor countries formally analyze whether they are on target to meet the Millennium Development Goals and seek to turn these goals into national rallying points, embedded in existing development plans.

“The principle of accountability of governments to their people, and of rich and poor countries to each other, is at the heart of the Millennium Declaration,” said Malloch Brown. “In an era when democracy is taking root around the world, data that clearly shows whether or not governments are making progress toward these Goals will allow citizens to judge their leaders’ success and failure for themselves.

ABOUT THIS REPORT: Every year since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has commissioned the Human Development Report by an independent team of experts to

explore major issues of global concern. A worldwide advisory network of leaders in academia, government and civil society contribute data, ideas, and best practices to support the analysis and proposals published in the Report. The concept of Human Development looks beyond per capita income, human resource development, and basic needs as a measure of human progress and also assesses such factors as human freedom, dignity and human agency, that is, the role of people in development. The *Human Development Report 2003* argues that development is ultimately “a process of enlarging people’s choices,” not just raising national incomes.

The *Human Development Report 2003* is published in English by Oxford University Press.

ABOUT UNDP: The United Nations Development Programme is the UN’s global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience, and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.