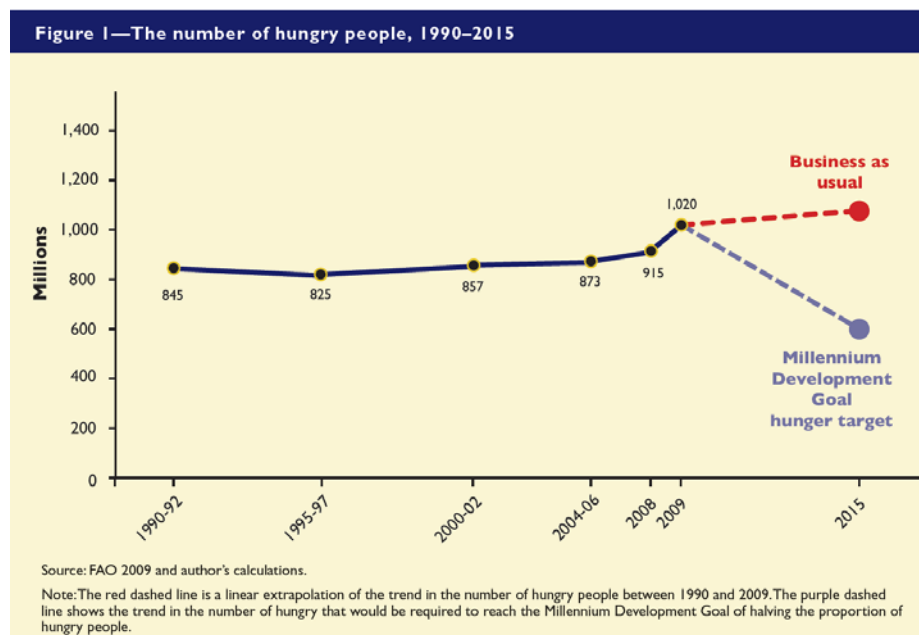


Halving Hunger: Meeting the First Millennium Development Goal through “Business as Unusual”

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In 2000, as part of the first Millennium Development Goal, world leaders set a target of halving the percentage of hungry people between 1990 and 2015. However, this hunger target has seriously swerved off track in the past decade (see Figure 1).



The goal on halving hunger can still be achieved, but business as usual will not be enough. What is needed is “business as unusual”—a smarter, more innovative, better focused, and cost-effective approach to reducing hunger. The elements of this new approach are as follows:

- **Invest in Two Core Pillars: Agriculture and Social Protection.** The first step in reducing poverty and hunger in developing countries is to invest in agriculture and rural development. Policymakers should also scale up investments in well-targeted safety net programs that focus on nutrition and health and increase production capacity.
- **Bring in New Players.** New actors in global development—the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and emerging economies—have important roles to play in reducing hunger and should be fully integrated in the global food security agenda.
- **Adopt a Country-Led, Bottom-Up Approach.** To maximize impact and tap on external development assistance, countries need to develop effective, efficient, and sustainable policies that are well adapted to the local context. Reforms should also be local in nature, with poor people acting as a driving force.
- **Design Policies Using Evidence and Experiments.** Policy experimentation is crucial for effective reforms. To succeed with this approach, policymakers need to allow for impartial monitoring of experiments and rapidly transform the lessons learned into large-scale reforms.
- **Walk the Walk.** Decisionmakers at the global, regional, and national levels need to meet their commitments in a timely manner to effectively enhance food security. Strong institutions and governance, as well as monitoring and transparency are vital to support the fulfillment of pledges.

Some aspects of this “business as unusual” approach have already been successful in a few countries, but they should be scaled up and extended to new countries to have a real impact on the reduction of global hunger. Global and national actors, which have distinct roles to play, need to work together. A stronger system of mutual accountability between the two groups is needed to keep progress in cutting hunger on track.