



WHERE DO WE STAND?

1990 **2015**. Overall poverty rates fell from 46 per cent in 1990 to 27 per cent in 2005 in developing regions, and progress in many developing countries is being sustained. This is despite setbacks caused by the 2008-09 economic downturn and the effects of the food and energy crises. However, even if these positive trends continue, in 2015, roughly 920 million people would still be living under the international poverty line of \$1.25 a day, as adjusted for inflation.

WHAT HAS WORKED?

- **Subsidies for Malawi and Ghana**: Since 2005, Malawi's voucher programme for fertilizers and seeds has helped boost its agricultural productivity, turning the country into a net food exporter after decades of famine as a perennial food importer. Malawi needs 2.2 million tons of maize a year to reach self-sufficiency. In 2005, the harvest fell to a low of 1.2 million tons of maize. The National Input Subsidy Programme resulted in a dramatic increase to 3.2 million tons of maize in 2007. Through a similar nationwide fertilizer subsidy programme, Ghana increased food production by 40 per cent, contributing to an average decline of 9 per cent in hunger between 2003 and 2005.
- **Investment in Vietnam**: Vietnam's investment in agriculture research and development helped cut the prevalence of hunger by more than half, from 28 per cent in 1991 to 13 per cent in 2004-06. The prevalence of underweight children was also more than halved from 45 per cent in 1994 to 20 per cent in 2006.
- **Nigeria's National Special Programme for Food Security**: Nigeria's National Special Programme for Food Security helped almost double agricultural yields and farmers' incomes. Farmers were able to buy inputs using interest-free loans to be repaid following harvest. In Bangladesh, \$107 million is to be distributed in the form of Agricultural Input Assistance Cards, targeting poor households.
- **Argentina's Jefes y Jefas de Hogar**: In Argentina, the *Jefes y Jefas de Hogar* programme employed two million workers within a few months after its initiation in 2002. This contributed to the country's rapid poverty reduction from 9.9 per cent that year to 4.5 per cent in 2005.
- UNDP provided technical expertise to establish the **Electronic Market**, bringing together farmers, farming co-operatives, domestic traders, agro-industrial processors, commodity exporters and institutional buyers to meet and trade through a secure,

WHAT IS THE UN DOING?

- In India, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) is supporting the Mahatma Gandhi **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**, which provides a right to a minimum of 100 days of paid work a year for landless laborers and marginal farmers, benefiting some 46 million households. Almost half of the beneficiaries are women.