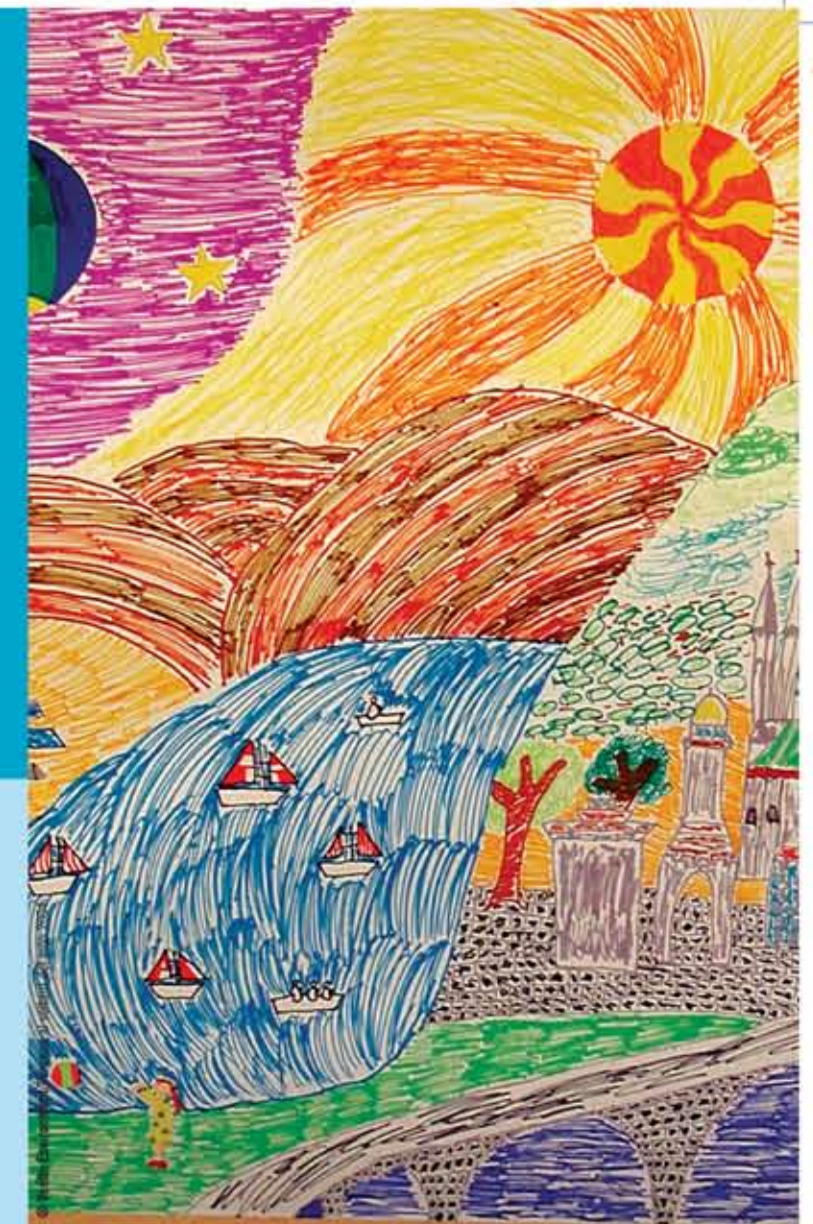


Water and the Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were established by the 191 Member States of the United Nations at the Millennium Summit in New York in the year 2000. The MDGs set specific targets for reducing poverty, hunger, illness, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women, to be attained by 2015.



1

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

2

Achieve universal primary education

3

Promote gender equality and empower women

4

Reduce child mortality

One of the goals established by the governments was to half, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

5

Improve maternal health

6

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

7

Ensure environmental sustainability

8

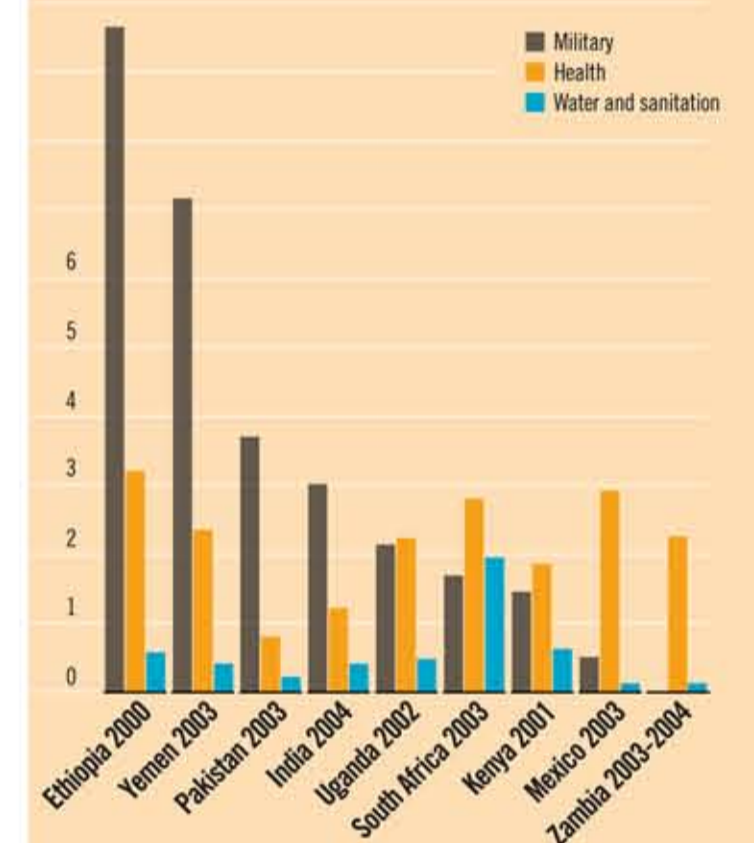
Develop a global partnership for development

The world has the necessary wealth and tools to reach the MDGs. In the case of water, this endeavour would, moreover, be profitable: countries that improve water supply and sanitation have a higher annual GDP growth rate than those that do not.

Although it is a key factor for development, water is not a priority in many countries' budgets.

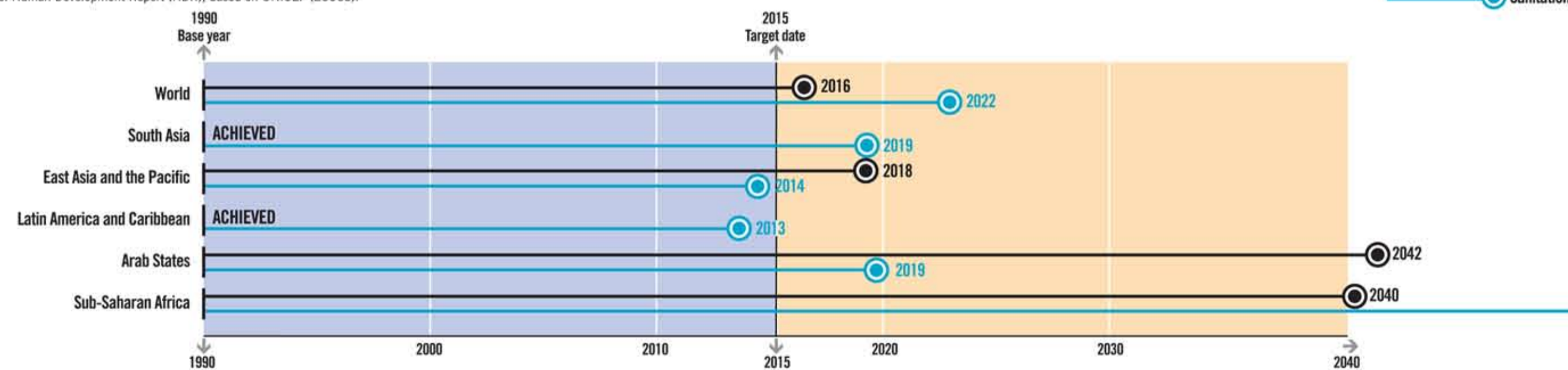
Government expenditures for military, health, and water and sanitation (% of GDP)

Source: Human Development Report (HDR), based on data for Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa (WSP, 2003); Yemen, (Yemen, 2002); Pakistan, (Pakistan, 2004); India (Nayyar and Singh, 2006); Uganda (Slaymaker and Newborne, 2004); Mexico (INEGI, 2006a); and Zambia (Zambia, 2004b).



Year in which the MDGs' water and sanitation targets are expected to be reached, on current trends.

Source: Human Development Report (HDR), based on UNICEF (2006b).



Water is crucial to combating poverty, improving the health of humans and ecosystems, and fostering socioeconomic development. If there is no access to a sustainable water supply, the MDGs will not be reached.

The latest United Nations reports indicate that progress towards attaining the MDGs has been irregular and slow. The overall goals can only be reached through the sum of local actions by communities throughout the world. Local commitment and the necessary resources are therefore required if we are to attain the MDGs.

It is essential to provide the training and means necessary to foster the self-sufficiency of communities and their capacity to meet global challenges.

