

# Least Developed Countries (LDCs)



## Number of LDCs by Region



## Facts and Figures

### 49 countries:

- 16 landlocked
- 12 small islands

### Total population 2008:

815.16 million

### Projected population 2015:

965.2 million

## Population

- » Population growth, per year (2005–2010): 2.37%
- » Over 72% of the population lives in rural areas and depends for subsistence and income on agriculture

## Economic Growth

- » Annual GDP growth rate down from a record 8.4% in 2007, to 7.0% in 2008
- » Current estimates for 2009 show a growth rate of just 4%
- » 11 of the LDCs exceeded the 7.0% growth target of the Brussels Programmes of Action

## Poverty

- » Still more than half of the population lives on less than \$1.25(PPP) per day
- » 13 LDCs have been classified as severely affected by high commodity prices and at high risk of food crisis in 2008

## Trade

- » The share of LDCs in global merchandise trade increased from 0.62% in 2002 to 1.08% in 2008
- » Half of LDC exports are destined for industrial countries whereas the other half goes to developing countries

## Debt Relief

- » Total debt service as % of exports of goods and services in 2008: 7.5
- » As of February 2010, 19 of the LDCs have reached the post-completion point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative of the World Bank and the IMF and are receiving debt relief of US\$38.8 million

## Foreign Direct Investment

- » Total FDI inflows (current US\$) increased from 4.1 billion in 2000 to 33.1 billion in 2008
- » Net FDI inflows (% of GDP) in 2008: 6.5

## Aid

- » Total ODA to LDCs by DAC countries increased from US\$36.8 million in 2007 to US\$46.6 million in 2008
- » Only 9 donors reached the target of 0.15 % of GNI in ODA to LDCs

## Remittances

- » Workers' remittances to the LDCs have more than trebled since 2000 reaching US\$23 billion in 2008

## Communication

- » Cellular subscribers as % of population increased from 2.8 in 2004 to 20.9 in 2008
- » In 2008, 35 of the LDCs had reached the target of 5 or more main line telephone and cellular service connections per 100 in habitants
- » Only 2.1% of LDCs use an internet connection as of 2008

## Education

- » The number of LDCs with enrolment ratios of less than 65% fell from 16 in 2000 to just 4 in 2008
- » Average literacy rates in LDCs have increased from 54% around 2000 to 58% in most recent data

## Water

- » % using improved water sources in 2008: 67
- » % using adequate sanitation facilities 2008: 40.5

## Health

- » Life expectancy at birth (years) 2008: 57
- » Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000) 2005, adjusted: 870
- » Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) 2008: 82
- » Adult HIV prevalence rate (ages 15 – 49) 2007: 2%
- » Declines in HIV incidence are reported in 3 out of 5 of the LDCs for which trend data are available
- » Very high numbers of deaths from malaria are found in 10 of the LDCs and high numbers in another 9

## Environment

- » Although the LDCs contribute least to global warming (0.5% of the cumulative greenhouse gas emissions between 1995 – 2008), they are the hardest hit by the adverse effects of climate change owing to high vulnerability and low adaptive capacities
- » 11 LDCs have announced nationally appropriate mitigation actions after the Copenhagen Climate Summit

## Productive capacities

- » Only 7 LDCs had a share of manufacturing in GDP of more than 15% in 2008
- » 17 LDCs reached the target of 25% of GDP as gross fixed capital formation in 2008

## Governance

- » In 2008 13 LDCs had more than 20% women in national parliaments
- » 15 LDCs are candidate countries to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and one is already compliant

## References

- » *UN Secretary-General Report 2009 on the Implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.*
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- » *Human Development Report 2007/2008, UNDP*
- » *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2009 World Development Indicators 2009*



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