



39

*The State of*

# Food Insecurity in the World

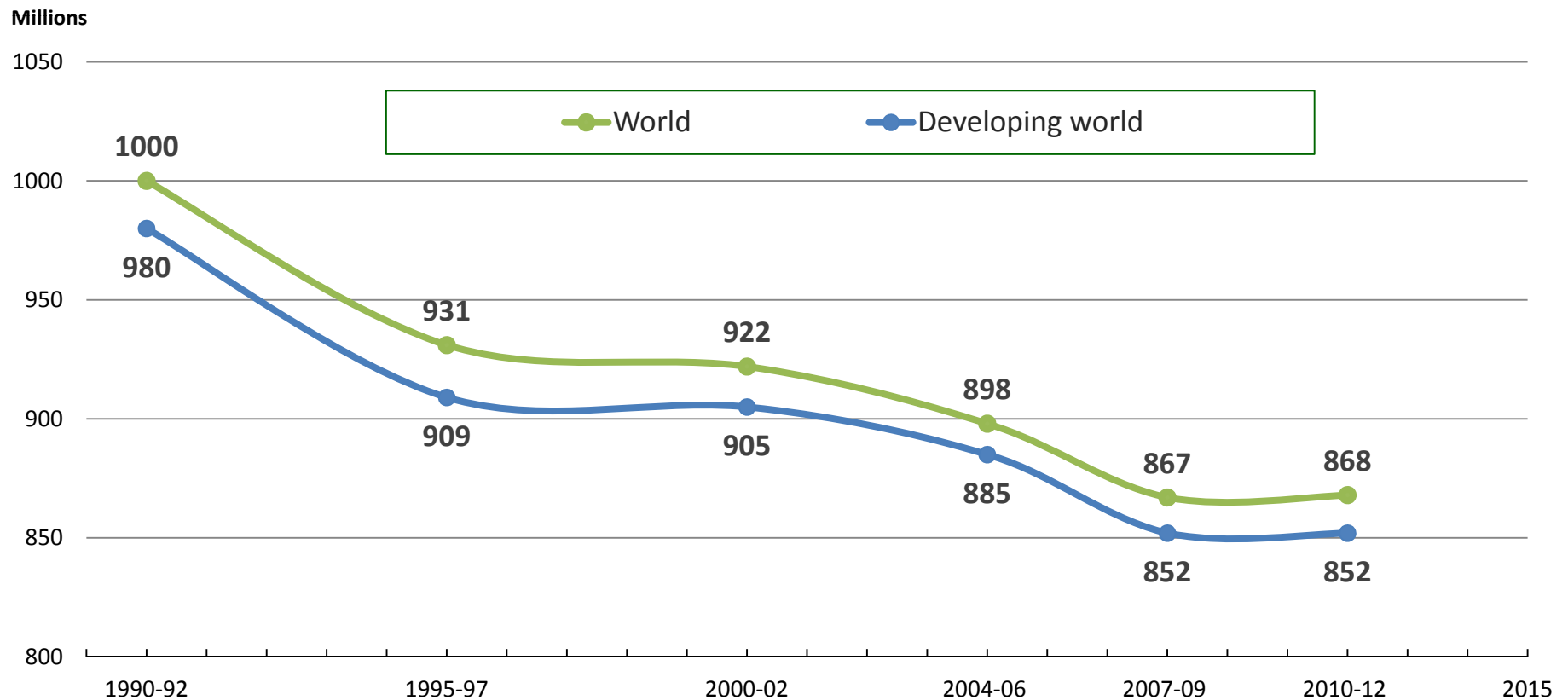
Economic growth necessary, but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition

**Economic and Social Development Department**  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations  
Rome, 9 October 2012

<http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi>

## Undernourishment in the world

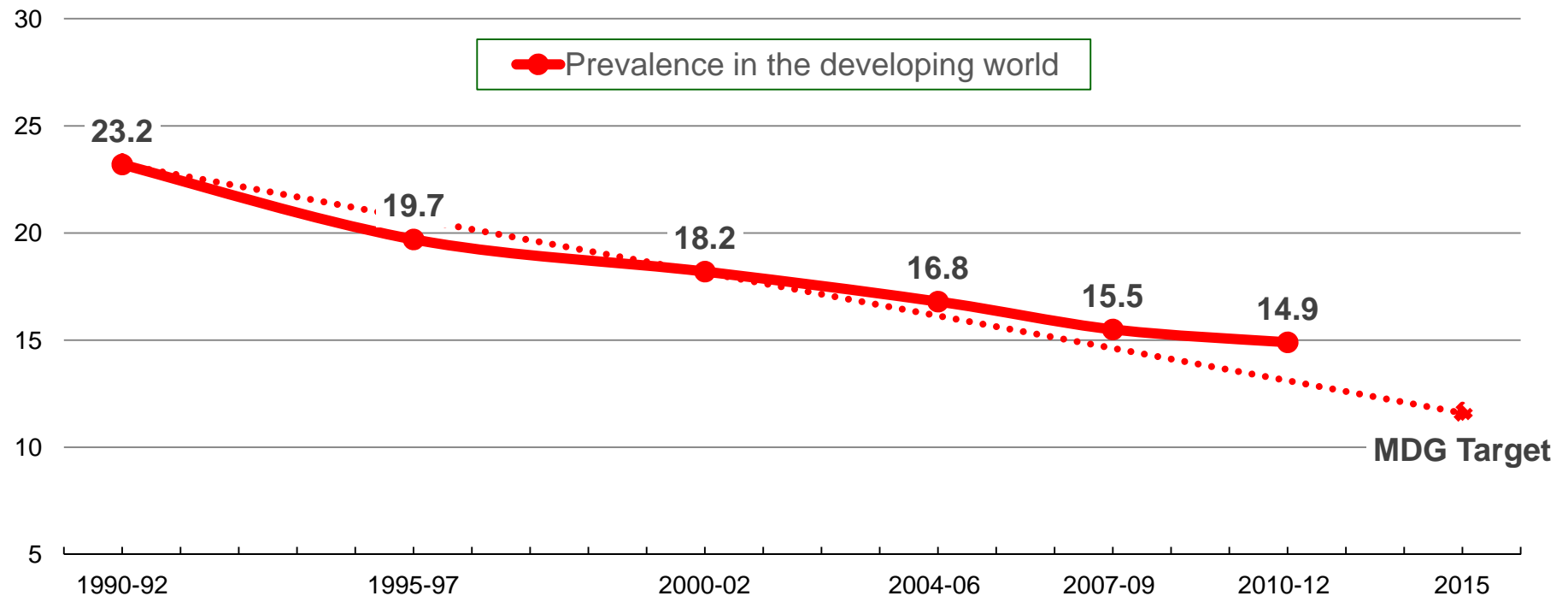
- With almost **870 million** people chronically undernourished in 2010–12, the number of hungry people in the world is unacceptably high
- The vast majority, more than **850 million**, live in **developing countries**



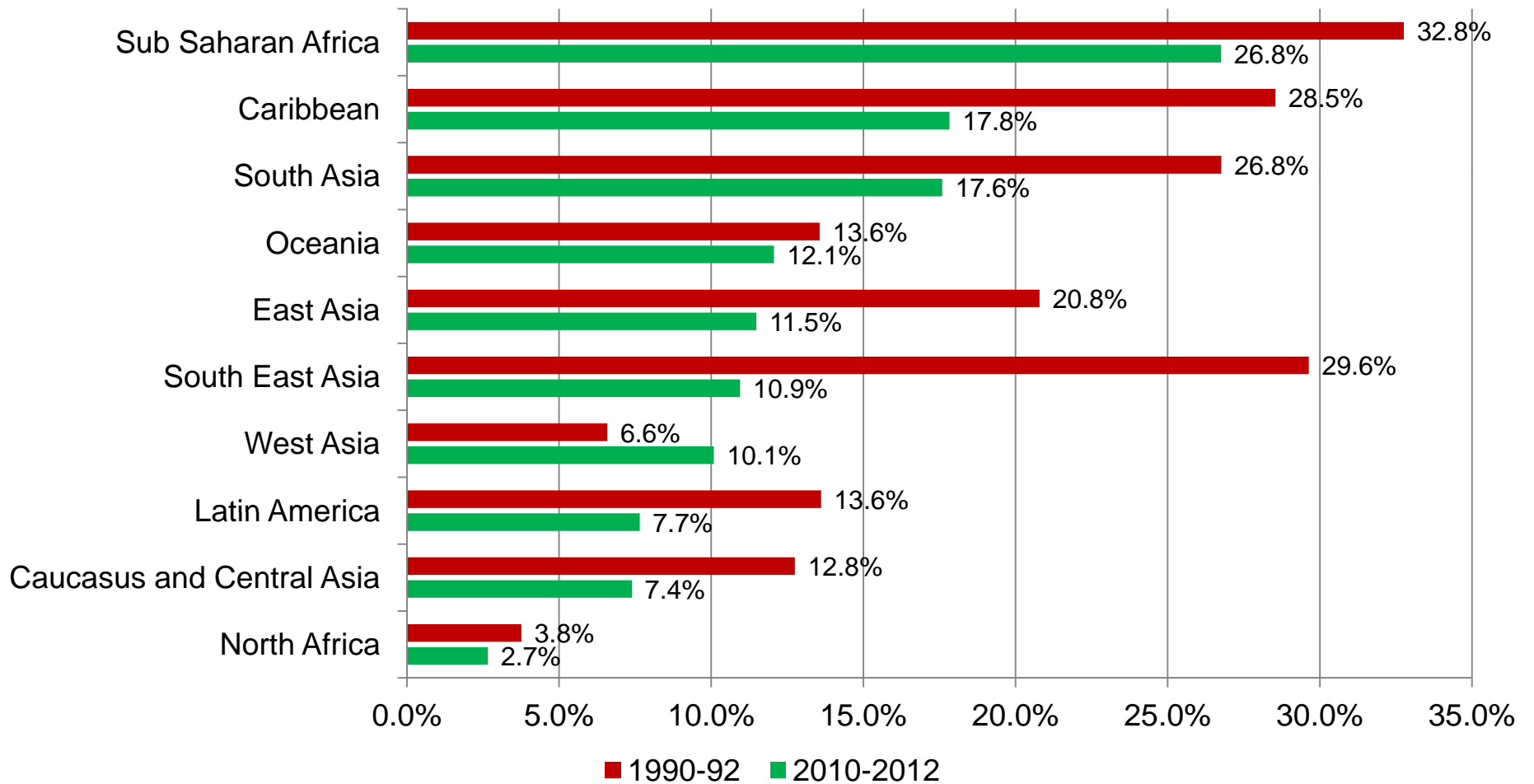
## MDG 1 hunger target achievable

- More progress in reducing hunger in developing world than previously thought.
- MDG target within reach, only if adequate and appropriate actions to reverse slowdown after 2006.

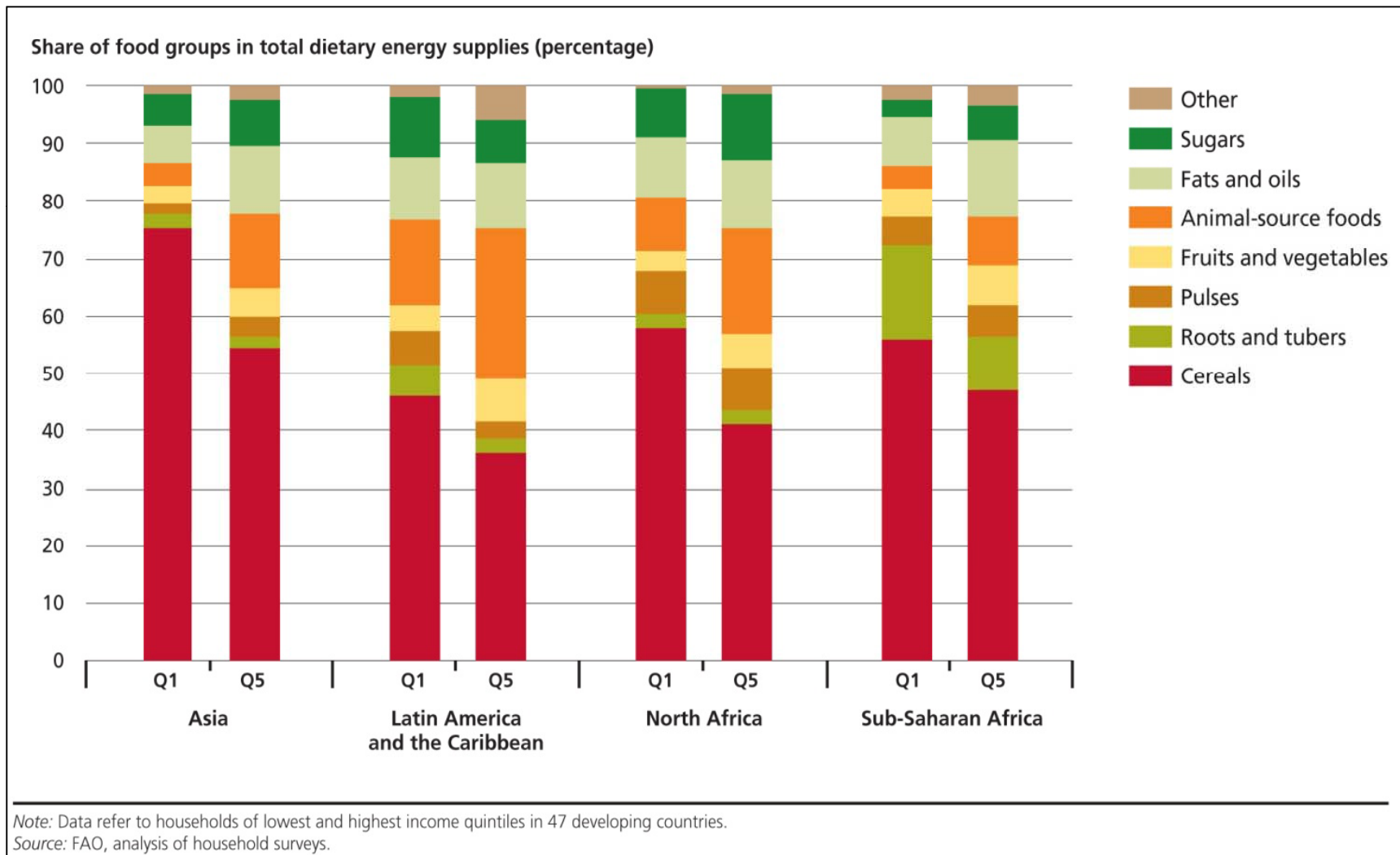
Percentage undernourished



## Uneven progress across regions



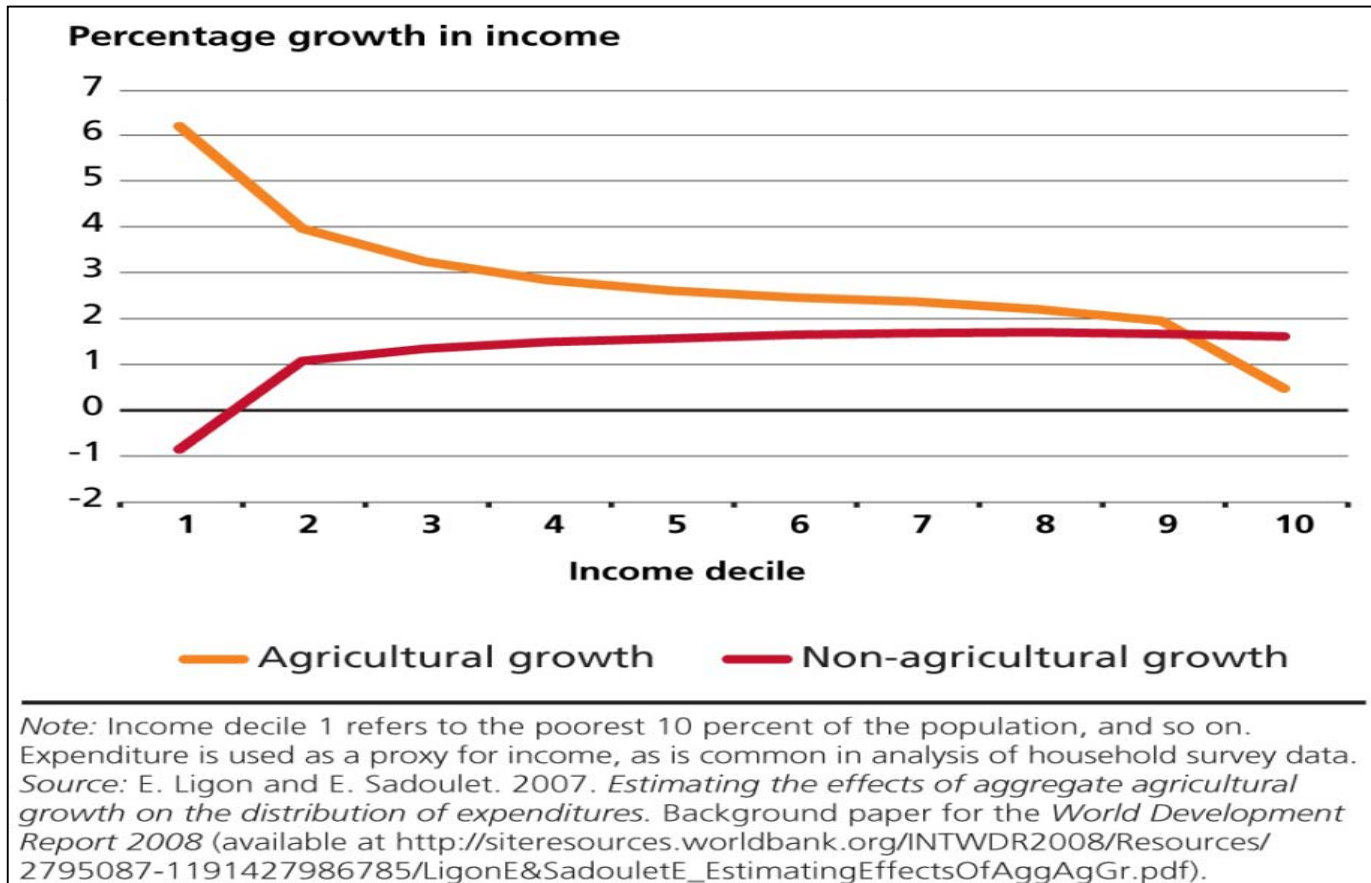
## Diets change as incomes rise



## Food and nutrition: challenges remain

- Progress remains uneven – both geographically and in terms of different nutrients
- Underweight remains the single largest risk factor contributing to the burden of disease in the developing world
- Micronutrient deficiencies still affect over 30% of the world's people
- More than 1.4 billion people worldwide are overweight
- “Double burden”: Hunger coexists with overweight and other forms of malnutrition – even in the same countries, communities and even households

## Agricultural growth is particularly effective in reaching the poor



## Social protection is crucial for accelerating hunger reduction

- Social protection comes in a variety of forms with different impacts
  - cash transfers, subsidies for education and health services, etc.
- First, it can protect the most vulnerable who have not benefited from economic growth
- Second, social protection, properly structured, can contribute directly to more rapid economic growth



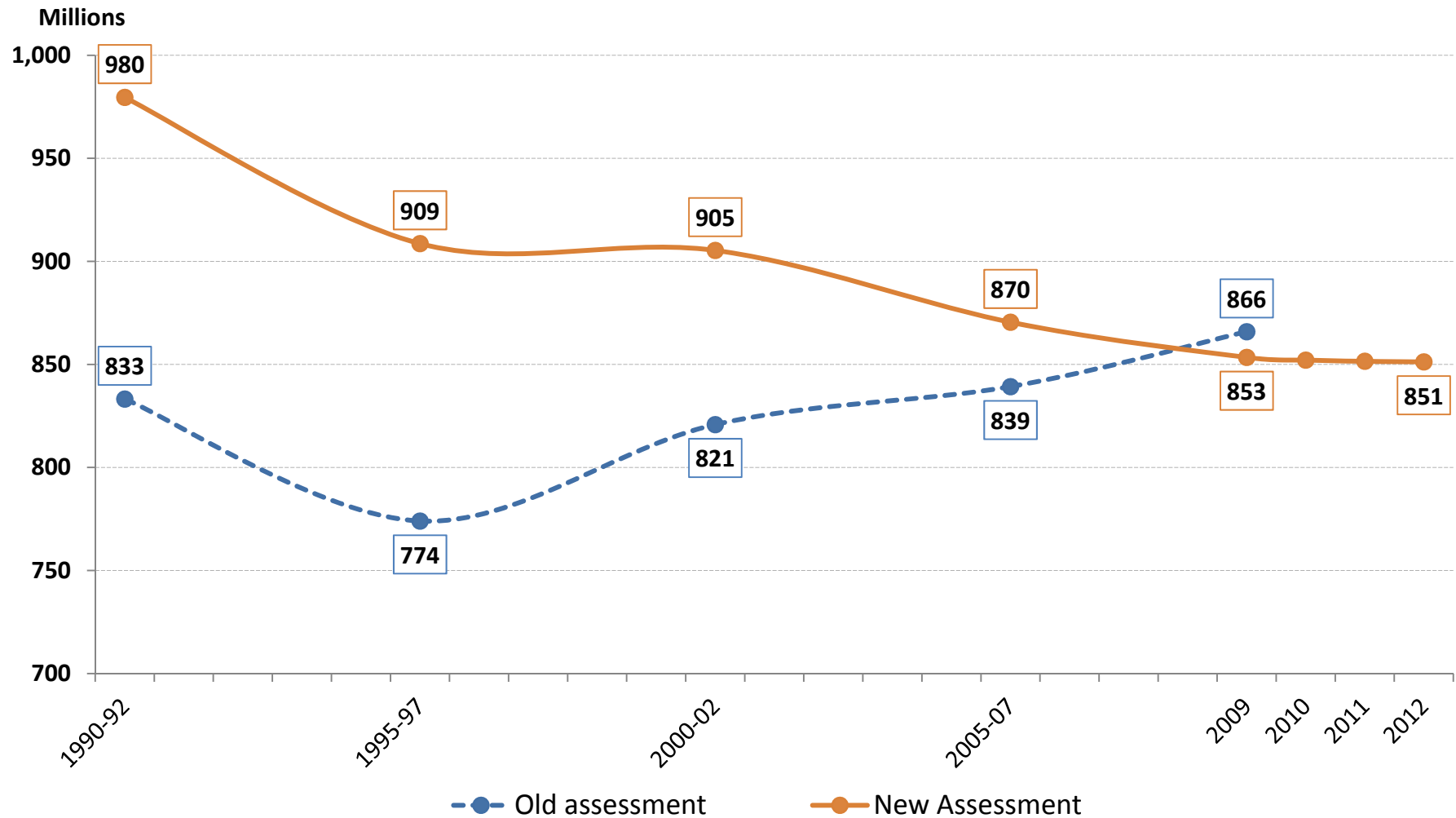
## Key points for the way forward

- Economic growth must involve and reach the poor
- Public action should create a conducive environment for pro-poor long-term economic growth:
  - Attention to agriculture especially smallholder farming
  - Provision of key public goods and services
  - Equitable access to resources by the poor
  - Empowerment of the poor, especially women, to participate in the decisions that affect them
  - Improved social protection systems
- Improved governance is also essential
  - Transparency, accountability, rule of law and human rights

## Improvements in data and methodology

- The new estimates reflect several key improvements in data and methodology
  - the latest (2010) revision of world population data
  - new anthropometric data from surveys, informing revision of minimum dietary energy requirements
  - country-specific estimates of calorie supply losses at the retail distribution level
  - most recent available data on food access from household surveys (57 surveys for 44 countries)
  - revised estimates of dietary energy supply up to 2009
  - food supply projected up to 2012 based on current data on food commodity balances
  - technical improvements to the methodology

## Overall impact: old vs new assessment



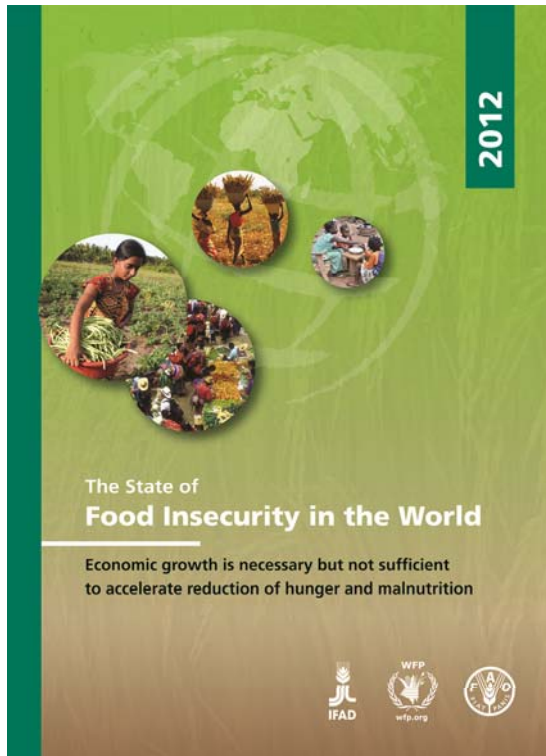
## Further improvements are needed

- More and better data on food losses and household food consumption (statistical capacity development)
- The PoU indicator is based on assessment of chronic (3 year average) caloric deprivation. Limitations:
  - Not meant to capture the impact of temporary crisis
  - It does not reflect welfare cost of high food prices
  - Does not capture aspect related to the quality of diets
- A suite of existing indicators is needed to capture various manifestations of food insecurity
- A new global indicator of people's experience of food insecurity to complement existing measures



*Thank you*

For more information ...



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The international reference  
on global hunger issues

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