



factsheets

Social Development Indicators

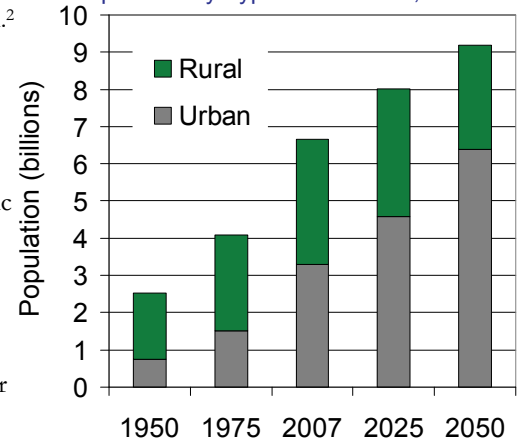
Standards of living are difficult to measure, but indicators of social development do exist. One of the crudest measures is Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita, determined by the value of all goods and services produced within a region over a given time period, averaged per person. A more advanced metric, called the Human Development Index (HDI), considers life expectancy, education, and GDP. The highest HDI ranked countries in the world are Iceland and Norway, with the United States ranked 12th.¹

Several of the indicators discussed below are used to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) - a set of targets agreed upon by United Nations member states as crucial for global human progress. There are targets for reducing extreme poverty, hunger, disease, and environmental impacts. Africa is frequently cited because of the number and severity of difficulties in this region.

Population

- The U.S. population is above 305 million, and the world population is over 6.7 billion.²
- The global population is projected to reach 9.2 billion in 2050, with 6.4 billion people living in urban areas - nearly double the number in urban areas in 2007.³
- Some of the most significant issues affecting population in 2007, as reported by governments around the world, include: HIV/AIDS, infant and child mortality, maternal mortality, adolescent fertility, and life expectancy at birth.⁴
- The fertility rate is the number of births per woman of child-bearing age, and is a basic indicator of population growth. Average global fertility declined from 4.5 to 2.6 between 1975 and 2005, but is still as high as 7 in parts of Africa.⁵
- According to a United Nations report, contraceptive use is increasing globally. However, in at least 43 countries more than 20% of the women of reproductive age have an unmet need for family planning, and 30 of these countries are in Africa.⁶
- The U.S. is one of only three developed countries with an adolescent birth rate greater than 30 (per 1000 births).⁵

World Population by Type of Land Use, 1950-2050³



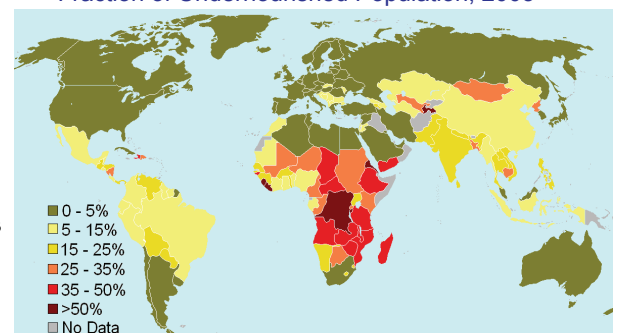
Standard of Living

- In 2005 there were 1.4 billion people living below the world poverty line of \$1.25 USD per day, down from 1.9 billion in 1981. The World Bank Chief Economist expects to achieve the MDG to cut 1990 poverty levels in half by 2015.⁷
- The Gini Index, a measurement of wealth distribution (0 = perfect equality, 1 = all wealth concentrated), ranks Denmark, Japan, and Sweden as having the highest income distribution equality. Of the 125 countries with a Gini Index score, the U.S. is ranked 71st.¹
- In 2007 over 12% of the total U.S. population, or 37 million people, lived in poverty – e.g., income under \$21,027 for family of 4 with 2 children. Rates were especially high for Hispanic and Black populations, with more than 20% of each group living in poverty.⁸
- Approximately 335,000 people are homeless in the U.S.⁹

Food

- The average disposable income spent on food, beverages, and tobacco ranges from 17% in high-income countries to 53% in low-income countries. On average, Americans spend less than 10%, while Nigerians spend 73%.¹¹
- Globally, 30% of deaths of children under 5 are caused by under-nutrition.¹²
- The Green Revolution led to large increases in agricultural yields, and helped feed the rapidly growing global population in the second half of the 20th Century. Sub-Saharan Africa was the only developing region where food production increased primarily because of increased crop area, not crop yield.¹³
- The UNFAO publishes a comprehensive list of food security statistics.¹⁰

Fraction of Undernourished Population, 2003¹⁰



¹ United Nations (2008) "Human Development Report 2007/2008"

² United States Census Bureau (2008) "US and World Population Clocks"

³ United Nations Population Division (2008) "World Urbanization Prospects 2007"

⁴ United Nations Population Division (2007) "Population Newsletter December 2007"

⁵ United Nations Population Division (2008) "World Fertility Patterns 2007"

⁶ United Nations Population Division (2008) "World Contraceptive Use 2007"

⁷ World Bank (2008) "News - New Data Show 1.4 billion live on less than..."

⁸ Denavas-Walt, Carmen (2008) "Income, Poverty, and Health Coverage in the United States : 2007" US Census Bureau.

⁹ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office (2007) "The Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress"

¹⁰ United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (2006) "FAO Hunger Map" and (2009) "Food Security Statistics"

¹¹ USDA (2003) "International Evidence on Food Consumption Patterns"

¹² World Health Organization (2008) "10 Facts on the Global Burden of Disease"

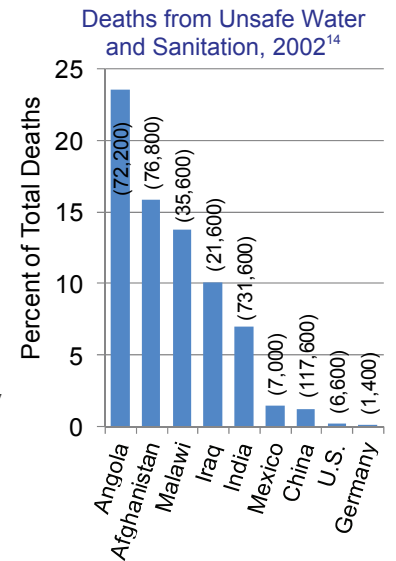
¹³ Evenson, RE and D Gollin (2003) "Assessing the Impact of the Green Revolution, 1960-2000" *Science*. 300, p758-762.

Water and Sanitation

- 2.5 billion people lack access to proper sanitation. Coverage is lowest in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where only 1 of 3 people have proper facilities. Generally, urban areas also have significantly better sanitation coverage – 79% compared to 45% coverage in rural areas.¹⁵
- As of 2006, 87% of the world population had access to clean drinking water – 1.6 billion more people than in 1990. But in sub-Saharan Africa only 58% of the population has clean drinking water, and 18% of the population has to travel more than 30 minutes to get this water. In developing countries it's most common for women to collect the water.¹⁵
- Privatization of water services can increase prices, which disproportionately affect the poor; companies also tend to avoid investment in low-income countries because of the high risk.¹⁶

Healthcare and Disease

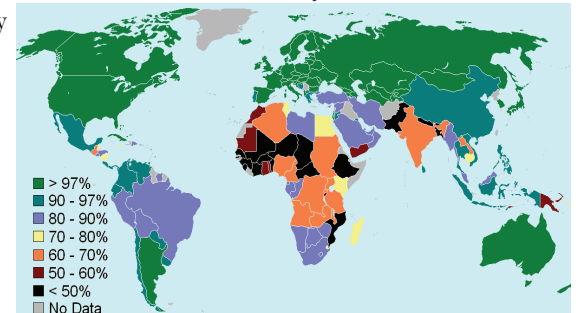
- In 2007, 90% of governments reported HIV/AIDS as a significant problem.⁴ Sub-Saharan Africa has only 10% of the world's population but 60% of the HIV/AIDS cases – 25.8 million.¹⁷
- Diarrheal diseases kill 1.8 million people annually – 90% are children under 5. About 88% of the infections are attributable to unsafe drinking water, improper sanitation services, and hygiene.¹⁸
- In 2006, about 880,000 people died from malaria – 91% were in Africa and 85% were children under 5. Preventive measures like treated bed nets, indoor insecticide spraying, and anti-malarial drugs have reduced malarial deaths in Africa, but current funding is insufficient.¹⁹
- Indoor cooking with fuelwood and animal dung results in 1.5 million deaths per year, more than 50% of which are children under 5.¹
- Cardiovascular diseases are the leading causes of death in the world. A healthy diet, regular physical activity, and avoiding tobacco could lower premature deaths from cardiovascular diseases and strokes by 80%.²⁰
- Globally, about 150 million people incur catastrophic healthcare costs each year (greater than 40% of household's capacity to pay).²¹



Education and Employment

- Socioeconomic status is a strong predictor of health, and is typically determined by education, income, and occupation. One study found that education is the single strongest indicator of good health.²²
- Between 1991 and 2005, primary school enrollment in Sub-Saharan Africa increased from 52% to 72%, but is still far below the 2005 world average of 87%.¹
- In at least a dozen countries, including Afghanistan, Ethiopia, India, and Yemen, the illiteracy rate was at least 25% higher for females than males. In Afghanistan the female illiteracy rate is 87%, the highest in the world.²³
- Globally, unemployment rates vary from less than 2% to greater than 30%.²³

Adult Literacy Rates¹



Environment

- Most global warming is “very likely” (>90% certainty) caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. In the 21st Century, natural and social systems will likely experience increasing: risk of extinction for 20-30% of plant and animal species, coastal flooding and erosion, heat waves, droughts, tropical storm intensity, and health risks associated with malnutrition and water-related diseases. Declines in crop productivity in lower latitudes and freshwater availability are likely. Poor communities are especially vulnerable to climate change because of their low adaptive capacity and high dependence on climate conditions (e.g., rain for agriculture).²⁴
- The Stern Review found that investing 1% of global GDP annually in greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions could avert a permanent reduction of 5-20% GDP per capita, due to climate change impacts.²⁵ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates that regional GHG mitigation costs vary considerably, but range from -1% (a net gain) to 5.5% of GDP on average globally.²⁴

Conclusions

- Some MDGs are not on track to reach their targets: reducing the fraction of sub-Saharan Africans living on less than \$1 per day by 50%, reducing the number of undernourished children, improving sanitation, increasing women's health and equality, and meeting foreign aid commitments. However, the goals for reducing extreme poverty by 50%, reducing malaria and AIDS infections, increasing safe drinking water access, and increasing primary school enrollment are expected to be met by 2015.²⁶
- Of the 22 countries who pledged 0.7% of their Gross National Income (GNI) as Official Development Assistance (ODA) to poor countries by 2015, only 5 – Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden – have met their commitment to the MDG. In 2007, the U.S. contributed \$21.8 billion as ODA – more than any other nation – but this was only 0.16% of GNI.²⁷

¹⁴ World Health Organization (2008) “Safer Water, Better Health: Costs, Benefits, and Sustainability of Interventions to Protect and Promote Health”

¹⁵ World Health Organization / UNICEF (2008) “Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation – Special Focus on Sanitation”

¹⁶ Prasad, Naren (2006) “Privatisation results: Private Sector Participation in Water Services after 15 years.” *Development Policy Review*, 24, p669-692.

¹⁷ World Bank (2008) “HIV/AIDS in Africa”

¹⁸ World Health Organization (2004) “Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Facts and Figures.”

¹⁹ World Health Organization (2008) “World Malaria Report 2008”

²⁰ World Health Organization (2008) “10 Facts on the Global Burden of Disease”

²¹ World Health Organization (2008) “World Health Statistics 2008”

²² Winkleby, Marilyn et al. (1992) “Socioeconomic Status and Health: How Education, Income, and Occupation Contribute to Risk Factors for Cardiovascular Disease” *American Journal of Public Health*, 82, p816-820.

²³ International Labor Organization (2007) “Unemployment”

²⁴ IPCC (2007) “Climate Change 2007: Synthesis Report”

²⁵ Stern, et al. (2006) “Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change”

²⁶ United Nations (2008) “The Millennium Development Goals Report 2008”

²⁷ United Nations (2008) “Delivering on the Global Partnership for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals.” and OECD (2008) “OECD in Figures 2008”

