

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (UN SDG)

SDG 1: NO POVERTY

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF GLOBAL AND COMMONWEALTH PROGRESS

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INTRODUCTION

As stated in our first SDGs report, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all UN member states in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for achieving equitable and sustainable development across the globe.

The Sustainable Development Agenda builds on decades of efforts in developing and developed countries to achieve peace and prosperity and calls for continued action to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. The SDG framework is elaborated under 17 SDGs, 169 targets and 234 indicators (<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>)¹.

The implementation and monitoring of the SDGs are carried out through national and sub-national policies, structures and systems, ensuring their alignment with national and sub-national development priorities. SDG data is collected through multiple channels including sub-national and national statistics offices, as well as the UN and other international institutions such as the IMF, OECD, and World Bank.

Over the years, though significant advances have been made in building the capacity needed to collate data, measure and monitor the progress in the implementation of SDGs, data gaps remain due to factors that include lack of strong national data collection systems, limited resources for data collection and differing data collection methodologies. Countries report SDG implementation progress to the UN via platforms like the SDG Global Database maintained by the UN. The UN draws on the available data for its annual Sustainable Development Goals Reports as well as other publications. A vast volume of SDG data is also available through other national, regional and international reports and databases.

Based on a small number of selected reports and databases, this paper provides a brief overview of global progress in achieving **SDG 1: No Poverty**, followed by a broad snapshot of its status across the Commonwealth through a sample analysis.

SDG 1: NO POVERTY – AN OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL PROGRESS

SDG 1 aims to end poverty² in all its forms everywhere by 2030. This includes eliminating extreme poverty³ and reducing multidimensional poverty⁴ through social protection, access to resources, resilience to shocks, and inclusive policies.

The **UN's Sustainable Development Goals Report 2025** reveals that poverty reduction, implemented and monitored through its 7 targets and 13 indicators, has slowed to a near standstill, with 2020-2030 set to mark a lost decade. Its other key findings include:

¹ Of the 251 **SDG indicators** included in the SDG global indicator framework, **234** are **unique indicators**. Several are repeated under two or three different targets.

² **Poverty** typically refers to deprivation of financial resources to meet basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter.

³ **Extreme poverty** is defined as surviving on less than US\$3.00 per person per day at 2021 purchasing power parity.

⁴ **Multidimensional poverty** is defined as the simultaneous acute deprivation of health, education and living standards, rather than just low income.

- 808 million people – or 1 in 10 people worldwide – are living in extreme poverty. At the current trajectory, only 1 in 5 countries is projected to have halved its national poverty by 2030.
- Though for the first time on record, over half of the world’s population now receives at least one form of social protection benefit, 3.8 billion people remain uncovered.
- Conflicts, climate change, high levels of external debt and other crises mean that without a significant acceleration of efforts, 8.9% of the global population will still be living in extreme poverty by 2030.

Furthermore, key findings of the **UNDP’s 2025 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index Report** indicate that:

- 1.1 billion people are living in multidimensional poverty across 109 countries.
- Of the 1.1 billion poor people, 887 million live in regions experiencing at least one of four climate hazards: high heat, drought, floods and air pollution.

The **World Bank’s 2025 updates** reveal that:

- The updated international poverty line of \$3.00 per person per day, replacing the previous \$2.15 line, has resulted in a revision in the number of people living in extreme poverty from 713 million to 838 million in 2022.
- Sub-Saharan Africa and other states affected by conflict and fragility bear the highest burden of populations living in extreme poverty.
- Globally, poverty remains overwhelmingly rural despite a reduction of extreme poverty in rural areas from nearly 27% in 2013 to about 17% in 2023.

The above analyses indicate that in order to make further progress in the fight against poverty, urgent action is required to raise social protection coverage in developing countries, close spending gaps on essential services and target resources to the most vulnerable populations.

SDG 1: NO POVERTY - AN OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS IN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES

In view of the vast volume of data available as well as the varying type and years for which data is available for each Commonwealth country, **Table 1** at **Annex 1** provides a sample of data related to a few indicators for SDG 1 in selected developing and developed countries from each region.

Annex 2 sets out an analysis of the sample data, which is broadly representative of the status of SDG 1 progress across Commonwealth countries/regions. It shows that despite real and substantial development gains during the past decade, progress in achieving SDG 1 in Commonwealth countries/regions is mixed, with overall advancement in poverty reduction over the long term but significant stagnation or reversal of gains in some cases due to compounding global, financial and climatic shocks and vulnerabilities, including COVID-19, and retrenchment of aid flows owing to new geopolitical priorities. According to an analysis in October 2025, Official Development Assistance (ODA) has fallen by between 15% - 22% relative to 2023 as major donors have effectively committed to reallocate aid flows to military spending and fiscal consolidation. As such, the global aid target was missed by almost half. While the Sustainable

Development Goal Target 17.2 aims at an ODA contribution of 0.7% of donors' gross national income, aid provided by OECD-DAC members is now below 0.37%.

The data also indicates that while some countries, especially the developed nations, have made substantial gains in reducing extreme poverty through economic growth and expanding welfare programmes, achievement of SDG 1 by 2030 is unlikely in most regions and countries without significant increases in, inter alia, investment, ODA, social protection and climate resilience.

**TABLE 1: SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF SDG 1 – NO POVERTY
in Selected Commonwealth Countries from All Regions**

AFRICA	
Nigeria	Poverty: Population living in multidimensional poverty increased from 53.7% in 2017 to 62.9% in 2021 . Deprivations for people considered poor (according to the multi-dimensional poverty index) declined from 41.9% in 2017 to 40.9% in 2021 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from increased from 0.2% in 2015 to 10.1% in 2022 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 4.4% in 2015 to 14.8% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 0.1% in 2017 to 2.1% in 2022 .
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 0.1% in 2017 to 2.1% in 2022 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 8.5% in 2012 to 3.0% in 2024 .
Lesotho	Poverty: Poverty rate was 49.7% in 2023.
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 7.8% in 2015 to 10.2% in 2021
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 9.2% in 2015 to 11.7% in 2021 .
	Disability cash benefit: No data
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 13.9% in 2000 to 47.9% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 19.1% in 2000 to 10.4% in 2024 .
Kenya	Poverty: Population living below the extreme poverty line increased from 32.0% in 1992 to 46.4% in 2021 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit declined from 5.8% in 2015 to 3.6% in 2021 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit declined from 10.4% in 2015 to 9.0% in 2021 .
	Disability cash benefit: population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 0.2% in 2019 to 2.4% in 2021.
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 23.6% in 2000 to 40.9% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services increased from 24.1% in 2000 to 28.5% in 2025 .
ASIA	
Bangladesh	Poverty: Population living below the extreme poverty line reduced from 51.2% in 1991 to 8.0% in 2022 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 4.3% in 2015 to 19.2% in 2021 .
	Social protection benefit: 22% of the population was covered by at least 1 social protection benefit in 2021 .

	Social assistance programmes: Population covered by social assistance programmes increased from 12.4% in 2005 to 54.4% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 18.6% in 2015 to 43.5% in 2021 .
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 23.7% in 2000 to 67.6% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 20.5% in 2000 to 11.9% in 2025 .
Sri Lanka	Poverty: Poverty rate was 24.5 per cent in 2024 , measured at the international poverty line of US\$3.00 per person per day.
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 4.5% in 2015 to 27.7% in 2020 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 30.4% in 2015 to 41.3% in 2021 .
	Disability cash benefit: population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit reduced from 20.8% in 2015 to 17.8% in 2021 .
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 76.8% in 2000 to 95.4% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 8.3% in 2009 to 7.2% in 2024 .
Malaysia	Poverty: Population living below the extreme poverty line was 5.1% in 2024 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit declined from 2.1% in 2019 to 2.0% in 2020 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 27.3% in 2019 to 29.1% in 2023 .
	Disability cash benefit: population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 30.5% in 2019 to 32.2% in 2021 .
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 93.1% in 2000 to 96.0% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 21.4% in 2000 to 14.1% in 2023 .
CANADA AND THE CARIBBEAN	
Canada	Poverty: population living below the extreme poverty line reduced from 1.2% in 1990 to 0.2% in 2020 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 99.0% in 2015 to 100.0% in 2021
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit declined from 99.8% in 2015 to 95.6% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving cash benefit increased from 67.2% in 2015 to 69.4% in 2022
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this declined from 99.9% in 2000 to 98.6% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 13.0% in 2000 to 10.7% in 2022 .
Bahamas	Poverty: Poverty rate is currently 12.5% .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit declined from 4% in 2019 to 2.1% in 2020 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit declined from 49.9% in 2019 to 49.1% in 2020 .

	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving cash benefit increased from 50.8% in 2019 to 51.0% in 2020 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 19.8% in 2000 to 10.6% in 2025 .
Jamaica	Poverty: Population living below the extreme poverty line reduced from 11.6% in 1990 to 1.4% in 2021 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit declined from 14.3% in 2019 to 14.1% in 2022 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 30.8% in 2019 to 32.6% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 9.0% in 2015 to 35.5% in 2021 .
	Basic sanitation services: Population using basic sanitation services increased from 80.4% in 2000 to 91.6% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services increased from 16.8% in 2000 to 17.9% in 2024 .
Trinidad & Tobago	Poverty: 0.6% of the population is multidimensionally poor.
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 24.0% in 2019 to 26.3% in 2021 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 55.2% in 2019 to 57.2% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit reduced from 68.1% in 2019 to 60.1% in 2022 .
	Basic sanitation services: Population using basic sanitation services declined from 94.4% in 2005 to 94.2% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services increased from 11.7% in 2000 to 12.6% in 2025 .
EUROPE	
Cyprus	Poverty: Population living below the extreme poverty line reduced from 0.1% in 2004 to 0.0% in 2022 .
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 24.1% in 2015 to 74.5% in 2022 .
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 85.8% in 2015 to 98.8% in 2022 .
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit reduced from 19.1% in 2013 to 18.6% in 2022 .
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this declined from 99.6% in 2000 to 99.5% in 2024 .
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 14.3% in 2000 to 12.5% in 2022 .
PACIFIC	
Australia	Poverty: Population living below the poverty line increased from 12.4% in 2021/22 to 14.2% in 2022/23
	Social assistance cash benefit: 69.6% of poor population was receiving social assistance cash benefit in 2022 .
	Social protection: Population receiving at least one social protection benefit increased from 82.0% in 2015 to 94% in 2022 .

	Disability cash benefit: 100% of the population with severe disabilities received cash benefit in 2022.
	Basic sanitation services: 100% of the population used basic sanitation services in 2024.
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services increased from 12.2% in 2020 to 12.7% in 2022.
Fiji	Poverty: Extreme poverty rate of 4.7 percent in 2019, as defined by the US\$3 per day international poverty line.
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 28.2% in 2019 to 39.7% in 2022.
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit increased from 58.9% in 2019 to 65.6% in 2022.
	Disability cash benefit: Population with severe disabilities receiving disability cash benefit increased from 20.1% in 2018 to 45.6% in 2022.
	Basic sanitation services: population using basic sanitation services increased from 87.6% in 2000 to 92.8% in 2024.
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services declined from 21.8% in 2000 to 13.8% in 2025.
Vanuatu	Poverty: Population in multidimensional poverty was 27.3% in 2019; percentage of population living below \$3 per day was 19.5%
	Social assistance cash benefit: Population receiving social assistance cash benefit increased from 5.3% in 2019 to 6.8 in 2023.
	Social protection benefit: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit declined from 21.1% in 2019 to 20.2% in 2023.
	Disability cash benefit: 30.3% of the population with severe disabilities received disability cash benefit in 2022.
	Basic sanitation services: The use of this increased from 92.0% of the population in 2000 to 97.1% in 2024.
	Essential education services: Total government spending on essential education services increased from 10.5% in 2000 to 11.7% in 2025.

SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF SDG 1: NO POVERTY In Selected Commonwealth Countries from All Regions

While progress varies from country to country, an analysis of the sample data at Annex 1 shows the following broad trends across regions/countries:

Africa

- The poverty rate is relatively high and rising in some countries.
- Social assistance and social protection rates are low and rising/declining.
- Disability cash benefit is low.
- The use of basic sanitation services is improving, albeit slowly.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and increasing/declining.

Asia

- Extreme poverty rate is declining and 0% in Malaysia in 2021.
- Social assistance and social protection rates are increasing.
- Disability cash benefit is low and increasing or reversing.
- The use of basic sanitation services is high and improving.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and declining.

Canada

- The extreme poverty rate is very low and declining.
- Social assistance cash benefit was 100% in 2021 but social protection rate is declining.
- Disability cash benefit is high and rising slowly.
- The use of basic sanitation services is v high but has declined slightly since 2000.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and has declined since 2000.

Caribbean

- The poverty rate is low and declining.
- Social assistance and social protection rates are low and rising/declining.
- Disability cash benefit rates are high and increasing/declining.
- The use of basic sanitation services is high and increasing/declining.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and rising/declining.

Europe/Cyprus

- The extreme poverty rate is 0% in 2022.
- Social assistance cash benefit and social protection rates are high and increasing.
- Disability cash benefit is low and declining.
- The use of basic sanitation services is high but with a slight decline since 2000.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and has declined since 2000.

Pacific

- The poverty rate is low and declining.
- Social assistance and social protection rates are rising.
- Disability cash benefit is rising.
- The use of basic sanitation services is high and improving.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and is increasing/declining.

Australia

- The poverty rate is low but is increasing.
- Social assistance cash benefit is relatively high in 2022 and social protection rate is high and rising.
- Disability cash benefit was 100% in 2022.
- The use of basic sanitation services was 100% in 2024.
- Government spending on essential education services is low and rising slowly.

TABLE 2: SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF SDG 1: NO POVERTY
in Selected Commonwealth Countries from All Regions - A Tabular Summary of the Findings at Annex 2

Region/ Country	Poverty	Social assistance	Social protection benefit	Disability benefit	Basic sanitation	Essential education
Africa	High - ↑	Low	Low	Low	↑ slowly	Low - ↑/ ↓
Asia	Low - ↓	Low - ↑	Low - ↑	Low - ↑/↓	High - ↑	Low - ↓
Caribbean	Low - ↓	Low - ↑/↓	Low - ↑/↓	High - ↑/↓	N/A	Low - ↑/ ↓
Canada	Very low - ↓	100%	High - ↓	High - ↑	High - slightly ↓	Low - ↓
Europe/Cyprus	0%	High - ↑	High - ↑	Low - ↓	High - slightly ↓	Low - ↓
Pacific	Low - ↓	↑	↑	↑	High - ↑	Low - ↑ /↓
Australia	↑	High	↑	100%	100%	↑ slowly

Key: ↑ Increasing; ↓ declining

SELECTED LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION RELATED TO SDG 1 AND OTHER SDGs

[AD860-Despite-gains-majority-of-Basotho-experienced-moderate-or-high-lived-poverty-Afrobarometer-19sept24.pdf](#)

[Poverty Rate by Country 2026](#)

[Economy | The Bahamas | World Bank Human Capital](#)

[Fiji Poverty and Equity Brief : October 2025](#)

[Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere - United Nations Sustainable Development](#)

[2025 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index \(MPI\) | Human Development Reports](#)

[Poverty in Australia increases to 1 in 7 people: new report](#)

[Poverty and Inequality Platform \(Vanuatu\)](#)

[Poverty and Malnutrition Persist in Sri Lanka Amid Recovery - World Bank - Ceylon Today](#)

[Malaysia's Absolute Poverty Falls To 5.1% In 2024](#)

[Sustainable Development Report 2025](#)

[SDGs | KnowSDGs](#)

[The OECD Hub on Sustainable Development Goals | OECD](#)

[WBG Poverty and Inequality Update - Fall 2025](#)

[WFP-149388 \(Lesotho\)](#)