

MDGs and Beyond



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RESOURCES:

Global Monitoring Report

www.worldbank.org/gmr

Maquette for MDG Simulations

www.worldbank.org/mams

World Bank website on the MDGs

www.worldbank.org/mdgs

Health, Nutrition and Population Data

<http://datatopics.worldbank.org/hnp/>

Statistics for the new agenda

By Grant Cameron

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The post-2015 development agenda has renewed interest in the quality and availability of statistics for guiding policy, monitoring progress, measuring results, and supporting analysis. As most of the requisite statistics are produced by developing country statistical systems, improving statistics requires investment in national statistical capacity.

The advent of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 12 years ago drew attention to the many gaps in statistics and the need to include statistical capacity building in national development strategies. At the time of the Millennium Summit in 2000, key statistics produced by many country systems were of poor quality or non-existent. Donor actions to improve statistical capacity were piecemeal and partial. Aid for statistics was almost exclusively bilateral and uncoordinated.

Since 2000, the Bank has played a leading role in drawing attention to the gaps in statistics and the need to integrate statistical capacity building. With Bank support, almost all low income countries have crafted country-led statistical development plans with implementation underway in many countries. And, the Bank has provided over \$500 million to improve statistical systems.

These efforts have borne fruit. Data availability has improved, but there is some way to go. Coverage for sanitation, water, under five mortality, and gender statistics has expanded and the quality of statistics has improved.

However, weaknesses in country statistical systems remain significant. Gaps in poverty, agriculture and malnutrition statistics and spotty vital registration systems require particular attention. To expand the Bank's role post-2015, some specific challenges need to be overcome.

First, we need to better integrate statistical capacity building into our operational work. Generally, Bank budget allocations for statistical capacity building have been small and most of these projects have relied on trust funds. Second, we need to increase the number of experts in statistical capacity building. Third, the Bank's Board and Senior Management need to provide sustained support and attention to steadily increase these activities. Finally, we need to ensure data produced by country systems is more accessible.

Meeting these challenges would provide many benefits: More and better statistics will be available to monitor development goals post-2015 and facilitate the mobilization of needed resources; evidence-based management at the Bank will improve; and there will be increases in national capacity for evidence-based development to guide policies, decision making, and monitor development progress.

What will it take to improve poverty data?

By Johan A. Mistiaen
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On February 29, 2012, The World Bank's Development Research Group announced that 22 percent of the population in the developing world lived on less than \$1.25 a day **four years ago** (in 2008). This lag in reporting is due in large part to data constraints. In addition to System of National Accounts (SNA), Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) data, monitoring global poverty requires data to compute the **distribution**—not just the mean!—of per capita consumption expenditures or income in each country. In other words, countries need to implement a nationally representative household survey program that collects consumption expenditure and/or income data at regular intervals (at least every 3-5 years).¹

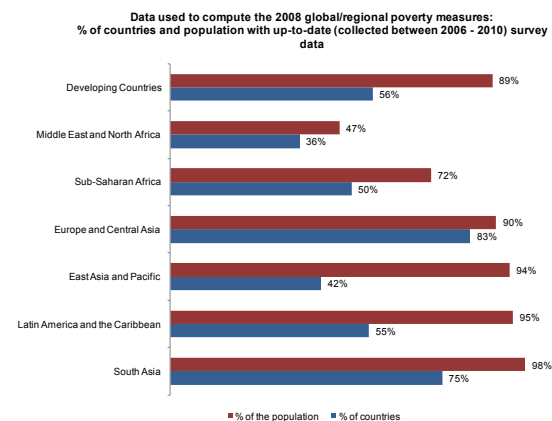
But too few countries are collecting the necessary data. This is evident from examining [PovcalNet](#): the World Bank's on-line global poverty analysis tool and database. The aforementioned global poverty estimates for 2008 are based on household survey data collected in 127 countries, but in only 86 of those countries were the data sufficiently up-to-date (i.e. collected between 2006 and 2010). Because the countries with timely data represented 89 percent of the MDG1 target population, this was sufficient to compute a measure of global poverty for 2008. However, only half of all IDA and IBRD countries have collected and disseminated the needed household survey data. Consequently, comparisons of recent trends and poverty levels between many countries or sub-groups of countries are not possible.

A regional breakdown reveals that the availability of recent poverty data is particularly problematic in Sub-Saharan Africa and in the Middle East and North Africa. In East Asia and the Pacific, good population-weighted coverage is disproportionately due to the recent survey conducted in China, but poverty data are outdated or never collected in almost 60 percent of countries in the region. Low country coverage is also a concern in Latin America and the Caribbean. Across the globe, coverage and timeliness is particularly problematic in small and fragile states.

Appropriate household survey programs for monitoring poverty and informing poverty reduction policies are well described in the literature (e.g. the World Bank's [LSMS](#) research program) and are being advocated with

clients. And many countries have successfully institutionalized and put poverty monitoring systems into practice—interesting examples include Indonesia, Peru and Vietnam. But too many policy makers appear to suffer from cognitive statistical dissonance or are either unable or unwilling to implement the required statistical reforms and programs. What will it take to improve the timeliness of global poverty data? To frame strategic thinking and formulate potential solutions in countries that face data challenges, the following hyper-stylized “four country-types” taxonomy can be helpful: (a) those with data that needs quality improvements; (b) those that do not have any data; (c) those that have data but do not want (anyone or everyone) to use it; and (d) those that do not want any data.

There is an urgent need to scale up our engagement with more type (a) and (b) countries and their development partners to deliver more technical assistance and financial support to implement household survey programs that are tailored to strengthen National statistical strategies, systems and local capacity. And a few countries have graduated from the type (c) category with support from the [Accelerated Data Program](#) with data documentation, statistical disclosure control (i.e. anonymizing survey microdata) and dissemination practices. This work should likewise be scaled up. A final thought. In the same way that MDG1 has helped to keep our attention focused on global poverty reduction, adopting a “data improvement” target could do the same for building better national statistical systems to inform and monitor poverty reduction policies.



¹ See the socioeconomic component of the [General Data Dissemination Standards](#) (GDDS) guidelines.

UN mulls post-MDGs framework

By Dominique Bichara

World Bank Special Representative to the UN

The post-2015 development framework is likely to have the best development impact if it emerges from an inclusive, open and transparent process with multiple stakeholder participation”

- Annual Report of the Secretary General to the UN General Assembly on Accelerating Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals: Options for sustained and inclusive growth and issues for advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 (July 2011)

As the 2015 deadline approaches, there is growing attention – both within the United Nations and globally – to what should come next. Over the last 10 months, official UN processes and complementary efforts by countries, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have intensified, translating in a proliferation of work streams and actors, but also, at times, in confusion and uncertainty over how the process will proceed.

Since Rio+20, two main streams have emerged under a broad UN umbrella: the ‘MDGs/Post-2015’ and the ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs). On the SDG front, a UN Intergovernmental Open Working Group on SDGs is being established, to be composed of 30 members nominated by member states, with a view to preparing a proposal on SDGs, integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) into a number of focused and universal priorities. Its report is expected for the September 2013 UN General Assembly. As member states struggle to finalize the composition of the Open Working Group, pressure is mounting to design one, single global development agenda for the post-2015 period, with sustainable development at its center.

In parallel, a UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda (UNTT) was established in January 2012 by the UN Secretary General (UNSG). Comprising representatives from more than 60 UN entities and departments as well as international organizations, UNTT is jointly led by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNDP. It is tasked with coordinating the UN system-wide preparations and propose a unified vision for the definition of the post-2015 UN development agenda. It will also

provide support to the Open Working Group on SDGs. The World Bank is part of the UNTT, and has contributed to the July 2012 UNTT Report for the UNSG entitled ‘Realizing The Future We Want for All’.

The UNTT complements the 27-member High-Level Panel (HLP) of Eminent Persons appointed by the UNSG on July 31, 2012 to advise him on a bold but practical development agenda beyond 2015. Co-chaired by the Presidents of Indonesia and Liberia and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, it includes leaders from civil society, private sector and government. The UNSG is represented ex-officio on the Panel by his Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning. Its report is expected to be submitted to the UNSG by June 2013. Panel discussions are complemented by global social media consultation processes and civil engagement in a number of outreach campaigns. While not a member of the Panel, the World Bank has been invited to make presentations to the Panel, and liaises closely with the UNSG’s Special Advisor.

In July 2012, UNDP officially launched national post-2015 consultative processes in over 50 countries and around 11 themes. The result of these country and thematic consultations, to which the World Bank networks and field offices have been invited to contribute, will be published in 2013, to feed the work of the HLP.

The reports of the HLP, the UNTT and the results of consultations will contribute to the UNSG’s report to the UN General Assembly, forming the basis of the future inter-governmental negotiations on post-2015. These will be formally launched at the September 2013 MDG Summit in New York, which will commence the preparatory work of the resolution to be adopted in 2015.

While the overall effort remains UN-based and led, a number of other processes, in which the World Bank participates, are also worth noting, such as the Friends of MDGs (a group of 15 Ambassadors to the UN), the Japan-led Contact Group on the MDGs (which brings together other international agencies, bilateral partners, CSOs and NGOs), OECD and academic networks.

Amid global concerns on the synchronization, if not convergence, of the SDG and MDG streams by mid-2013, the UN and the World Bank continue to prioritize the “acceleration agenda”, pooling their respective talents and joining forces (e.g. on data and statistical capacity) to “keep the foot on the pedal” to help countries achieve results on existing MDGs by 2015.

Maternal Health: Where is the effort?

By Eugenia Suarez Moran
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The world has been making progress towards improving people’s lives by 2015, with efforts focused on reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women.

One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) centers on improving maternal health, by reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015. Note that this is quite an ambitious target, as many of the other MDGs require a 50 percent reduction and sometimes a two-thirds reduction.

However, just three years from the target date, progress on maternal health is seriously lagging. Even though many developing countries are making progress towards reducing maternal mortality (e.g. Sri Lanka and Malaysia), for most, progress remains slow and the levels of maternal mortality are still high in much of the developing world. In spite of ongoing additional efforts all around the world, this target will not be achieved in most developing countries by 2015.

Some regions have made more progress than others, especially since they started with very different levels of maternal mortality. But even in regions that began with low numbers of maternal deaths, the only one that is on track to reduce maternal mortality is South Asia (if it continues to maintain the progress it made between 2005 and 2010). The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and East Asia and Pacific regions may also be able to reach this MDG, but only if these regions double the effort made from 2005 to 2010 (Figure 1).

Europe and Central Asia is a region with a less stellar performance. The region started with 70 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, while Sub-Saharan Africa started with 850. However, if Sub-Saharan Africa doubles the effort made during 2005 to 2010, it will be able to reach its goal by 2016 (Figure 1). Europe and Central Asia, on the other hand, would need to more than double its effort to meet the goal by then. Middle income countries are another example where the maternal mortality ratio in 1990 was nearly half of the starting position of low income countries (370 compared to 810 in low income countries). However, middle income countries have not made enough improvements to achieve the goal on time (Figure 2). Only by doubling their effort will they be able to reduce maternal mortality in 2016.

Although progress on reducing maternal mortality is still low, there are good examples which include some fragile states that have managed to achieve this particular MDG. Fragile states started with a similar number of maternal deaths to Sub-Saharan Africa (in 1990 they had 780 deaths per 100,000 live births). However, countries like Nepal have made impressive progress and have already achieved their MDG goal. Nepal, in fact, has made extraordinary progress not only in maternal mortality but also in the reduction of the proportion of poor people. The country managed to reduce maternal mortality from 770 in 1990 to 170 per 100,000 live births in 2010, earning Nepal the MDG Millennium Award in 2010.

Other fragile states such as Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria, Timor-Leste and Yemen are also on track to meet the MDG if they continue the same effort made between 2005 and 2010.

However, for most of the regions on the aggregate, and even with the effort made by some countries, all the regions, except South Asia, will need to more than double their efforts to achieve this MDG by 2015.

