

# 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 in 2008 down to 7.3% from 7.8% in 2007
- » 14 of the LDCs have met the 7% growth target adopted by the Brussels Programme of Action

## Poverty

- » 53.4% of the population lives on less than US\$1 (PPP) per day
- » Rates of undernourishment of over 35% were reported in 11 LDCs

## Trade

- » Exports of goods and services as % of GDP in 2008: 25%
- » Merchandise trade as % of GDP in 2008: 64.4%

## Debt Relief

- » Total debt service as % of exports of goods and services in 2007: 6.8
- » As of 2008, 35 of the LDCs have reached the decision point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative of the World Bank and the IMF and are receiving debt relief of US\$ 54.3 billion (measured in end-2008 value)

## Foreign Direct Investment

- » Total foreign direct investment inflows (current US\$) in 2007: US\$ 13.2 billion
- » Net foreign direct investment inflows (% of GDP) 2008: 2.4

## Aid

- » Total ODA to LDCs by DAC countries reduced to US\$ 20.7 billion in 2008 from US\$ 32.0 in 2007
- » In 2008, ODA accounted for 3.5% of the Gross National Income (GNI) of LDCs
- » 6 of 22 donors met the ODA/GNI target of 0.2 in 2007

## Remittances

- » Workers' remittances to the LDCs have more than doubled since 2000, but down to US\$ 21.25 billion in 2008 from US\$ 36.5 billion in 2007

## Infrastructure and Communication

- » Cellular subscribers as % of population increase to 14.5% in 2007, from 0.3% in 2000
- » In 2007, 36 of the LDCs reached the target of 5 or more main line telephone and cellular service connections per 100 inhabitants
- » Only 1.6% of the population used the Internet in 2008, compared to 12.8% in developing countries and 65.1% in developed countries

## Education

- » Net enrolment ratio in primary education (2007) is 76%, compared to 89% in developing
- » 26 of the LDCs are on track or are making rapid progress towards achieving the universal primary education enrolment goal
- » Literacy rate, adult total (2005–2007): 57%

## Health

- » Life expectancy at birth (years) 2008: 57
- » Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000) in 2005, adjusted: 870
- » Infant Mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) in 2008: 84
- » Adult HIV prevalence rate (ages 14–49) in 2008: 2.2%
- » Data from 2000 to 2007 show increased knowledge and prevention of HIV/AIDS in most of the LDCs for which data are available
- » Declines in HIV incidence are reported in 3/5 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 cumulative greenhouse gas emissions between 1995–2008), they are hardest hit by the adverse effects of climate change owing to high vulnerability and low adaptive capacities

## 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*



Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)

United Nations, Room S-770, New York, NY 10017, U.S.A.  
Telephone: (212) 963-9470; (212) 963-7778; (212) 963-5051  
Fax: (212) 963-0419; (917) 367-3415  
ohrls-unhq@un.org  
www.un.org/ohrls