



A FUTURE WITHIN REACH 2008



Regional Partnerships for the Millennium Development Goals
in Asia and the Pacific



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The shaded areas of the map indicate ESCAP members and associate members.

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A Future Within Reach 2008

Regional Partnerships for the Millennium Development Goals in
Asia and the Pacific

Asia-Pacific MDG Study Series

A Future Within Reach 2008

Regional Partnerships for the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific

United Nations publication
Sales No. E.08.II.F.15
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Manufactured in Thailand
ISBN: 978-92-1-120547-3
ST/ESCAP/2501

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This publication has been issued without formal editing.

Foreword

A regional picture of progress toward the Millennium Development Goals must inevitably be painted with broad strokes. While each country prepares its own progress reports, regional overviews are constrained by the shortage of capacity and information, and by disaggregated data.

Yet there is value in these regional MDG reports. For all their diversity, many Asian and Pacific countries, particularly neighbours in subregions, share significant cultural ties and similar social and economic challenges in implementing their MDG plans. A regional report can highlight opportunities for joint and cooperative action, encouraging countries to build partnerships for greater progress. It can also demonstrate the large challenges that remain, requiring the continued assistance of international organizations, such as the United Nations agencies and funds, the regional development banks and bilateral donors.

This third MDG report for Asia and the Pacific attempts to shed light on questions that are difficult to answer. How many of the region's people are living in extreme poverty? How many children are going to school? How many women are dying at childbirth? As importantly, the report attempts to peer into the future: what will be the situation in 2015 – the target date for all of the MDG targets?

Building on previous editions, *A Future Within Reach 2008* takes stock of the significant achievements to date across Asia and the Pacific, and highlights the main gaps that remain. On the positive side, the region has an unparalleled singular record of freeing more than 350 million people from extreme poverty between 1990 and 2004. But the task of reducing and ultimately eliminating human, or non-income poverty is immense. The report therefore also includes recommendations for strengthening growth and implementation efforts, adopting suitable policies, and garnering the additional resources needed to fill the remaining gaps. Action is clearly required at the national level, but this will need to be supplemented with the information, advisory services and human and financial resources of international bodies. It is essential that development partners contribute according to their unique characteristics and strengths, yet uphold the spirit, principle and practice of uniting to 'deliver as one'.

This report is a tripartite initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). We are grateful for the active support of a number of other United Nations agencies. We hope that the report will serve as a useful source of information and ideas, and a stimulus for innovation, investment, and regional cooperation as countries strive to achieve the MDGs and build a brighter future for all.



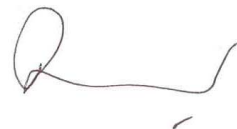
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Acknowledgements

This report was prepared under the tripartite partnership of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). A number of United Nations organizations, agencies, funds and programmes contributed to the preparation of the report with technical inputs.

Under the general direction of Noeleen Heyzer (ESCAP), Ursula Schaefer-Preuss (ADB) and David Lockwood (UNDP), this report was prepared by a team under the overall guidance of Ravi Ratnayake (ESCAP), Shiladitya Chatterjee (ADB) and Omar Noman (UNDP).

The preparation of the report was led by Hiren Sarkar and an ESCAP team consisting of Syed Nuruzzaman, Amitava Mukherjee, Amarakoon Bandara, Nobuko Kajiura, Christian Stoff, Nuankae Wongthawatchai and Jurairat Sajjapongse.

The report team wishes to thank the following colleagues who reviewed the draft chapters and provided valuable inputs: ESCAP – Herve Berger, Haishan Fu, Thelma Kay, Siliga Kofe, Tata Srinivas; UNDP RCC – Yubaraj Khatiwada; ADB – Kallidaikurichi Easwaran Seetharam, Myo Thant, Rana Hasan, Jacques Jeugmans, Armin Bauer, Francesco Tornieri, Christopher W. MacCormac; IOM – Federico Soda, Irena Vojackova-Sollorano; UNAIDS – Sun Gang; UNFPA – Ghazy Mujahid; UNICEF – Mahesh Patel; UNIFEM – Jean D' Cunha, Janet Wong; UN/ISDR Asia & Pacific – Christel Rose; UN Millennium Campaign – Minar Pimple.

Comments of Mia Mikic, Pranesh Chandra Saha, Shamika Sirimanne, Hirohito Toda and Kioe Sheng Yap are noted with thanks.

Several technical background papers were commissioned for the preparation of this report. These background papers were contributed by Tarun Das, A. Ganesh Kumar, Bhanumurthy Rangareddy Nagapudi, Manoj Kumar Panda, Raghbendra Jha and Keith Forbes.

An earlier draft of the report was presented to a Messaging Workshop, held on 15-16 October 2007 at Bangkok. The team acknowledges the contributions made by Zhala Hajiyeva, Graham Hassall, B. Murali, Michelle N. Domingo-Palacpac, T. Palanivel, Celia M Reyes, and Li Xiaoyun.

An United Nations Interagency Expert Consultation which was held on the draft report on 28 January 2008 provided valuable guidance to the team. Substantive contributions were received from Homayoun Alizadeh (OHCHR), Sumiter Broca (FAO), Ryce Chanchai (UN Millennium Campaign), Jean D'Cunha (UNIFEM), Sun Gang (UNAIDS), Yubaraj Khatiwada (UNDP RCC), Medeliene Moss (ILO), Ghazy Mujahid, Josephine Anne Sauvarin (UNFPA), Hiroshi Nishimiya (UNEP), Mahesh Patel (UNICEF), Josephine Sauvarin (UNFPA), Sameer Sharma (ITU), Federico Soda (IOM), Irena Vojackova-Sollorano (IOM) and Christel Rose (UN/ISDR).

The report team thanks the MDG Focal Points of ESCAP for their useful technical inputs: Tiziana Bonapace, Edgar Dante, Masakazu Ichimura, Atsuko Okuda, A.S.M. Abdul Quium, Srinivas Tata and Vanessa Steinmayer.

The report was edited by Peter Stalker and Nick Cumming-Bruce.

Administrative assistance was provided by Solada Cha-um-pruke, Metinee Hunkosol, Sopitsuda Chantawong and Wannaporn Sridama.

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