

## Chapter 2.

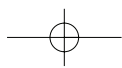
# Working Together for Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Development

**13.** Economic and social progress is one of the three pillars of action in the framework for international cooperation established by the Millennium Declaration. In that area, the framework fixes specific, time-bound targets and performance measures for poverty eradication and sustainable development. And it sets eight Millennium Development Goals, each of far-reaching importance: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; to achieve universal primary education; to promote gender equality and empower women; to reduce child mortality; to improve maternal health; to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; to ensure environmental sustainability; and to develop a global partnership for development.

**14.** This chapter begins by setting the development objectives of the Millennium Declaration in the context of the wider UN development agenda. It describes both the UN system's strategy and inter-agency collaborative work to support the achievement of those objectives. It also covers the system's efforts to address in this area the special needs of Africa, on which the Millennium Declaration puts a particular emphasis.

**15.** The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) must be understood in the context of the UN conferences and summits on economic and social issues. Although these did not originate as a formally linked series of conferences, they shared similar perspectives and processes. Each conference concentrated on a different dimension of development, but always in terms of its impact on and implications for the human person. Each proceeded through a participatory process, engaging all relevant actors in the UN system, all Member States, and an array of non-State actors. Together, these conferences have generated global consensus and shaped the policy orientation of Member States and of the UN system in a wide range of development areas, such as poverty eradication, employment and social inclusion, food security, health, education, environment, human rights, women and gender equality, children, population and human settlements.

**16.** The inclusive way in which the conferences were conceived and organized became a crucial factor in securing the broad engagement needed to sustain their effective follow-up. Nonetheless, the interconnections among the development challenges confronting states and their peoples proved to require approaches not only global in character, but also multisectoral in concentration. None of the conference outcomes could be enduringly advanced independently of the others. The need clearly existed for a coordinated and integrated follow-up to the whole series of UN conferences, which would come to include the historic Millennium Summit. The leadership exercised by the UN Economic and Social Council in guiding this effort has received—and will continue to receive—the strong support of the Chief Executives Board.



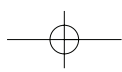
**17.** Two international conferences that followed the Millennium Summit have helped to round out the UN global development agenda: the International Conference on Financing for Development, convened in Monterrey in March 2002, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in September 2002. Monterrey produced a new global compact that commits developing countries to improve their policies and governance and simultaneously calls on developed countries to increase support, especially by providing developing countries with more and better aid, debt relief and greater access to markets. Johannesburg built a foundation for practical action to implement commitments on sustainable development. This included: a clear programme of action in key areas relating to sustainable resources, and innovative approaches to voluntary partnerships and their links to government commitments.

**18.** The Millennium Declaration has greatly facilitated the UN system's effort to achieve coordinated and integrated follow-up to the landmark conferences and summits in the development field. It has helped CEB to expand its focus from programmatic, sectoral matters to include—and indeed focus on—strategic issues of system-wide concern. Since 2001, CEB has organized its work around the themes identified in the Secretary-General's "Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration."<sup>8</sup> Building on this "Road Map," CEB has been devising and promoting common strategies to advance the UN system's contribution to achieving an effective, coordinated follow-up to different aspects of the Millennium Declaration and to related outcomes of other global conferences. In this effort, CEB has aimed both to support intergovernmental follow-up processes and to drive effective inter-agency responses.

**19.** In a way that has simultaneously built on and reinforced this inter-agency effort, nearly all of the intergovernmental bodies of the organizations that make up the CEB membership have sought to frame their strategies and policies around a common set of goals. In 2001, for instance, the World Bank's governing body adopted a multi-year Strategic Framework that explicitly aligned the Bank's efforts with the goals of the Millennium Declaration. In 2003, the Development Committee reaffirmed the shared commitment of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to achieving the MDGs, particularly the goal of reducing poverty.<sup>9</sup> Similar inter-governmental processes have been underway throughout the rest of the UN system, bringing it together in an unprecedented fashion.

8. "Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration: Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/326)." This has enabled CEB to contribute to a system-wide perspective in the Secretary-General's subsequent reports on the Declaration's implementation. See "Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration," Reports of the Secretary-General 2002, 2003 and 2004 (A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1; A/58/323; and A/59/282 and A/59/282/Corr.1).

9. The Development Committee is a forum of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund that facilitates intergovernmental consensus-building on development issues. Known formally as the Joint Ministerial Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries, the Committee was established in 1974. The Committee's mandate is to advise the Boards of Governors of the Bank and the Fund on critical development issues and on the financial resources required to promote economic development in developing countries. Over the years, the Committee has interpreted this mandate to include trade and global environmental issues in addition to traditional development matters.



## The UN system's strategy

**20.** Three premises have guided the UN system's strategy to support implementation of the Millennium Declaration's development objectives. First is the holistic nature of human-centred development and the consequential linkages and interdependencies both among all three pillars of collective action addressed in the Declaration and among its development goals. For example, while the goal of reducing and ultimately eradicating extreme poverty should be understood as central, progress towards it depends heavily on progress towards all the Declaration's other objectives. Consider how hunger is the single largest contributor to disease, weakening the immune system, reducing capacity to recover from infection and inhibiting achievement of the goals relating to health. Malnutrition has consequences for goals relating to different stages in the lifecycle: it limits school completion for children; reduces labour productivity and jeopardizes employment, and hence poverty reduction, among adults; and increases the risk of degenerative diseases in later life. At the same time, lack of progress in stemming the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis will jeopardize improvements in areas such as education, employment and health services.

**21.** The second premise of the UN system's strategy is that the achievement of the Declaration's goals and targets requires sustained and, in most cases, enhanced economic growth. This is particularly so in countries facing the greatest development challenges. The UN system's strategy has therefore placed a core emphasis on improving the conditions for growth in developing countries.

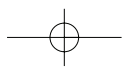
**22.** This relates directly to a third basic premise: that the achievement of the Millennium Declaration's development objectives requires the creation of a supportive, enabling international environment. A successful, pro-development and timely conclusion of the Doha Trade Round and the provision of more aid and debt relief have so far fallen short of the Monterrey vision. The UN system stands united in its commitment to realize that vision.

### Box 2.1

#### The Follow-up to Monterrey

The Monterrey Consensus established a sustained intergovernmental follow-up process in both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In addition to considering different financing issues on the annual agenda of its Second Committee, the Assembly, every two years, now hosts a two-day High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development. ECOSOC also holds an annual high-level meeting in the spring on different aspects of the Monterrey Consensus with the leadership of the World Bank, the IMF, the World Trade Organization and (since 2004) UNCTAD.

In line with the innovative and participatory modalities established by the Monterrey Conference, inter-agency support to the follow-up involves close collaboration among all concerned institutions and organizations, and a systematic outreach effort. The Financing for Development Office (FFDO) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the World Bank, IMF, WTO, UNCTAD, UNDP and the regional commissions cooperate closely in preparing the follow-up reports for the General Assembly. Within their respective mandates, they also work together to organize multi-stakeholder consultations on the Conference follow-up. Open to Member States and relevant civil society and business organizations, these consultations bring different stakeholders together to strengthen and advance the work underway on each set of issues by official bodies, civil society and private groups.



**23.** As the Millennium Project Report has pointed out, more aid will need to be provided in forms that can flexibly meet the incremental costs to developing countries of meeting the MDGs, thereby promoting sound governance through longer-term commitments and enabling financing for the recurring costs. In order to ensure debt sustainability, a larger proportion of the additional aid should take the form of grants. At the same time, considerable scope exists for increasing the effectiveness of aid: by improving the alignment of aid with national development strategies and priorities, and by aligning donor policies and practices with those of the recipient countries.<sup>10</sup>

### Box 2.2

#### The “Three Ones”

The wide international agreement reached around three core principles to improve coordination of national responses to HIV/AIDS, known as the “Three Ones,” exemplifies a successful effort towards harmonization of donor policies, in the spirit of the Rome Declaration on Harmonization, the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Monterrey Consensus.

Agreed in April 2004 by donor and developing countries, the “Three Ones” amounted to: one agreed HIV/AIDS action framework, which provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners; one national AIDS coordinating authority, with a broad-based, multisectoral mandate; and one agreed country-level system for monitoring and evaluation. They emerged through a preparatory process initiated by the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), working in collaboration with the World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

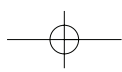
The “Three Ones” will help enable donor and recipient countries to work together more effectively; they will also help to increase country-level coordination and to enhance efficiency in the use of resources devoted to HIV/AIDS responses.

Many partners at the country, regional and global levels have enthusiastically embraced the “Three Ones.” In 2004, the UNAIDS Secretariat found that, out of 66 countries examined, 81 percent had up-to-date national AIDS frameworks, 95 percent had national AIDS coordinating authorities and 77 percent had working groups to develop national monitoring and evaluation systems.

**24.** From these premises, the UN system’s strategy for advancing the Millennium Declaration’s development objectives has proceeded along four components:

- *Analysis:* defining and assessing the policy dimensions of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, based on a consensus among partners for the reforms, investments, financing options and strategies for “scaling up.”
- *Campaigning and advocacy:* collaboration with a wide range of partners, extending well beyond the UN family, to foster a self-sustaining movement, with strong national, regional and international roots.
- *Operations:* goal-driven assistance to address directly the key constraints to progress, guided by the mandates, comparative advantages and resources of the UN system at the country level.
- *Monitoring:* tracking and reviewing progress towards the MDGs.

10. The Rome Declaration on Harmonization (24-25 February 2003) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (28 February-2 March 2005).



**25.** The Millennium Project has sought to analyze and identify the most promising strategies for meeting the MDGs. Drawing on expertise from a wide array of research institutions, and with the support of many UN system organizations, the Project has put forward practical ways to guide ongoing national and international poverty reduction efforts, including key operational priorities, organizational means of implementation and financing structures.

**26.** The Millennium Campaign has, in turn, served as the main platform for the UN system's advocacy strategy in support of the Declaration's implementation. The Campaign has mobilized and reinforced political support for the Declaration by working with parliamentary networks, local authorities, the media, faith-based organizations, youth organizations, the business sector, NGOs and other entities outside the UN system. The campaign and advocacy efforts have been building broad-based coalitions to promote the MDGs and to work with industrialized countries on raising support for increased aid, debt relief and expanded access to markets, technology and investments.

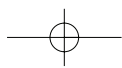
**27.** At the operational level, UN organizations have focused on mainstreaming the MDGs into their programmes and activities. The country-owned and country-driven Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the UN Common Country Assessments (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) are all being geared to help maximize the coherence and effectiveness of the system's support for country-level implementation of the Millennium Declaration.

### Box 2.3

#### **United Nations Development Group: Coordinating UN country-level support for the Millennium Declaration**

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) is one of four Executive Committees established by the Secretary-General in the main areas of UN work, with the others focusing on peace and security, humanitarian affairs and economic and social affairs. Now expanded to include not only UN Programmes and Funds, but also a large number of specialized agencies, UNGD aims to improve the effectiveness and coherence of UN system activities at the country level. It does so by developing policies and procedures to facilitate cooperation among member organizations in analyzing country issues, planning support strategies, implementing support programmes, monitoring results and advocating for change. Responsible for elaborating guidelines for the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), UNGD is spearheading the effort to shape coordinated operational support to countries in meeting the MDGs.

**28.** The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers provide an important link among national public actions, donor support and development outcomes towards meeting the MDGs. They are prepared by governments through a participatory process engaging civil society and involving the World Bank, the IMF and other development partners. As the framework for domestic policies and programmes to reach the MDGs in a given country, the PRSP serves as the basis for concessional lending by the World Bank and the IMF. When formulated before a PRSP, Common Country Assessments provide useful analytical inputs for preparing the national poverty reduction strategy, which itself can then contribute to the UN Development Assistance Framework.



**29.** The UNDAF represents the collective contribution of UN organizations to addressing identified development challenges at the country level. As a common strategic framework for UN operational activities, UNDAF provides both: an integrated response to national priorities and needs; and the legal basis for detailing the modalities and content of UN work in supporting developing countries. The UNDAF results-matrix identifies areas for joint programming and shows how the concrete results of the programmes and projects of each organization will contribute to national development goals. Led by the Resident Coordinator, the UN Country Teams assist the incorporation of the MDGs in national poverty reduction strategies, including through the PRSP process. Inter-agency reflection is now underway on how to enhance the integration of non-resident UN organizations into this process, and, more generally, on how to ensure that development outcomes at the country level benefit from all capacities available within the system, operational and analytical.

**30.** To complement these efforts, “Theme Groups” provide country-level fora for sharing information on key cross-sectoral areas, such as gender equality, human rights, HIV/AIDS, food security and rural development. These groups help to advance a common vision to shape the UNDAF. They facilitate the efforts of UN Country Teams to promote complementarities, particularly when it comes to furthering the key objectives of country ownership and national capacity. In addition to representatives of UN organizations, members of these groups include governments, donors and civil society. In the specific case of HIV/AIDS, the overall coordinating work of the UN Theme Group steers support for implementation of National Aids Strategies, being provided from within fully-integrated UN Country Team Implementation Support Plans.

**31.** At the regional level, the five UN regional commissions have contributed significantly to raising awareness; conducted research and policy analysis; and promoted policy dialogues and exchanges of national experiences through their intergovernmental fora. Their regional reports—prepared in cooperation with the UN Secretariat, the specialized agencies and other regional partners—have evidenced both the trends and heterogeneity within regions; analyzed the underlying causes influencing sub-regional divergences; identified good practices; and provided policy perspectives and recommendations for action.<sup>11</sup>

**32.** The regional commissions have also fostered and facilitated policy exchanges and knowledge-sharing on key issues that, while relevant to all countries, need to be addressed in ways that take into account the varying circumstances of different regions and countries, such as: relationships among poverty reduction, growth and equity; conditions for a sustained process of poverty reduction; links between economic policies and the social MDGs; the combination of broad-based human capital formation with social protection and specific antipoverty programmes; and policies for addressing inequalities.

**33.** The regional coordination meetings organized by the Commissions, and called for by the Economic and Social Council, have facilitated harmonization of the UN system’s activities at the regional and sub-regional levels. The meetings provide a mechanism for coordinating the various activities of UN system organizations and strengthening the effectiveness of their technical assistance to help countries integrate the MDGs and other priority objectives into their policy frameworks.

11. ECLAC released *Meeting the Millennium Poverty Reduction Targets in Latin America and the Caribbean* in December 2002. ESCAP issued its regional MDG report entitled *Promoting the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific* in May 2003. Similar reports have been published or are being published by ECA, ECE and ESCWA.

**34.** The annual reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration stem from a broad system of monitoring and reporting to track global, regional and national progress towards the MDGs. These reports have provided an overview of progress in implementing the Declaration's commitments and a comprehensive statistical analysis on progress towards the goals. They have been based on global and regional monitoring by an Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators, coordinated by UN-DESA; on country-level monitoring coordinated by UNDP; and on other inputs from many parts of the system. They have also been complemented by an array of detailed progress reports produced by individual organizations. The most wide-ranging of these is the World Bank and IMF's annual "Global Monitoring Report," which provides an integrated assessment of progress on policies and actions needed to achieve the MDGs and related conference outcomes.<sup>12</sup>

#### Box 2.4

#### Tracking progress on the MDGs

Monitoring progress towards the MDGs at the global level requires the collaboration of international agencies and close consultation with national experts and statisticians. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators coordinates the efforts of UN organizations, international parties and national statistical services. Coordinated by UN-DESA, the group meets twice a year to review enhanced collaboration on data compilation, methodological development and statistical capacity-building. All specialized agencies of the UN and the regional commissions are members of the group, which also includes other international statistical services, representatives from national statistical offices and experts in selected areas. Lead agencies have been designated by the Secretary-General to steer the data and methodological developments for each of the 48 MDG indicators.

The results of this work are reflected in *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005*, supplemented by a more extensive on-line report and an on-line database ([millenniumindicators.un.org](http://millenniumindicators.un.org)), which contains country-level data for each of the selected indicators, as well as other background data and explanatory material. Maintained by the United Nations, this database comprises the most up-to-date series provided by the designated lead agency for the indicator in question. An annual regional and global analysis of this data is available at the same website.

In order to assist countries in monitoring and reporting on the MDGs, and in collaboration with other parts of the UN system, UNICEF developed DevInfo. Released in May 2004, this software tool allows for the collection and analysis of standard and specific user-defined indicators. DevInfo is being used by an ever-increasing number of governments, UN country teams, academic institutions and others to provide standardized and comparable reporting on MDGs, to advocate their achievement through policy measures and to develop national institutional capacity.

**35.** This inter-agency effort has been accompanied by monitoring and reporting on individual MDGs and related internationally agreed goals undertaken by the UN organizations and agencies most directly concerned, under the guidance of their respective governing bodies and with the support of other parts of the UN system. As noted above, country-level reporting by UN Country Teams has focused increasingly on monitoring MDG implementation.

12. *Global Monitoring Report 2005—Millennium Development Goals: From Consensus to Momentum and Global Monitoring Report 2004—Policies and Actions for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals and Related Outcomes*, World Bank.

## Inter-agency collaboration

**36.** The growing number of inter-agency initiatives in the development area is indicative of the UN system's commitment to join forces in advancing the economic and social objectives of the Millennium Declaration. The following examples demonstrate the range of collective work being undertaken toward each of the MDGs, with additional detail provided in an annex to this report.

## Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger

**37.** The first—and in many ways, over-arching—goal of the Millennium Declaration, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, has provided a core focus for the system's collaborative efforts, at the conceptual and the operational levels.

### *Eradicating extreme poverty*

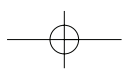
**38.** The global conferences established a policy framework for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development most conducive to poverty eradication. That frame-work and the Millennium Declaration's vision of a “fully inclusive and equitable” globalization together have guided UN system support for progress towards eradicating poverty.

#### Box 2.5

#### **The Copenhagen commitments to eradicate poverty**

The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development emphasized the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. In 2000, at the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly, Member States called for placing poverty eradication at the centre of economic and social development and for reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. This Commitment was further embodied in the Millennium Declaration, which resolves to halve, by that same year, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and the proportion of those suffering from hunger. The Declaration adopted in 2005 at the 43rd session of the Commission for Social Development, on the 10th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, called for the restoration of the people-centred approach to development envisioned in the Copenhagen Declaration and for the adoption of policies that link eradicating poverty to fostering social integration and promoting employment strategies. More than that, the Declaration recognized the mutually reinforcing relationship between implementing the Copenhagen commitments and attaining the MDGs; hence its call to inject the issues of employment and social integration into the MDGs, in order to broaden the concept of, and in fact to achieve, poverty eradication. The ten-year review of the Social Summit showed wide consensus that the fight against poverty requires greater coordinated global and national action, and that formulating effective poverty eradication strategies will require recognizing and understanding poverty's root and structural causes. Member States called for closer working relationships among the UN agencies, Funds and Programmes to adequately address the root causes of poverty and their relationship to employment and social integration. They also called for the integration of macroeconomic and financial policy issues with the realization of the broader social development goals.





**39.** Decent and productive employment is key to eradicating poverty, and, in this context, the Millennium Declaration focuses especially on the needs and aspirations of young people. Identifying the most relevant demographic and other trends and achieving far-sighted targeting of particularly vulnerable social groups are among the main concerns guiding inter-agency collaboration to enhance the effectiveness of the system's work towards poverty eradication.

**40.** The Millennium Declaration resolved to “develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.” Inter-agency work in this field aims to promote decent work for poverty alleviation and concentrates on unemployed youth as a special group. In addition, an ad hoc inter-agency task force is coordinating the activities of UN agencies with programmes on young people. The task force aims to convey a clear and consistent message about the need to link investments in young people to achieving the MDGs. In support of the preparations for the 2005 World Summit, the task force will launch an advocacy campaign on “The youth face of the MDGs.”

**41.** Through tripartite consensus and in close collaboration with other UN system organizations, the International Labour Organization has developed three interlinked concepts to advance decent and productive employment as a broad strategy for eradicating poverty: the Decent Work Agenda, as a tool for development and social inclusion; productive employment for women and men, as the main route out of poverty; and the achievement of a fair globalization as a source of global stability and rising living standards.

## Box 2.6

### Decent work and a fair globalization

In response to the request from the General Assembly (A/RES/55/2412) to “elaborate a coherent and coordinated international strategy on employment,” ILO developed the Global Employment Agenda. This agenda aims to place employment at the heart of economic and social policy, on the basis of a tripartite strategy engaging government, business and workers' organizations in a wide range of actions. It includes proposals for strategic alliances in pursuit of employment objectives with the Bretton Woods institutions and others, including UNESCO, UNEP and the WTO.

“Decent work” country programmes— which combine employment creation, protecting fundamental rights at work, strengthening social protection and broadening social dialogue— have become the main tool applied in ILO's work in the field.

This approach to productive employment as the sustainable way out of poverty underpins the policy contribution of ILO to reaching the goal of reducing poverty by half by 2015. It received strong support from the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa, convened by the African Union in Ouagadougou in September 2004.

The Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, established by ILO, highlighted the importance of decent work and fair globalization as instruments to help ensure that the global economy delivers on development objectives and people's aspirations. The Report concluded that implementing the Millennium and the Copenhagen Declarations requires complementary action at the national and international levels. It called on ILO and other UN organizations to play a leading role in shaping a fair globalization and advanced recommendations to that end. ILO is actively following up the Commission's recommendations in its area of competence, including through cooperation with relevant organizations on a Policy Coherence Initiative that addresses growth, investment and employment in the global economy.

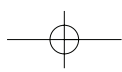
**42.** Social integration, one of the core issues addressed by the Social Summit, is essential for a society that respects every individual. In many places, however, this remains a distant goal and therefore requires intensified efforts to mainstream it into the pursuit of the MDGs. As a result of the social changes brought by globalization, communities worldwide have come to bear enormous pressures. The social ills of increasing inequality, poverty and lack of opportunities have had a forceful, negative impact on community well-being. Social integration has economic, environmental, political, human rights and security dimensions: any attempt to create peaceful societies must foster social integration based on the promotion of human rights, non-discrimination, equality of opportunity and the participation of all people, taking into account not only the human rights and needs of people living today, but also the rights of future generations. Yet, in many countries, groups with special needs remain marginalized in the political process, even though their participation is critical to address their concerns effectively and, generally, to promote an equitable society. In particular, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and the older poor frequently suffer discrimination and the denial of their basic human rights:

- Indigenous peoples are often the most marginalized populations in society, deprived of their right to development, including access to education, to healthcare, to water and to participation in the policy processes that affect their lives;
- Persons with disabilities require special focus and legal instruments to protect them from discrimination and to ensure their rights and equal opportunities in society; and
- The needs of growing ageing populations are of increasing concern, for without reform of the current systems for financing pensions and long-term care, future generations of older persons may be left without adequate social protection.

### Box 2.7

#### **Coordinated inter-agency action in support of special social groups**

Coordinated inter-agency action is essential to improve the situation of special social groups. Inter-agency collaboration has been significant in the lead up to the adoption of the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing; in the ongoing elaboration of the International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities; and in the continuing work of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. For example, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues has contributed considerable substantive preparatory documentation for the Permanent Forum's 2005 session, which focused on the MDGs, particularly the first two goals of eradication of poverty and achieving primary education for all. In relation to poverty eradication, the Forum recommended that Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers recognize rights to indigenous land, forest, marine and other natural resources; that the Commission on Sustainable Development take measures to protect water from privatization and other incursions that impoverish communities; and that the policy and practice of the World Bank and other multilateral development banks should be consistent with the internationally recognized human rights of indigenous peoples and should respect their free, prior and informed consent.



**43.** Several UN organizations, including UN-HABITAT, the World Bank and UNDP, are working together to help eradicate poverty in urban areas and to promote sustainable urbanization: that is, to promote the role of cities as engines of economic growth and social development.

### Box 2.8

#### Addressing the urbanization of poverty

Achieving the MDGs, particularly the goal of halving poverty by 2015, requires that poverty reduction programmes give more attention to urban areas. According to UN estimates, virtually all population growth expected in the world during 2000-2015 will be concentrated in urban areas, and the urban population will rise from 2.8 billion in 2000 to 3.8 billion in 2015. The global population is expected to increase at an annual rate of less than 1 percent per annum, or 0.84 percent over the next fifteen years. Yet, in the less developed regions, where the rural population will grow at only 0.1 percent per annum, the urbanized population will increase at a rate of 2.45 percent per annum. In other words, with urban poverty growing much faster than rural poverty, poverty is being urbanized. UN-HABITAT estimates that today around 40 percent of the world's population living on less than US\$2 Purchasing Power Parity—roughly 1.2 billion people—are living in urban areas. By 2030 more than half of the world's poor will be living in cities.

#### *Eradicating extreme hunger*

**44.** FAO, IFAD and WFP are working together to address the immediate and long-term challenges of fighting hunger and achieving food security.

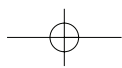
### Box 2.9

#### Combating hunger and poverty

The three Rome-based United Nations organizations, FAO, WFP and IFAD, are working with a common vision and complementary mandates to end hunger and poverty. FAO provides technical expertise and policy guidance. WFP provides food aid in response to emergencies and contributes to economic and social development, through such programmes as Food for Work and School Feeding. IFAD provides loans and grants to help the rural poor overcome poverty and gain the means to achieve food security.

FAO, WFP and IFAD have developed strong collaboration in both operational work and policy development. At the country level, they are assisting smallholder farmers and other rural producers to increase productivity and incomes and to reduce their vulnerability. By addressing the structural causes of food insecurity and poverty, they are helping to create the conditions for more rapid and balanced development. The agencies support an approach that combines food assistance for preventing malnutrition with longer term investments in agricultural production. Through their action, they have provided immediate access to food and improved the livelihoods of populations in need.

In the context of emergencies, FAO and WFP carry out needs assessments and help develop a response on food security in coordination with other relief organizations. IFAD supports the efforts of affected peoples to rebuild normal lives, by assisting their transition to rehabilitation and development. (continued on following page)



**Box 2.9****Combatting hunger and poverty** (continued from previous page)

The agencies are also working together on policy issues to highlight the centrality of agricultural and rural development to achieving the MDGs. Their joint launch of the Millennium Development Project Report in Rome, in consultation with the Government of Italy, reflects their strong commitment.

Symbolizing their close collaboration, FAO, WFP and IFAD presented their views jointly at the Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey and at subsequent discussions in the General Assembly. The three agencies are also working together to support the efforts of African countries within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

The three organizations are collaborating within the framework of the International Alliance Against Hunger (IAAH). Established by the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, the Alliance advocates for greater political will and practical action to rapidly reduce the incidence of hunger and rural poverty. Core membership in the Alliance also includes the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) and NGO networks. A UN System Network on Rural Development and Food Security—promoted by FAO, IFAD and WFP—supports the activities of National Thematic Groups within the Resident Coordinator system and enables information exchange on best practices.

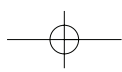
**45.** In order to strengthen worldwide efforts to fight malnutrition, the UN System Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), a partnership among UN organizations, governments and NGOs, is analyzing trends and raising awareness on nutrition issues, galvanizing global action against malnutrition and promoting cooperation among UN agencies and partner organizations in support of national efforts to end malnutrition.

**Box 2.10****Nutrition and the MDGs**

In its 5th Report on the World Nutrition Situation (March 2004), the Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) makes the case that reducing malnutrition is central to achieving the MDGs, citing evidence that links nutrition to a range of other development outcomes. The Report highlights how a nutrition perspective can strengthen key development mechanisms and instruments, such as poverty reduction strategies, health sector reform, the improvement of governance and human rights, and trade liberalization. The report also advances specific suggestions for including nutrition in programme and policy development and calls on the nutrition community to lead this effort.

## Achieving universal primary education

**46.** Education is key to giving people choices and, fundamentally, to breaking the cycle of poverty. From this perspective, the Millennium Declaration especially highlights the goals of universal primary schooling and of gender equality in primary education—and sets specific targets for their achievement. The goals have helped galvanize inter-agency



collaboration and joint initiatives, including strategies for achieving the objectives of Education for All (EFA) by 2015. The UN system strategies towards EFA cover a range of efforts, from collective advocacy, intensified networking and broader partnerships and commitments to resource mobilization and the inclusion of education sector goals within national planning frameworks.

### Box 2.11

#### Education for All

UNESCO is mandated to coordinate EFA partners and to maintain the momentum of collaboration (Dakar Framework for Action, 2000, paragraph 19). A number of initiatives have been set in motion to generate sustained global commitment and support for country level efforts to implement EFA, including: the EFA Global Monitoring Report, now a standard reference document for all partners in the field of education; the Collective Consultation of NGOs on Education for All; national and regional EFA Forums; the annual High-Level Group on EFA; and the Working Group on EFA.

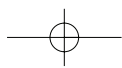
The EFA strategy emphasizes eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education through the UNICEF-led Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), a ten-year sustained effort to promote girls' education, which involves 13 UN entities in a wide range of partnerships with civil society organizations and networks. UNGEI focuses intensive action on 25 countries most at risk of failing to meet the goal.

The World Bank-led EFA-Fast Track Initiative has set up a global partnership of donors and developing countries to mobilize supplementary funding and to accelerate progress in low-income countries towards the goal of universal primary education. EFA-FTI focuses on country ownership, support linked to performance, lower transaction costs and transparency. Supported by bilateral donors, regional development banks, and UN organizations, such as UNESCO, WFP and UNICEF, EFA-FTI has improved efficiency in: the allocation of resources to primary education service delivery, system expansion, system financing and spending for primary education. WFP has supported EFA-FTI through school feeding with \$400 to \$500 million per year, as part of an Essential Package of interventions for basic education which it promotes in cooperation with other EFA partners.

Civil society organizations, notably in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, have increasingly organized themselves to present a coherent voice and to build systematic relationships with governments and international agencies in support of EFA. The Global Campaign for Education plays a strong advocacy role at the international level. Regional and national networks also are emerging or gaining ground, while communities are becoming more engaged in educational issues and advocacy.

## Promoting gender equality and empowering women

**47.** Assuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men is a central objective of the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration addresses gender equality and the empowerment of women as human rights and as essential instruments for fighting poverty, hunger and disease and for stimulating development that is truly sustainable. It also embodies specific commitments to combat violence against women and to promote implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). And, as described above, it sets a clear target, encompassing all levels of education, for eliminating gender disparities in education by 2015.



**48.** Targeted, women-specific initiatives and an active and visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspectives in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes are long-standing priorities for the UN system. The Millennium Declaration's commitments have given renewed impetus and focus to the close inter-agency collaboration and coordination in these areas.

**49.** In that spirit, the outcome of the ten-year review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, conducted by the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2005, reaffirmed, in a special declaration, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The declaration emphasized that full and effective implementation is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those agreed at the Millennium Summit, and it reiterated the crucial importance that Member States attached to the UN system's collective contribution and engagement towards that end.

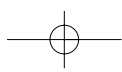
#### Box 2.12

#### **Inter-agency collaboration on gender equality and empowerment of women**

The Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) is a system-wide network of Gender Focal Points which promotes gender equality and empowerment of women throughout the system. It coordinates follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995), to the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000) and to the Millennium Declaration. Comprised of some 60 members representing 25 organizations of the UN system, the network provides a unique forum for exchange of information, experiences and best practices, as well as for the enhancement of collaboration and coordination. Activities are carried out in ad hoc task forces on critical areas of concern, including trade, ICT, water resources management, operational activities and peace and security. The network provides regular opportunities for innovation in methodology development, including through workshops on the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

## Reducing child mortality

**50.** The Millennium Declaration committed countries to reducing by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under the age of five. Various organizations of the system have launched important initiatives in this field, working with non-UN partners. These initiatives encompass child immunization, improving child health in the home, child survival and healthy newborns. Over the years, UN organizations have scored major successes in immunizing children and reducing child mortality. An inter-agency working group involving UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank focuses on household and community IMCI (Integrated Management of Childhood Illness). Another multi-agency initiative, the Child Survival Partnership (CSP), formed in 2004, aims at providing a forum for coordinated action to address the main conditions that affect children's health. CSP enables governments and partners to agree on consistent approaches and stimulates concerted efforts towards their implementation. The Healthy Newborn Partnership, an



inter-agency group formed in 2000, promotes attention and action to improve newborn health and survival. It also provides a forum for information exchanges on programmatic, research, training and communication issues. The Partnership collaborates actively with other groups working on related objectives, such as the Inter-Agency Group for Safe Motherhood.

### Box 2.13

#### Reducing child mortality through immunization

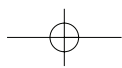
Outstanding progress has been made towards eradicating polio, reducing measles mortality and eliminating maternal and neo-natal tetanus, through such innovative partnerships as the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, the Measles Initiative and the Global Partnership for Eliminating Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus. Worldwide, 784 children were paralyzed by polio in 2003, down from an estimated 350,000 in 1988; the number of endemic countries has declined from more than 125 to six. From 1999 to 2002, measles deaths decreased by 30 percent globally, with a 35 percent reduction in Africa. The number of neonatal tetanus deaths came down from 800,000 worldwide in the 1980s to 180,000 in 2002. By the end of 2005, maternal and neonatal tetanus will be eliminated in 12 of the 57 high-risk countries, with 13 more high-risk countries close to achieving this goal.

With the launch of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) in 2000, more than 500,000 lives are expected to be saved. The Alliance has enabled 40 of the world's poorest countries to immunize for the first time 35.5 million children against hepatitis B. Six million children have been vaccinated against *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) and 2.7 million children against yellow fever.

Challenges remain, however, and WHO is working with UNICEF to develop a new global immunization strategy (Global Immunization Vision and Strategy—GIVS). The strategy concentrates on four main priorities for protecting more people in a changing world: introducing new vaccines and technologies, linking vaccination with other interventions, increasing synergy between immunization programmes and health systems, and addressing immunization challenges in the context of global interdependence.

## Improving maternal health

**51.** Universal access to reproductive health care is the starting point for maternal health; it should be pursued as an integral part of efforts to ensure the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of health. Making reproductive health services accessible to all is, in turn, essential to meeting the Millennium Declaration's goals related to child mortality, HIV/AIDS and gender equality and to meeting its over-arching goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. This approach, and the specific target set in the Millennium Declaration for significantly reducing maternal mortality ratios are together providing a renewed basis for engaging the contribution of an array of UN organizations and for adding a new focus to the UN system's work on women's rights and on women's education and health. Inter-agency collaboration covers a broad range, from identifying and disseminating best practices to orienting social investments.



**Box 2.14****Global and regional initiatives to improve maternal and newborn health**

The global Safe Motherhood Initiative was launched in 1987 in response to high levels of maternal deaths in the developing world. A great deal has since been learned about effective and affordable strategies for saving women's lives during pregnancy and childbirth and about the linkages between maternal and newborn well-being. A number of countries have been able to reduce maternal and newborn deaths by investing in proven, cost-effective interventions and by strengthening health systems. Yet in many countries, women and their newborns continue to die and suffer needlessly.

In January 2004, a broad Partnership for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health was established to reinvigorate and expand the global Safe Motherhood Initiative. Bringing together multilateral and intergovernmental agencies, donors, health professional associations, NGOs, academic/research institutions, as well as developing countries, the Partnership aims to strengthen and expand maternal and newborn health efforts within the broader goals of poverty reduction, equity and human rights; it aims particularly to address the enormous health disparities that exist between urban and rural populations and between rich and poor. Building on the MDGs on child mortality and maternal health, the Partnership seeks to create synergy among the many stakeholders working to assure the right to safe pregnancy outcomes. Two key priorities of the Partnership are: to ensure that safe motherhood and newborn health are addressed in national development plans, sector-wide approaches, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and other resource allocation mechanisms at the country-level; and to advocate for greater attention to, funding for and action on safe motherhood and newborn health at the global level.

In February 2004, the Latin American and Caribbean Task Force on Maternal Mortality Reduction, which includes such organizations as WHO, the World Bank, UNICEF and UNFPA, as well as a number of non-UN partners, adopted a joint statement on maternal mortality. The statement identified strategies, priorities and a combination of interventions, including legal and policy changes; an essential package for ensuring skilled attendants and emergency obstetric care; a strong participation of communities in demanding quality care; and monitoring and financial mechanisms on reproductive health, such as the inclusion of maternal mortality in national plans and budgets. The Regional Task Force has helped build commitment to safe motherhood within its member agencies and increased intra-agency support for best practices. It has also provided opportunities for collaboration among its members in other areas. These positive processes are being replicated at both regional and national levels.

The African Road Map for the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals related to Maternal and Newborn Health, adopted by the African Union, is supported by WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and a broad range of governmental and non-governmental partners. The Road Map aims to provide skilled attendance during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period, at all levels of the health care system, and to strengthen the capacity of individuals, families, communities, civil society organizations and governments to improve maternal and newborn health. The main strategies of the Road Map include: improving the provision of and access to quality maternal and newborn health care, including family planning services; strengthening district health planning and the referral system; advocating for increased commitment and resources for maternal and newborn health and family planning; fostering partnerships; and empowering communities, particularly women.



## Combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

**52.** The UN system has mounted joint efforts to address the multi-faceted challenges posed by HIV/AIDS and to advance the Millennium Declaration's goals of reversing its spread and of reversing the incidence of malaria and other diseases, such as tuberculosis, across a broad range: from awareness-raising, advocacy and resource mobilization to capacity-building and delivery of health services. In fact, across all these areas, multi-agency action has increasingly become the norm. For example, FAO, UNICEF and WFP are collectively supporting the improvement of food and nutrition security and the care for orphans and other children living with HIV and AIDS in southern Africa. In another example, the IFAD-managed Belgium Survival Fund Joint Programme brings together WHO, UNICEF and IFAD to provide assistance to HIV/AIDS orphans in Uganda and elsewhere in Southern Africa.

**53.** Launched by the Secretary-General in February 2003, the Commission on HIV/AIDS and Governance, chaired by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, has served to complement the work of the UN and other agencies on transmission and prevention, and to chart the way forward on HIV/AIDS and its linkages to governance in Africa in three interrelated areas: the implications of sustained human capital losses for the maintenance of state structures and economic development; the viability (technical, fiscal and structural) of using antiretroviral (ARV) medication as an instrument of mitigation; and the synthesis of best practices in HIV/AIDS and governance in key development areas, with a view to formulating policy recommendations, in partnership with UN and other agencies.

### Box 2.15

#### **Responding to HIV and AIDS: Joint UN approaches in action**

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, or UNAIDS, exemplifies the shared commitment of the UN system to addressing one of the gravest challenges facing humanity. Composed of ten co-sponsoring organizations (UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, WHO, UNESCO and the World Bank), UNAIDS is the main advocate for global action on the epidemic. It leads, strengthens and supports an expanded response aimed at preventing transmission of HIV/AIDS, providing care and support, reducing the vulnerability of individuals and communities to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the pandemic's impact.

At the country level, HIV Theme Groups, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and supported by the UNAIDS Country Coordinator, work to harness the collective resources of UNAIDS and other concerned UN agencies together to advocate for and empower national leadership and to coordinate the response; to broker and facilitate public, private and civil society partnerships; to generate strategic information (good practices and lessons learned) for evidence-informed policy and programming; to build capacity for tracking, monitoring and evaluating country responses; and to facilitate both access to and the optimal use of resources (financial, technical and human) in support of national priorities. (continued on following page)

**Box 2.15****Responding to HIV and AIDS** (continued from previous page)

Through the global initiative led by WHO and UNAIDS to ensure three million people globally are on anti-retroviral treatment by 2005 ("3 by 5"), joint UN efforts have supported universal access to effective, affordable and equitable prevention, treatment and care, including safe anti-retroviral treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS. The global initiative on HIV/AIDS Education led by UNESCO and UNAIDS, as part of its overall prevention strategy, is helping countries to develop comprehensive education, sector-based responses to HIV/AIDS, with a focus on children and young people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

**54.** In 2003, concern over the worsening HIV/AIDS pandemic and its severe consequences on food security, public health, educational systems and the institutional capacity in affected countries—particularly in Africa—led CEB to launch a renewed, comprehensive inter-agency effort that would bring to bear against the pandemic all of the system's knowledge and operational capacity relating to its causes and its socio-economic effects.

**Box 2.16****Addressing the triple crisis of AIDS, food security and governance**

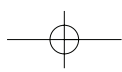
Organized in the framework of CEB's High Level Committee on Programmes by eleven organizations of the UN system, and under the leadership of UNAIDS and WFP, a task group collaborated in 2003 on the preparation of a system-wide strategy targeting the interlinked crisis of food security, weakened capacity for governance and AIDS in the Southern and Eastern African region. The strategy also addressed the connection between food security and livelihoods strategy and agricultural practices, including drought management.

At its Fall 2003 Session, CEB approved this strategy and called on its member organizations to draw upon it as a tool for advocacy and communication with regard to the nexus between HIV/AIDS, food security and governance; to adopt it as a guide for action by their country representatives and by UN country teams in areas where AIDS threatens; and to strive to increase financial investments in country-level actions directed at HIV/AIDS in Southern and Eastern Africa.

The strategy included a set of programmatic and supporting institutional actions necessary to enable the UN system to advance the achievement of the targets outlined in the Declaration of Commitment adopted at the General Assembly's Special Session on AIDS in June 2001 and, more broadly, in the Millennium Declaration.

CEB tasked UNDG to oversee and monitor the strategy's implementation on the ground.

**55.** The Millennium Declaration rightly recognizes other major diseases—malaria and other old but re-emerging threats like tuberculosis—as the cause of millions of deaths in the developing world, affecting the social and economic fabric of societies and countries' prospects for development. Within the UN system, WHO has the lead in this area. Also, as noted in the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2005*, eighty countries are benefiting from over \$290 million for malaria control, provided through the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Efforts are also being expanded to prevent malaria during pregnancy, through mosquito net distribution and preventive drug treatment.



## Ensuring environmental sustainability

**56.** For the effort to ensure environmental sustainability, the Millennium Declaration sets specific targets, encompassing access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation and improvements in the conditions of life of slum dwellers. In this area, the UN system draws guidance from the principles of sustainability adopted at Rio and reinforced at Johannesburg and from the overall commitment to action embodied in the Millennium Declaration's targets for integrating these principles into country policies and programmes and for reversing the loss of environmental resources. UN organizations are working together across a span of issues, from helping to forge international agreements on the environment to addressing specific environmental challenges, such as freshwater, water and sanitation, energy, oceans and coastal areas, and consumption and production patterns.

### Box 2.17

#### Working together for environmental sustainability

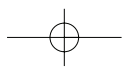
The Environmental Management Group (EMG), established by the UN General Assembly in 1999 and led by UNEP, is identifying and addressing environmental and human settlements issues that require enhanced cooperation among UN organizations and with non-UN actors. The focus is on environmental education, harmonization of national reporting, environmental governance and environment-related capacity building.

UNCTAD is working closely with UNEP, UNDP, the regional commissions and WTO to develop a comprehensive programme for addressing the trade-environment-development nexus. An example of this collaborative effort is the UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development, which is focusing on the particular situations and requirements of small island developing states.

**57.** In 2003, CEB adopted a set of approaches and guidelines to orient the system's follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The aim was to strengthen system-wide support for the implementation of WSSD outcomes and effectively to integrate them into the follow-up processes for other relevant UN conferences. In so doing, CEB strove to maximize the impact of the WSSD outcomes on progress across the MDGs.

**58.** As part of this process and under the aegis of CEB's agencies, inter-agency collaborative arrangements for the follow-up to WSSD—dealing with water and sanitation (UN-Water), energy (UN-Energy), oceans and coastal areas (UN-Oceans), and patterns of consumption and production—were established or strengthened.

**59.** UN-Water's World Water Assessment Programme is an integral part of the UN system's contribution to the realization of the Millennium Declaration commitments to “halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world's people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water” and to “stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources, by developing water development strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which



promote both equitable access and adequate supplies.” The main product of the World Water Assessment Programme is the World Water Development Report. Released on World Water Day 2003, its first edition, “Water for People, Water for Life,” provided an initial assessment of progress towards achieving water-related goals in the context of the larger pursuit of sustainable development. The report’s second edition will be released on World Water Day 2006.

### Box 2.18

#### **Mobilizing the UN system for freshwater resources**

The sustainable management of freshwater resources has long constituted an international goal from the Mar del Plata Action Plan of the 1977 UN Conference on Water to the Millennium Summit, and to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. Only recently, however, have experts recognized the need for a comprehensive assessment of the world’s freshwater as the basis for more integrated water management. The World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP) was established in 2000 that year as a collective response of the UN system to assist countries in reaching their commitments in this area.

Hosted by UNESCO, UN-Water’s World Water Assessment Programme involves 23 UN organizations, along with convention secretariats, donors and other partner entities from outside of the UN system. The programme consists of:

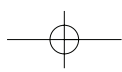
- The World Water Development Report (WWDR), a periodic publication that reviews the world’s freshwater resources, provides decision makers with information tools for integrated water resources management and with case studies that illustrate different scenarios of how challenges are being faced in different parts of the world;
- A capacity-building component, designed to promote the ability of governments to conduct their own assessment; and
- A Water Information Network and Water Portal, which allows communication among with governments and water-related non-governmental groups, and facilitates capacity-building and awareness-raising about water.

**60.** Efforts to manage forests and combat deforestation and to improve energy efficiency and access are two other key dimensions of sustainable development, which the UN system is increasingly approaching as common priorities for both analysis and operations.

### Box 2.19

#### **Managing forests and combatting deforestation**

With its resolution 2000/35, ECOSOC created a unique mechanism to support the work of the intergovernmental United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF): the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF). CPF is a voluntary and informal cooperation of 14 organizations, representing UN organizations and agencies (FAO, UNDP and UNEP); convention secretariats (the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change); international research organizations (the Centre for International Forestry Research, the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations and the World Agroforestry Centre); (continued on following page)

**Box 2.19****Managing forests** (continued from previous page)

intergovernmental organizations (the International Tropical Timber Organization and the World Conservation Union); financial institutions (the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility); and the secretariat of the Forum itself. CPF reports its progress to and seeks guidance from the Forum. Based on the comparative advantages of its members, CPF contributes to the policy deliberations of the Forum and promotes and facilitates sustainable forest management worldwide.

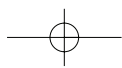
Collaboration among CPF members covers a wide range of issues, including: national forest programmes and action plans; forest law enforcement; reduced-impact logging; community-based fire management; protection of unique types of forest and fragile ecosystems; forest and landscape restoration; rehabilitation and afforestation in low forest cover countries and areas affected by the Indian Ocean Tsunami; monitoring, assessing and reporting; and financial mechanisms. Some of its operational achievements include:

- the Sourcebook on Funding Sustainable Forest Management, which makes information accessible through an on-line searchable database;
- the Task Force on Streamlining Forest-Related Reporting, which aims to reduce the reporting burden on countries;
- the Initiative on Forest-related Definitions, which serves to foster a common understanding of terms and definitions; and
- the Global Forest Information Services, which provides a global internet-based platform for forest information.

**Box 2.20****Collaboration on energy**

An inter-agency network on energy, UN-energy promotes coherence in the UN system's activities in the field of energy as an integral part of CEB's effort to provide a multi-disciplinary response to WSSD and to the Millennium Summit. UN-Energy is open to all UN entities, agencies and programmes working in the area of energy. Current activities focus on promoting energy access and on energy efficiency and renewable energy, both within the framework of decisions taken by WSSD and by the ECOSOC Commission on Sustainable Development.

**61.** A key cross-sectoral issue for the UN system is climate change and its implications for achieving the Millennium Declaration's objectives of ensuring environmental sustainability and protecting the ecosystem. Individually and collaboratively, UN system organizations are working to raise awareness, to help forge international agreements, to carry out analytical work and to assist countries in mitigating the effects of climate change.



**Box 2.21****Coordinating responses  
to climate change**

The 2001 assessment report of the WMO-UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned that, if carbon dioxide levels are not significantly reduced, the Earth's average temperature will rise by as much as 5.8 degrees centigrade by 2100. The adverse impacts expected on human health, food security, economic activity, natural resources, physical infrastructure and migration patterns could put the achievement of the MDGs at risk, especially among the poorest in developing countries, who often live in environmentally vulnerable areas. The recently released Arctic Climate Impact Assessment reported that the region is warming far more rapidly than previously known—at nearly twice the rate as the rest of the globe.<sup>13</sup> Greenhouse gases are projected to make it warmer still, resulting in further large-scale melting of permafrost. According to WMO, 2004 was the fourth hottest year on record. New figures released by Munich Re, a leading re-insurance company and a UNEP Finance Initiative member, projected that in the first ten months of 2004, natural disasters will cost the insurance industry approximately \$35 billion, up from \$16 billion in 2003. Yet, steps taken towards the “required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases” remain inadequate.

Major efforts are underway at the intergovernmental level to address climate change. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force in February 2005. The Buenos Aires Conference (COP10) in December 2004 adopted measures to help countries prepare for climate change; furthered cooperation among the Secretariats for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); and welcomed the Implementation Plan for the Global Observing System for Climate (GCOS) in Support of the UNFCCC.

UN organizations continue to deal, individually and collaboratively, with aspects of climate change, including energy, agriculture, cleaner production, human health and forests. They are also undertaking collaborative projects through the Global Environment Facility (GEF)—sponsored by UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank—which aims to reduce the risks of global climate change, while helping to provide energy for sustainable development.

**62.** In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders resolved to intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters. This commitment followed the greater awareness engendered by the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–1999) and by the first World Conference on Disaster Reduction (Yokohama, 23–27 May 1994).

13. “Impacts of a Warming Arctic: Arctic Climate Impact Assessment”, Arctic Climate Impact Assessment Overview report, 2004.

**Box 2.22****Coordinating responses to natural disasters****The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR)**

The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) builds on the achievements of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction and facilitates disaster reduction efforts worldwide. ISDR combines the strengths of key actors through two groups: the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, which is the principal body for the development of disaster reduction policy and consists of 25 UN, international, regional and civil society organizations; and the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the ISDR, which serves as the UN system's focal point for promoting coordination of disaster reduction activities in the socio-economic, humanitarian and development fields, as well as for supporting policy integration.

The January 2005 World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan, set out an action plan for 2005 to 2015 and adopted a common statement on the Indian Ocean disaster. The Declaration adopted in Kobe expressed the international community's determination to reduce disaster losses and reaffirmed the vital role of the UN system in disaster risk reduction.

**Coordinating responses to the Tsunami disasters**

In the aftermath of the devastation caused by the recent tsunami, the General Assembly in resolution 59/279 "welcomed the effective cooperation between the affected States, relevant bodies in the United Nations system, donor countries, regional and international financial institutions and civil society in the coordination and delivery of emergency relief." The Assembly also stressed the need to continue such cooperation and delivery throughout the ongoing relief operations and rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, in a manner that reduces vulnerability to future natural hazards." In response to the tsunami, UN, UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNEP, World Bank, UNHCR, WHO, FAO, UNESCO, UN-Habitat and ITU mobilized rapidly to mount a coordinated response, providing immediate humanitarian relief—food aid, water purification and emergency health kits, sanitation, temporary shelters, supplies for emergency obstetric care and safe blood transfusions, and vaccinations—and coordinating efforts for long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas.

**Developing a global partnership for development**

**63.** In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders resolved "to create an environment—at the national and global levels alike—which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty." Towards this end, they committed to "an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system." Subsequent UN conferences in Monterrey, Johannesburg and São Paulo have emphasized the link between trade and development. By one estimate, the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda could bring 144 million people out of poverty by 2015, significantly contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>14</sup> The Bretton Woods institutions and all other UN agencies engaged in development are working closely with the World Trade Organization to help deliver on the promise of Doha.

14. *Global Economic Prospects (2004): Realizing the Development Promise of the Doha Agenda*, World Bank, 2005.

### Trade

**64.** Notwithstanding the great potential benefits that developing countries can expect from increased and improved participation in international trade and trade agreements, various constraints need to be overcome at the international and national levels so that trade can serve to address the most pressing human needs, enhancing opportunities for the poor and women, and to advance sustainable development. To support these priorities, UN organizations are actively supporting the efforts of developing countries to build supply capacities, enhance competitiveness and achieve diversification into the production of higher value and higher technological content. Of critical importance is the provision of trade-related technical and capacity building assistance that addresses both short-term needs of implementation and trade negotiations, and long-term needs of strengthening endogenous institutional, human and regulatory capacities.

#### Box 2.23

#### The Doha Development Agenda

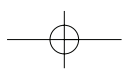
At the Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001, Trade Ministers adopted a Ministerial Declaration setting out a broad work programme for the WTO for the coming years. Known as the Doha Development Agenda, the work programme incorporates negotiations and other activities to address the challenges facing the trading system and the needs and interests of the diverse WTO membership, particularly those of developing and least-developed countries.

The extensive work programme which has evolved since 2001 includes negotiations in specific areas: agriculture, services, market access for non-agricultural products, trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, trade facilitation, WTO rules, improvements to the Dispute Settlement Understanding and trade and environment. It also includes high-priority aspects that do not involve negotiations, such as: electronic commerce; small economies; trade; debt and finance; trade and transfer of technology; technical co-operation and capacity building; least developed countries; and special and differential treatment.

Progress on the Doha Development Agenda has been mixed, including the disappointment of the 2003 Cancun Ministerial Conference. And the negotiations have extended beyond the original time frame through January 2005. WTO members achieved a breakthrough in July 2004, when they took decisions on key issues to ensure continued momentum. Framework agreements are now in place for the negotiations on agriculture (including cotton) and non-agricultural market access. Negotiations have been launched on trade facilitation, and WTO Members have agreed that the Singapore issues—investment, competition policy and transparency in government procurement—will not be negotiated during the Doha Round. Recommendations have been adopted to advance the negotiations on services. WTO members have also agreed to a package on development issues and reaffirmed their commitment to fulfilling the development dimension of the Doha Agenda.

**65.** Many UN system organizations are collaborating to build trade-related capacities, particularly in the least-developed countries, better to integrate them into the global economy and to enable them to reap greater benefits from globalization. A notable example is the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, which combines the efforts of IMF, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, World Bank and WTO, in partnership with bilateral donors and recipient countries. The Integrated Framework supports national





development plans with diagnostic studies to identify and respond to trade development needs. Its experience shows that reforming formal trade policies is not enough to stimulate growth. A need exists to address a range of obstacles, including weak institutions, deficient infrastructures and trade barriers in key markets.

**66.** In the area of commodities, which is the dominant sector in many developing countries, the UN system, with UNCTAD in the lead, has been focusing on constraints originating from the supply side and from difficult market entry conditions. Another focus of the work of UNCTAD, FAO and the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) has been to identify possibilities for increased financing in the commodity sector.

### Box 2.24

#### Cooperation on commodities

The International Task Force on Commodities provides a comprehensive and systematic consultative framework, which enables the sharing of information and the use of complementary expertise among key actors involved in reviewing the commodity situation and in operating commodity markets. The efforts of all interested stakeholders are directed towards a pragmatic approach designed to bring both focus and priority to breaking the cycle of poverty which now traps many commodity producers and commodity-dependent countries. Such a consultative process addresses the wide spectrum of the commodity *problématique*.

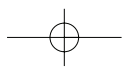
In addition to Member States (both commodity-dependent developing countries and interested development partners), partners include: international organizations (FAO, IMF, ITC, UNDP and the World Bank); commodity-specific bodies (international commodity organizations and study groups); the private sector, in particular major corporations engaged in the production, marketing and distribution of commodities; nongovernmental organizations that promote action on commodity issues; and the academic community.

### Aid

**67.** The goal of developing a global partnership for development provided one of the key platforms for the Monterrey Conference's response to the concerns of Member States over the continuous trend of decline in official development assistance flows to developing countries, which remains their primary source of external funding. The outcome of the Conference, the Monterrey Consensus, derived from full and extensive collaboration among the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and other major stakeholders, such as the WTO. It aims to create a broad-based partnership between developed and developing countries, in order to explore ways of generating additional public and private financial resources to complement national efforts to mobilize domestic resources. As part of that partnership, the Monterrey Consensus sought to reverse the decline in ODA and to affirm the commitment of developed countries to the 0.7 UN Development target.

**68.** Monterrey and the actions taken by donors in its aftermath have had a beneficial impact on the magnitude of official assistance flows.<sup>15</sup> Even with recent progress, however,

15. As a result of commitments undertaken by member states at Monterrey, the decline in the share of ODA in developed-country GNI was reversed and reached 0.25 percent in 2003 and 2004. Moreover, if all commitments are met by the target date of 2006, total ODA is projected to reach \$88 billion, an increase of almost 50 percent in nominal terms from the total recorded in 2002. If these pledges, together with additional commitments made by DAC member countries to increase ODA after 2006 are met, ODA is projected to reach \$108 billion in 2010.



additional funds will be necessary. As a result, along with efforts to establish timetables to reach the ODA target of 0.7 percent reaffirmed at Monterrey, attention has turned increasingly to finding sources of financing in addition to traditional ODA—now referred to as “Innovative sources of financing for Development.” Since 2003, initiatives by Heads of State, studies from independent experts and technical groups have been reviewing the feasibility and implications of various proposals. Recent meetings of the International Monetary and Finance Committee<sup>16</sup> and the Development Committee<sup>17</sup> have pursued the matter, and the General Assembly<sup>18</sup> has requested that possibilities in this regard be given further consideration.

### Box 2.25

#### Financing the development goals

The Financing for Development Office of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs works in full and extensive collaboration with the major stakeholders to prepare analytical reports on the follow-up process to the International Conference on Financing for Development, as mandated by the General Assembly. In addition, the IMF, World Bank and WTO participate actively in the multi-stakeholder workshops and consultations requested by the General Assembly (A/58/230), as part of the follow-up process to Monterrey. These dialogues have taken place in New York and at various regional locations and have dealt with issues, such as: building an inclusive financial sector for development; sovereign debt for sustained development; public-private partnerships for improving the effectiveness of development assistance; improving the climate for private investment; and systemic issues. The International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) and the Development Committee have been particularly involved in monitoring the financing requirements of the Millennium Goals, based on the “Global Monitoring reports” prepared by the staff of the two institutions. In this same context, both committees have given attention to the Assembly’s request to follow up on the call in the Monterrey Consensus for further investigation of the potential for innovative sources of finance. Discussion of innovative sources of financing has been on the agenda of the Development Committee at its meetings since the spring of 2003,<sup>19</sup> and on that of the International Monetary and Financial Committee since its annual meetings in 2003.<sup>20</sup>

16. The IMFC noted in its communiqué for the Spring 2005 meetings that “On innovative sources of development financing, such as the International Finance Facility (IFF) and its pilot—the IFF for immunization—global taxes which could also refinance the IFF, the Millennium Challenge Account, and other financing measures, it welcomes the joint IMF and World Bank note outlining progress that has been made. The Committee asks to be kept informed of the further work ahead of the U.N. Summit.”
17. The Communiqué of the Development Committee for Spring 2005 “welcomed further work on innovative sources of development financing. We noted that negotiations among interested parties on the proposed pilot International Finance Facility (IFF) for Immunization are well advanced; and the analysis of technical feasibility of the IFF has created the conditions for the necessary political decisions on participation. We encourage interested donors to proceed with these proposals. Potential participants believe that global tax mechanisms to finance development may be feasible and desirable, while other members do not. We noted the analysis of the economic rationale, technical feasibility, and moderate coalition size needed for some of the global tax proposals. Building upon the existing political momentum in some countries, we invite the Bank and the Fund to deepen their analysis of the most promising nationally applied and internationally coordinated taxes for development for the Annual Meetings, as an input into the consideration of a pilot case for interested countries.”
18. The General Assembly has now requested “further consideration to the subject of possible innovative and additional sources of financing for development from all sources, public and private, domestic and external, taking into account international efforts, contributions and discussions, within the overall inclusive framework of the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development”
19. References to Innovative Financing are found in the following communiqués, 4/17/05, para.11; 10/2/04, para. 9; 4/25/04, para. 8; 9/22/03, para. 3;and 4/13/03, para. 3.
20. The item is discussed in the communiqués of 4/16/05, para.13; 10/2/04, para. 17; 4/24/04, para. 14; and 9/21/03, para. 17.

### *Partnerships*

**69.** The Millennium Declaration reaffirmed the resolve of the international community to “give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization’s goals and programmes.” Organizations of the UN system have forged strong partnerships with non-UN development actors on a wide range of issues and are working with the private sector and civil society organizations to help alleviate poverty and achieve the MDGs. An example is the UN’s Global Compact, an initiative of the Secretary-General to engage the business community in a common effort to support 10 internationally agreed principles in human rights, labour, environment and anticorruption. The Global Compact now involves nearly 2,000 companies and other stakeholders, operating in more than 70 countries.

#### **Box 2.26**

#### **Partnerships with civil society**

The United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security, promoted by FAO, IFAD and WFP, combines the exchange of best practices among network members with country-level theme groups. The groups include civil society, governments, donors and UN system organizations.

National Cleaner Production Centres, promoted by UNEP and UNIDO, are working with the multinational chemical corporation BASF on eco-efficiency programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises to access methods of analysis and to introduce new production processes at the highest international standard.

The Cities Alliance, promoted by UN-HABITAT and the World Bank, is a global alliance of cities and their partners committed to improving the living conditions of the urban poor, by preparing city development strategies and large-scale slum upgrading programmes.

### *Least Developed Countries*

**70.** In the Millennium Declaration, Heads of States pledged to address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs); committed to ensuring the success of the Third United Nations Conference on the LDCs in May 2001; and, to this end, outlined the main support measures that industrialized countries should take to contribute to a successful outcome. Building on the mobilization of the system’s advocacy and analytical resources that characterized the Conference preparations, a strong, deliberate effort is now underway to ensure an effective coordination of the system’s support to the Conference’s follow-up.

**Box 2.27****Working for the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action**

Following the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Brussels (May 2001), CEB expressed the system's commitment to make an effective, concerted contribution to the implementation and monitoring of the Conference's outcome. The governing bodies of all concerned organizations within the system are actively engaged to integrate the outcome of the Brussels Conference into their respective programmes. In order to facilitate coordinated follow-up, implementation and monitoring of the Brussels Programme of Action, UN system organizations have designated focal points to work with the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which serves as the system's central coordinating body in this area.

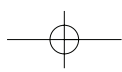
Support programmes specifically aimed at assisting LDCs cover a wide range of activities, from human and institutional capacity-building, strengthening of governance systems, building productive capacities and trade-related assistance to environmental protection and reducing vulnerability to natural disasters. A number of collaborative inter-agency initiatives are underway. The Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to LDCs, jointly managed by WTO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, IMF and the World Bank, aims to assist LDCs in mainstreaming trade in their national poverty reduction strategies, expand and diversify their trade and become better integrated into the multilateral trading system. Various organizations are also working together to build capacity in LDCs to promote foreign investments and encourage the application of information and communications technology for development. Many UN organizations have also established special trust funds to mobilize resources for LDCs. Monitoring and reporting of progress in implementing the Brussels Plan of Action have proceeded through well-coordinated processes within the UN system.

*Small Island Developing States*

**71.** In the context of their ongoing work to help small Island Developing States to address their economic and environmental vulnerabilities and to confront the challenges they face in trade and development and in human and institutional capacity development, UN organizations have provided advisory services and substantive support for implementing the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Commission on Sustainable Development guides these activities, which have been complemented by a wide range of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

**Box 2.28****Partnerships for sustainable development of Small Island Developing States**

In preparation for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in Mauritius (10-14 January 2005), the United Nations compiled a list of multi-stakeholder initiatives and partnerships, including various UN system organizations, that support the sustainable development of SIDS. Sub-regional or global in scope, the partnerships cover tourism, energy, biodiversity, water, agriculture, waste management, marine resources, rural development and disaster management and vulnerability. Many involve capacity building and technology transfer as key elements in their implementation.



**72.** Preparations for the Mauritius International Meeting, which undertook a ten-year review of the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action, built on this collaborative work and received strong inter-agency support. The meeting itself included a number of agency-sponsored panels and events, which helped produce an outcome that addressed the most pertinent perspectives, policies and strategies to advance the SIDS' multidisciplinary agenda, including further inter-agency collaboration, to be pursued on an ongoing basis, to help ensure the follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation. Towards this end, UN-DESA is devising a plan for coordinated and coherent partnership among UN agencies to secure the effective implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, within an interdisciplinary framework for collective action in research and analysis, technical advisory services and support for capacity-building.

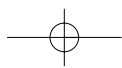
### Addressing the special needs of Africa

**73.** The Millennium Declaration places particular emphasis on the special needs of Africa and calls for focused support to “Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development.” The UN system has shown steadfast commitment to supporting Africans in their development efforts. This support is based on the principle of an Africa-owned and Africa-led development process and provided through international partnerships.

**74.** Launched in 2001, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) fully embraced the Millennium Declaration. NEPAD provides a collective, regional framework for political, social and economic renewal. Just as national action to implement the priorities of NEPAD contributes to achieving the MDGs, so does international support for NEPAD contribute to strengthening African countries' commitment and capacity to achieve the MDGs.

**75.** NEPAD has become the guiding framework for coordinated efforts by UN organizations to help address the special needs of Africa. The UN system has adopted a three-tiered approach to coordinating its support for NEPAD. At the regional level, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) acts as the UN system's key interlocutor with African countries on NEPAD. ECA's yearly consultative meetings serve as the principal coordinating mechanism for the activities of UN organizations in Africa. Under a cluster arrangement designed to facilitate inter-agency coordination, UN organizations carry out support activities, working closely with the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the NEPAD secretariat. And at the country level, UN organizations coordinate their work through the Resident Coordinator System and through existing mechanisms, such as PRSPs and CCAs/UNDAFs.

**76.** For African countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals, substantially enhanced and sustained efforts by the international community will be required, particularly in improving market access for African goods, increasing ODA and debt relief to African countries, promoting both domestic and foreign investments, and facilitating the transfer of appropriate technology. In shaping priorities for inter-agency collaboration in support of NEPAD, particular attention is being given to human resource development and capacity-building. Their crucial importance in advancing the goals of NEPAD has



been recognized by the African Union and highlighted in all recent studies and reports, from the Millennium Project Report to UNESCO's Education For All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report and the Commission for Africa Report.

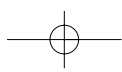
**77.** The UN system views its support for NEPAD as an integral part of its contribution to implementing the Millennium Declaration. From this perspective, the system has provided essential support for implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), which aims to review the performance of African countries in adhering to mutually agreed codes and standards of good governance. And the UN system has intensified assistance in education-related areas, particularly literacy, as key not only to developing the human resources needed to enable Africa to play its proper role in the global economy, but also to promoting democratic governance, fostering intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding, and building equitable knowledge societies. As part of this overall effort, UN agencies have helped to assess the institutional capacities of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in human resources development. In other MDG-related areas, the system has extended support in developing and implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). It has helped establish the NEPAD cities programme, preparing action plans for cities' development, including environmental action plans. And, through UN Water/Africa, the system has made a significant contribution to bringing together UN and non-UN stakeholders at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to develop a water facility with a continent-wide portfolio of projects worth US\$680 million.

**78.** The UN system is currently reviewing the effectiveness of these arrangements, with two objectives in mind: to shift further the focus of the inter-agency regional consultative mechanism from functioning as a forum for sharing information and identifying issues of common concern to operating as a vehicle for enhanced joint action and strategic coordination; and to align better the mechanism's programme cluster arrangements with the planning and implementation of sub-regional and country programmes, thereby improving the overall alignment of the mechanism's work.

#### Box 2.29

#### The Regional Inter-agency Coordination and Support Office

Enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration holds much promise in mainstreaming a number of cross-cutting issues, such as HIV/AIDS, gender and human rights. One notable example of cross-sectoral collaboration among organizations of the UN system in Southern Africa is the Regional Inter-agency Coordination and Support Office (RIASCO), a platform established for innovative programming on food security, HIV/AIDS and the humanitarian crisis. The programme addresses inter-related objectives, such as the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS, protection of the vulnerable in crisis situations and the special needs of Africa. The joint location of and programming by the relevant UN system organizations has allowed for the close integration of relief, recovery and development. The complementarities between organizational mandates, expertise and physical inputs are promoting synergy among the UN system partners and improving the effectiveness of their work, both individually and collectively.



## Challenges

**79.** As shown in this chapter, the UN system has made significant progress in concerting its support to countries to meet the poverty eradication and development goals of the Millennium Declaration. The challenge remains, however, of shaping comprehensive strategies that fully reflect the interlinkages among the MDGs and that effectively integrate the wealth of policy inputs generated by the global conferences.

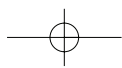
**80.** The UN system must, in turn, translate these strategies into policy advice that is concerted, but not monolithic. This means advice that brings to bear the totality of the system's knowledge and experience to advance holistic, socially conscious approaches to sustainable growth and development; that flows from individual country realities and priorities; and that preserves policy space for developing countries to chart their own integration into the global economy. Beyond that, the UN system must strive to match progress in enhancing policy coherence with an adequate capacity to optimize the sequencing of UN interventions in a given country. The system also needs to continue to strengthen its capacity to mount prompt responses. The UN system's effective handling of the SARS outbreak and its response to the HIV/AIDS crisis provide good examples of the response capacity that needs to be further developed and applied system-wide.

### Box 2.30

#### Inter-agency collaboration on economic development

The slow progress made by some countries and regions in poverty eradication and sustainable development underscores the need for the UN system to give renewed emphasis to enhancing policy coherence and operational coordination in support of accelerated economic development. Under the auspice of CEB/HLCP, work is underway on a UNIDO initiative to elaborate an MDG-based common agenda for collaborative work among organizations of the UN system working in the field of economic development. An inter-agency task force has been established and is now engaged in identifying priority areas for collaboration, developing a result-oriented and time-bound work plan, and setting up a consultative process to fully harness the capacities and comparative advantages of the organizations of the system in support of accelerated economic development, focusing in particular on Africa and the least developed countries.

**81.** Across organizations and programme areas, the UN system confronts the persistent challenge of linking global, regional and national efforts in ways that maximize their mutual reinforcement and their total contribution to meeting the MDGs. Global goals will ultimately have a real impact on the lives of peoples only to the extent that they translate into country-level and region-wide policies and priorities. By the same token, regional and country-level experiences and requirements must consistently inform global policy development.



**82.** The potential for such integration represents a powerful comparative advantage of the UN system, one which could yield significant increases in effectiveness and real impact if fully exploited. Building on country- and regional-level conditions and requirements, the UN system must endeavour to achieve a closer integration of its operational activities with its conceptual and analytical work.

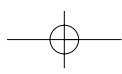
**83.** At the country level itself, the UN system must continue to work to apply approaches to supporting the implementation of the MDGs that are genuinely demand-driven; to ensure that monitoring and evaluation policies and practices lead to systematic accumulation and application of lessons learned to be shared system-wide; to broaden partnerships with key development actors; and to harmonize its efforts with those of the donor community, civil society and the private sector. In all of these areas, true country ownership of development cooperation in meeting the objectives of the Millennium Declaration is key to progress. The UN system must go beyond simply adhering to perceived country priorities and, instead, work purposefully to help strengthen national capacities for setting those priorities and effectively lead the development cooperation effort. The system should come to perceive this task as a way to exploit one of its unique comparative advantages in relation to other development actors and as an important responsibility for which it is uniquely equipped.

**84.** Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women is another major, and in many ways, unique responsibility for the UN system as a whole. In this area, the primary focus must be on education: the UN system must take bold steps to address the challenges impeding access to education for girls and to ensure that good quality, gender-sensitive education and equal opportunities are made available to all. Beyond education, the empowerment of women must become an integral component of efforts to advance each of the MDGs and of policies and activities across all dimensions of the Millennium Declaration.

**85.** Although not covered by a specific MDG, promoting employment is fundamental to eradicating poverty. As stressed in the Secretary-General's report for the High-Level segment of the forthcoming ECOSOC session (E/2005/56), the power of the poor to extricate themselves from poverty, disease and misery lies in productive employment and decent work. The UN system must strive to ensure that global, regional and national policies are re-directed to and refocused on productivity-enhancing investments and policies designed to generate employment for unskilled and semi-skilled labour, in both rural and urban areas. Poverty reduction strategies, such as the PRSPs, should recognize the critical role of employment and the need to enhance the human capital of the poor, particularly by increasing access to education (especially primary and secondary), skills and healthcare; improving physical infrastructure; easing access to credit; and creating social safety nets.

**86.** Another major challenge for the UN system is to mobilize and integrate more fully its scientific and technological capacities into its support to countries for achieving the MDGs. This relates, in turn, to the challenge of bringing more fully to bear on the pursuit of the MDGs the policy guidance generated by the World Summit for Sustainable Development and the World Summit on the Information Society. Both have stressed the key importance of applying science and technology and innovation in achieving a sustainable development process.





**87.** The impact of trans-boundary issues on the pursuit of the MDGs also requires greater system-wide attention. Particularly relevant in this regard are the development of transport networks in land-locked and poor regions; the integrated management of international rivers, basins and lakes aimed to achieve environmental sustainability; the fight against air pollution; and the rational use of energy. The nature and urgency of these objectives underscore the need further to reinforce inter-agency cooperation not only at the global level, but also at the regional and sub-regional levels.

**88.** Current trends indicate that many parts of Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, lag significantly behind in achieving the MDGs. Many encouraging signs exist, however, at the regional level and at the international level, which have seen new and potentially major initiatives. Taken together, they suggest that the development scenario in the region may be poised towards significant change. Building on its historic engagement in African development, the UN system should situate itself as Africa's main partner in helping national and regional institutions to take full advantage of these new opportunities for significant progress. The UN system's capacity to do so should be rooted in: stronger inter-agency collaboration, so as to minimize duplication and better optimize the use of resources; enhanced policy coherence and operational coordination, focusing on capacity and institution-building; and a continuing system-wide effort to mobilize resources to support national progress and the initiatives, programmes and institutions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

**89.** In his report to the 2005 World Summit, *In Larger freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All* (A/59/2005), the Secretary-General presents various proposals to surmount challenges in implementing the development aspects of the Millennium Declaration—to secure “freedom from want.” The decisions taken by Member States at the Summit in response will guide the ongoing efforts of CEB to drive inter-agency coordination and collaboration in this area.

