



# A FUTURE

# WITHIN

# REACH

Reshaping institutions in a region  
of disparities to meet the  
Millennium Development Goals  
in Asia and the Pacific





# **A Future Within Reach:**

## **Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparities to Meet the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific**



New York, 2005



# **A Future Within Reach: Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparities to Meet the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific**

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Bibliographical and other references have, wherever possible, been verified.

## FOREWORD

Five years have passed since the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration, which gave rise to the Millennium Development Goals. Since then, the countries of Asia and the Pacific have been working hard to achieve these goals. Some have been very successful; others have made less progress. Bringing all countries within reach of the goals will require increased commitment and determination at the national, regional and global levels.

Many countries have prepared their own reports on progress towards the MDGs – and there have also been assessments at the global level. To supplement these, ESCAP, UNDP and ADB have formed a partnership, capitalizing on our particular areas of expertise, to present a regional picture – analysing the trends in MDG achievement across Asia and the Pacific and exploring the policy implications at both the national and regional levels.

This tripartite initiative by a United Nations regional commission (ESCAP), a United Nations agency (UNDP) and a regional development bank (ADB) is the first of its kind in the world – and we are proud that it is referred to globally as a “best practice”. It ensures a common voice on the MDGs in the region, helps build a consolidated regional platform and presents a clear plan of action for their achievement.

The report is the second in a series. The first, published in 2003, was subtitled *Meeting the Challenges of Poverty Reduction*. It gave an initial picture of progress towards the goals, focusing particularly on national policies for poverty reduction and on the potential for partnerships at the global level. This Report updates and extends that analysis. Using the latest data, the Report tracks each country or territory’s progress in each of the MDG targets and assesses whether it will achieve that target by 2015. The results reveal a mixed picture. Some countries are evidently making good progress on the poverty target, but many seem destined to miss other important targets related to health and the environment.

The Report argues for change, not just for making substantial investments in key areas, but also for carrying out major institutional changes at the local, national and regional levels to make the development process fairer and more inclusive. In particular, it advocates for changes that could lead to better provision of public services, and highlights emerging and new patterns of regional cooperation that could have high pay-offs for the MDGs.

We hope that this report will be a critical input to the United Nations General Assembly Millennium Summit +5 in September 2005. It provides a comprehensive regional picture for the Summit and helps to ensure that the interests of the region’s 3.9 billion people are represented. We hope that for all stakeholders in the region this Report will also become a key resource in our efforts to inform and mobilize support for MDG achievement.



**Kim Hak-Su**

United Nations  
Under-Secretary-General  
& Executive Secretary,  
United Nations Economic  
and Social Commission  
for Asia and the Pacific,  
Bangkok



**Hafiz Pasha**

United Nations Assistant  
Secretary General &  
UNDP Assistant Administrator  
for Asia and the Pacific,  
New York



**Geert van der Linden**

Vice President  
Asian Development Bank,  
Manila

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