



INTERNATIONAL FOOD
POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
sustainable solutions for ending hunger and poverty

Taking Action for the World's Poor and Hungry People



Beijing, China • 17–19 October 2007
The 2020 Conference at a Glance

The need for a consultation process

- Globally about 1 billion people are absolutely poor, living on less than US\$1 a day; about 800 million are hungry
- The first Millennium Development Goal may be met on a global level, but some regions and countries will not reach it
- The poorest of the poor are hard to reach
- Including them will require more resources and investment per capita; additional and more effective action is needed

IFPRI's consultation process

- *Takes stock* of progress in achieving the first Millennium Development Goal and those who would be left behind
- *Assesses* why poverty persists in these groups
- *Analyzes* successes and failure
- *Assesses* appropriate strategic approaches and their implementation
- *Learns* from successful experiences in China and elsewhere
- *Identifies* areas of consensus on goals, strategies, and policies to achieve food and nutrition security

The Beijing conference in numbers

- More than 400 leading international and Chinese policymakers and thinkers
- About 25 ministerial/vice ministerial participants
- Globally renowned researchers and practitioners from NGOs, international agencies, and the private sector from 40 countries
- 13 plenary sessions and 11 parallel sessions
- Over 100 scientific and policy presentations
- About 60 policy briefs and research papers made available

Opening ceremony



Speakers:

- **Hui Liangyu**, Vice Premier, State Council of the People's Republic of China
- **Lennart Bage**, President, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- **Ernest Debrah**, Minister of Food and Agriculture of Ghana
- **Ursula Schäfer-Preuss**, Vice President, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- **Joachim von Braun**, Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)
- **Khalid Malik** with a message from UN Secretary General **Ban Ki-moon**

Conference program

- Understanding poverty and consequences
- What will it take to move out of poverty
- Ending extreme poverty and hunger: policy action in countries and regions
- Changing roles and partnerships: actors and institutions
- Meeting the needs of minorities and marginalized people
- Taking action for poverty and hunger reduction

Key data on the poor

Global progress in reducing poverty

The world has made considerable progress

- Population living on less than \$1 a day:

28.6% in 1990 18.0% in 2004

- At this rate, MDG poverty target will be met globally by 2015

But regional progress is uneven

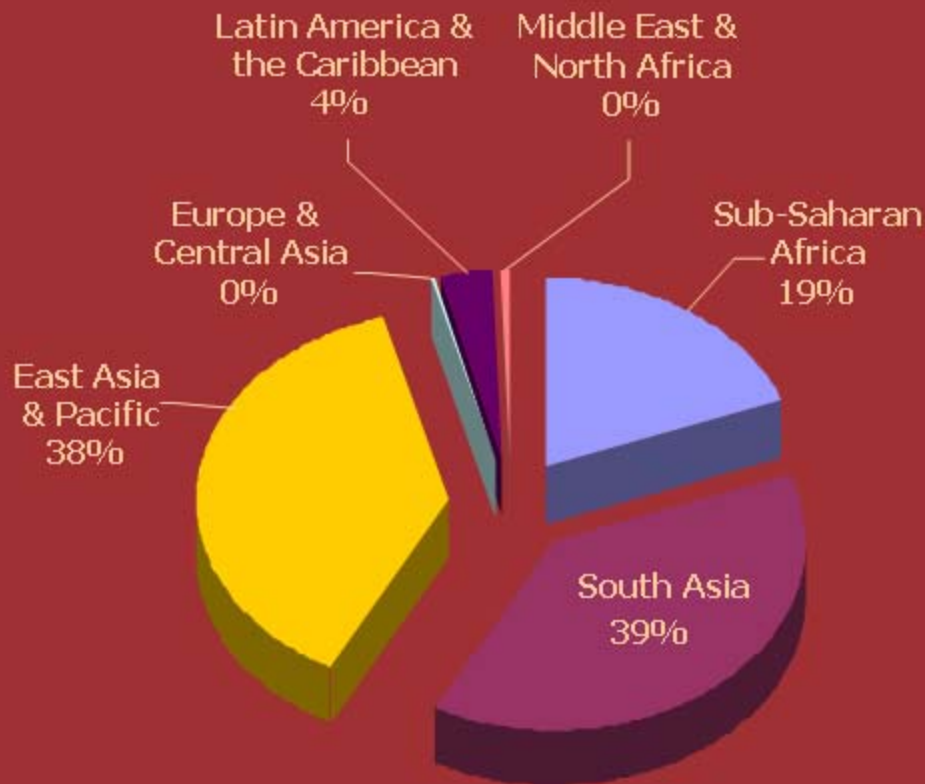
- Global poverty reductions largely driven by East Asia and the Pacific, aided by South Asia

- Poverty reduction stagnating in Sub-Saharan Africa:

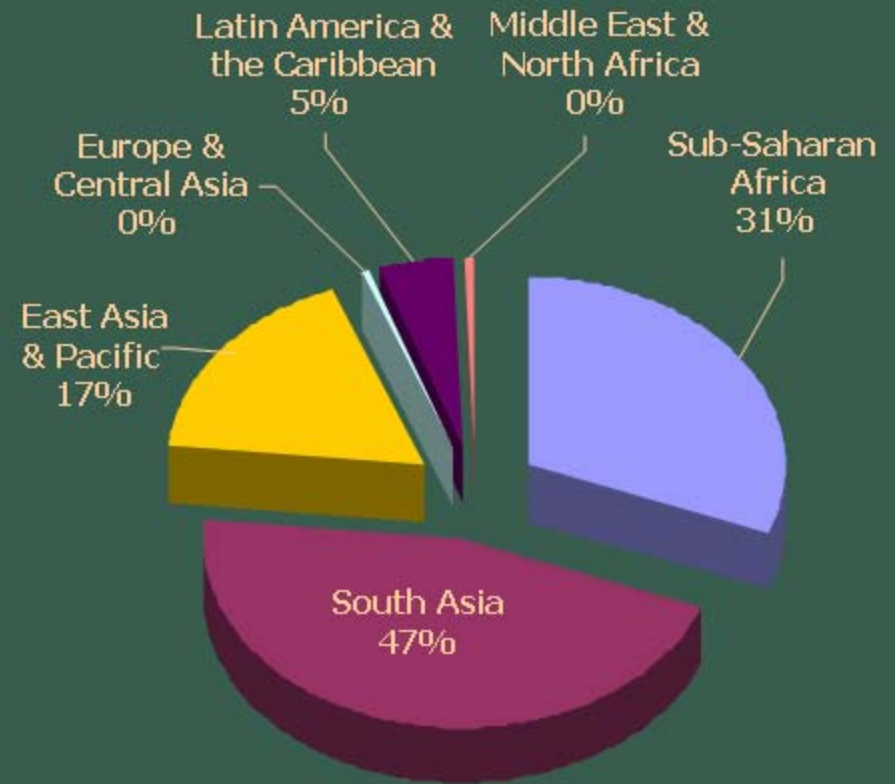
46.8 % in 1990 41.1 % in 2004

The \$1-a-day poor: How many and where?

1,248 million in 1990



969 million in 2004



Looking beneath the \$1-a-day line



Subjacent poor
(75 cents–\$1)
485 million people



Medial poor
(50 cents–75 cents)
323 million people



Ultra poor
(less than 50 cents)
162 million people

Progress slowest for the poorest

- Income growth benefited those just below the poverty line most
- Poverty rates for the ultra poor decreased less than if everyone's income had grown equally
- East Asia and the Pacific: rapid economic growth benefited all groups nearly equally
- Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia: ultra poor were mostly left behind

Who are the ultra poor?

- People in remote rural areas, located furthest from roads, markets, schools, and health services
- People facing exclusion because of their ethnicity, gender or disability
- People with few assets or education, or access to credit

Where are the ultra poor?

- Three-fourths of the world's ultra poor live in Sub-Saharan Africa, the only region where ultra poverty predominates
- Most of Asia's poor live just below the \$1-a-day line—only a small minority is ultra poor

Why do the ultra poor stay poor?

- They are born poor or come from poor areas
- Effects of disasters or shocks can persist for years
- Lack of education, labor, assets, and access to credit can create a trap
- They belong to a disadvantaged group

Selective conclusions for action

Drawn by Joachim von Braun

IFPRI Director General

Successful action needs theory

The conference yielded a rich discussion on theory and concepts, including

- Growth, inequality, and poverty: “growth+”
- Poverty traps
- Drivers of inequality
- Causes of exclusion and discrimination
- Role of risks, uncertainties, and lack of insurance
- Scale of action and role of decentralization
- Incentive issues for public transfers

This discussion must be continued to avoid action without focus

Progress on measuring poverty

- Increasingly multidimensional measures of poverty
- Increased timeliness of data

Does the 1US\$/day poverty line matter?

No: What matters is information for well-defined actions for and with poor groups (such as rural, oldest, youngest, ill, small farmers, urban poor, unemployed, women, excluded, disabled)

Yes: Aggregate poverty monitoring helps to guide actions and monitoring of impact

Conclusion: While continuing to use their established national poverty lines, all countries should monitor their \$1-a-day poverty (e.g., to facilitate international action)

Facts about poverty and hunger

- Poorest are increasingly concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, in countries with conflict, and where growth is stagnant
- Twin problem: The poor are predominantly rural while the number of urban poor is increasing
- Poverty and hunger reduction has been slowest among the poorest
- Minorities are the majority among the poorest
- There are substantial movements in and out of poverty

Poverty linked to social exclusion

Discrimination against

- Ethnic minorities
- Women, girls
- Individuals, families with disabilities

Needed

- Data for visibility and research
- Comprehensive approach for the disabled
- View people as having potential, not problems

New risks for poverty reduction

- Rising food prices and resource scarcity
- Macroeconomic imbalances
- Climate change and environmental sustainability
- Multiethnic world with increased discrimination and ethnic conflicts
- Health crises (avian influenza, HIV/AIDS)

Key actions that need to be taken

1. Promote inclusive growth with emphasis on rural growth
2. Enhance access to assets, infrastructure, markets
3. Strengthen social protection
4. Accelerate investments in health, nutrition, education, particularly for children and women
5. Include the excluded

The mix is different for different countries and regions (Africa, Asia, and Latin America)

Diverse priorities by region

Some top-priority actions mentioned for...

- Asia: overcome exclusion, reduce child undernutrition, connect small farmers to value chains
- Africa: increase agricultural growth, overcome conflicts, improve policy environment
- Latin America: improve education quality, better target social expenditures, enhance local capacity

Learning across regions is necessary for leapfrogging

More attention to political core issues

Countries to take charge of own future

- Overcome conflicts, instability, and other root causes of poverty
- Strengthen governance, accountability, rights
- Improve fiscal and tax policy
- Set sound macroeconomic policy and trade regime
- Coordinate development aid and commitments

Sequencing and prioritizing

To determine priorities, we need

- Framework that captures synergies and trade-offs
- Analyses based on sound data
- Consideration of alternative options
- Recognition of the political process
- Strong evaluation culture

We are dealing with a complex policy challenge, not a set of projects

Policy priorities for pro-poor technology

- Target additional research and technology to resource-poor areas where many of the poor live
- Improve access to information technology by the poor
- Increase crop productivity: water management, seeds, fertilizer, agricultural research
- Expand environmental services with the poor

Priorities for health and nutrition

- Early child nutrition
- Interventions (such as conditional cash transfers)
- Micronutrients
- Health services for the poor
- Behavior and care

Options for social security and social protection

- Start with existing institutions
- Strengthen tax base
- Improve information and incentives
- Move toward comprehensive health insurance coverage
- Draw on global lessons, including from high-income countries
- Think comprehensively across institutions: markets, microfinance, insurance, services

Implementing action effectively

- Choose appropriate scale and scaling-up process
- Create broad-based political support for action
- Enable action at the local level and build community organizations
- Facilitate social entrepreneurship
- Pursue public–private partnerships
- Be results-oriented

Long-run challenges to reducing poverty

- Poor nutrition (intergenerational)
- Unsustainable resource management
- Climate change
- Institution building
- Difficulty of changing mindsets
- Exclusion

Next steps

- Follow-up on the findings and suggestions in major regions
- Coordinate with donors and partners
- Broaden the set of actors domestically
- Identify and strengthen impact pathways from conference
- Produce comprehensive documentation and communicate findings

I am not here to make you feel guilty,
I am not here to make your conscience weak.
But you are just as much to blame
as me.

—Ashley Eberhart, Age 16, United States
Winner of the IFPRI 2020 Youth Writing Contest (2007)

Conference documentation

- To download conference materials, please visit www.ifpri.org
 - All research prepared for the conference
 - Nearly all papers presented
 - Videostreams of many sessions, with more coming online soon
- For Chinese materials, please visit www.iprcc.org.cn
- For questions or additional material, please contact r.pandya-lorch@cgiar.org