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Publics in Developed Countries Ready to Contribute Funds Necessary to Cut Hunger in Half By 2015

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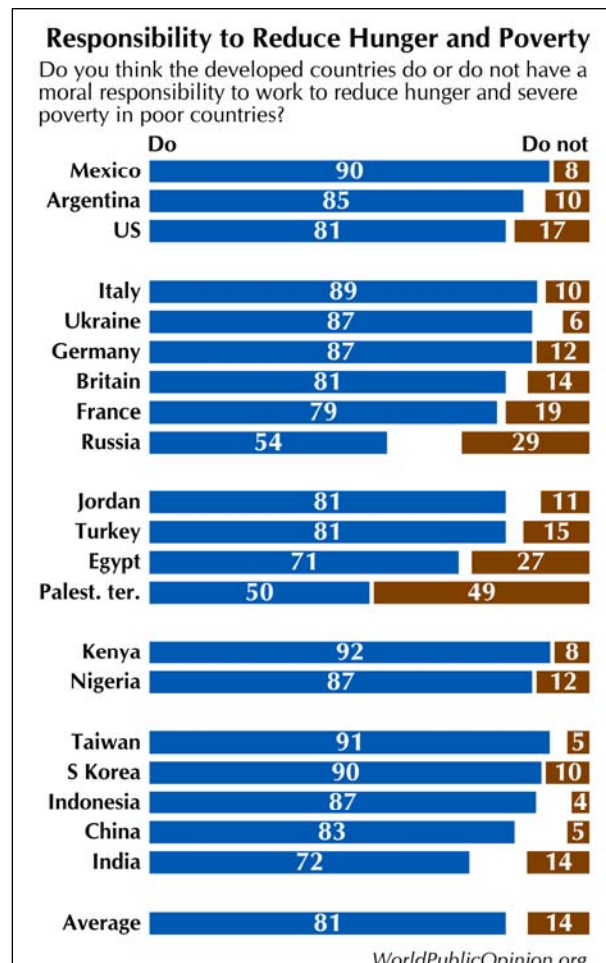
College Park, MD—A new WorldPublicOpinion.org poll finds that majorities in all eight developed countries polled are willing to contribute the funds necessary to cut hunger and severe poverty in half by the year 2015. This constitutes one of the key Millennium Development Goals that the United Nations' member states established in 2000.

Respondents were presented a necessary annual per person contribution toward meeting this goal, adjusted for national income, ranging from \$10 for Turks to \$56 for Americans. In every case, and in most cases by a large margin, majorities of respondents say they are willing to personally pay the amount necessary to meet the goal, provided that people in other countries did so as well.

In a question asked to 20 nations around the world, majorities in all but one agree that developed countries “have a moral responsibility to help reduce hunger and severe poverty in poor countries.” On average, eight in 10 say developed countries have such a responsibility.

The poll, released in conjunction with World Food Day, was conducted by WorldPublicOpinion.org, a network of research centers from around the world managed by the Program on International Policy Attitudes (PIPA) at the University of Maryland. The poll includes the opinion of 16,370 respondents surveyed between July 15 – September 9, 2008. Margins of error range from +/-3 to 4 percent.

Interviews were conducted in 20 nations, including most of the world's largest nations—China, India, the United States, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Russia—as well as Argentina, Egypt, France, Germany,



Great Britain, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Mexico, the Palestinian Territories, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, and Ukraine.

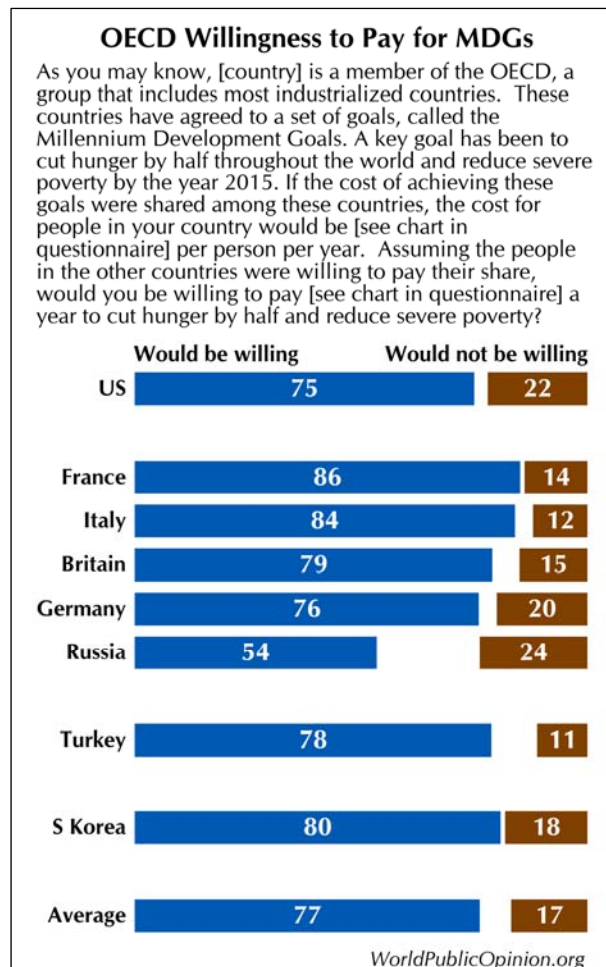
States that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which includes all of the aid-giving developed countries, agreed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The World Bank has estimated that OECD members will have to together increase their aid \$39 billion per year to fulfill the goal of cutting hunger and severe poverty in half by the year 2015.

To establish the cost of the aid increase necessary to fulfill this goal on a per person basis, \$39 billion was divided among the 30 OECD aid-giving countries, plus Russia (which has applied for OECD membership), in proportion to their respective gross domestic products (GDPs). Each country's total contribution was then divided by an approximation of the total adult population in that country. Importantly, it was assumed that individual taxpayers would bear the entire burden, with no contributions from businesses, or corporate or excise taxes.

Respondents in France, Italy, Great Britain, South Korea, Turkey, the United States, Germany, and Russia were told about the Millennium Development Goal of cutting hunger and severe poverty in half and told how much it would cost each person in their country if the cost were shared among all of the OECD countries. These amounts were: the United States \$56, Great Britain \$49, or 25 pounds sterling, France \$45, or 29 euros, Germany \$43, or 27 euros, Italy \$39, or 25 euros, South Korea \$23, or 24,000 won, Russia \$11, or 257 rubles and Turkey \$10, or 12 liras.

They were then asked: "Assuming the people in the other countries were willing to pay their share, would you be willing to pay [per-person amount] a year to cut hunger by half and reduce severe poverty?"

Majorities in every country polled say that they would be willing to pay the required amount. In every country except one, the majorities are very large, ranging from 75 percent in the United States to 86 percent in France. Russia is the one country with a modest majority—54 percent. On average, 77 percent are in favor of



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contributing a proportion of their country's foreign aid to meet this goal, and only 17 percent would not be willing to do so.

Steven Kull, director of WorldPublicOpinion.org, comments: "What this tells us is that, when presented the actual, per-person cost of cutting hunger and severe poverty in half, the people of developed countries are willing to spend what is necessary."

The poll also asked the general question of whether developed countries "have a moral responsibility to work to reduce hunger and severe poverty in poor countries." Majorities in all but one nation say that they do. Majorities range from 92 percent in Kenya to 54 percent in Russia. Curiously, the one exception is the Palestinian Territories, where views are almost evenly divided; 50 percent say that developed countries do have a moral responsibility, while 49 percent say that they do not.

In the United States, 81 percent say developed countries have a moral responsibility to work to reduce hunger. There is wide consensus across partisan lines, with 76 percent of McCain supporters, 87 percent of Obama supporters, and 77 percent of undecided voters in agreement.

Among Americans, large majorities of both McCain and Obama supporters also express willingness to pay the amount (\$56 per person, per year) required to meet the goal of cutting hunger and poverty in half. Seventy-two percent of McCain supporters, 81 percent of Obama supporters, and 70 percent of undecided voters say they would be willing to pay the required amount.

For more information, visit: www.WorldPublicOpinion.org.

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