

Millennium Development Goal 1 – To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Target – Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.

Target – Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

In 1990, nearly 28 per cent of people in low- and middle-income countries were living on less than \$1 (60p) a day. Many people living at this level of poverty cannot afford to pay for basic requirements such as food. The aim of the first Millennium Development Goal is to reduce this figure to 14 per cent by 2015, thereby lifting more than 500 million people out of extreme poverty. While this will not signify a complete eradication of poverty, it will bring the world closer to a stage when all its people will have the minimum necessary to feed and clothe themselves.

Although poverty levels have been decreasing in many regions since 1990, in others progress has been less good. The greatest number of poor people live in South Asia, but the proportion of poor is highest in sub-Saharan Africa where over forty per cent of the population continues to live on less than \$1 a day. In fact, the number of poor people in this region has actually increased over the years.

It is vital the world community works together to reduce poverty and thus meet people's basic needs. Much could be achieved by reforming international trade, so that developing countries receive fair prices for their goods, and by addressing other issues such as climate change. In a world in which many people are better off than ever before, it is unacceptable that so many others should be struggling to survive.

Life in Kibera, Kenya

The boys on this poster are pupils at Mashimoni Primary School in Kenya. They live in a large shanty town called Kibera on the edge of Nairobi, Kenya's capital. The people living there are some of the poorest in the country. They live in makeshift tin-roofed houses in cramped conditions. Most of them have very little money.



There is no proper water supply in Kibera – most people have to get water from standpipes. There are no doctors' surgeries, clinics or hospitals. There are no free state secondary schools either, and most parents cannot afford to pay school fees or to pay for school uniforms and books. Several charities work in Kibera, helping the people to meet their basic needs. Helping these children go to school is one way of helping the whole community.

It would be better for the people of Kibera if their government provided free secondary education and health care for everyone, but at the moment, it does not have the money for this. If the Millennium Development Goals are achieved, the people of Kibera might have access to the basic services which so many people take for granted.

Activity 2.1

Aims

- To teach pupils that over one billion people live on less than 60p a day.
- To help them to imagine what this is like.

Living on one dollar (60p) a day (ages 9–14)

1. Ask the class what people need in order to live, and write their answers on the board. When they make suggestions such as 'food' or 'clothes', ask them further questions to encourage them to think more deeply. How much food? What kind of food? How often? Encourage them to think more broadly than just food and clothes. What would happen if they fell ill? What would happen if they were too cold?
2. Explain to the class that more than a billion people in the world (roughly one-and-a-half times the population of Europe) live on less than 60p a day. In order to help them understand what this means give some examples:
 - In Vietnam 60p would buy enough rice, cabbage and mince for three people.
 - In Mexico 60p would buy rice and beans for five people and half a loaf of bread.

How much food would 60p buy in the UK?
3. Add the other things that people need to the list, and ask the class to rank them, with 1 being the most important and so on. Compare their answers.
 - Money for rent or mortgage (if they are renting or buying a house).
 - Money to pay off existing debts (if they have any).
 - Clothes for the family. (Apart from protection from the weather and decency, people need proper clothes for work, for example.)
 - Repairs to the house or to things in it. (The house may leak when it rains.)
 - Gas, electricity or fuel for cooking and heating. (Most food needs to be cooked. People living in cooler climates need to keep warm.)
 - Water. (Most people have to pay water companies for providing water.)
 - Money for school fees. (In some countries there is no state education.)
 - Transport. (People might need to take goods to the market or travel to other towns to work.)
 - Medicines, doctors, clinics and hospitals. (Most countries do not provide these for free.)
4. Explain that on 60p a day many of these things could not be paid for. Ask pupils to work in groups and to decide what they would do without and why.
5. On a large piece of paper, they should create a 'consequences chain' showing what would be the result of doing without these things. For example:



6. Display the consequences chains for other groups to see.

Activity 2.2

Aim

- To stimulate pupils to think about what it means to be poor.

You will need

- Photocopies of the statements below – enough sets for each group of four pupils.
- A large sheet of sugar paper, some glue and some felt-tip pens for each group.

Poverty connections (ages 11–14)

1. Ask the pupils to read through the cards together and discuss how each is connected to the others.
2. Ask them to put the 'Poverty' card at the top of their sheet of paper and to arrange the other cards underneath it so as to show how each condition is connected to or caused by another. When they agree on where to put the cards, they can glue them down. They should now draw arrows from the 'Poverty' card and from one card to another to show how they are all related. Ask one or two groups to feed back on their discussions.
3. Discuss what steps would have to be taken to break the cycle (e.g. programmes of free health care, funding for education). What are some of the factors that contribute to poverty? (War, lack of jobs or land, people unable to sell their produce for a fair price, poor transport, lack of services such as health care, extreme weather conditions caused by global warming, etc.) Ask the pupils to collect newspaper articles to show how poverty is being challenged.

Poverty connections

SCHOOL

Some children may miss school because their parents can't afford the fees or because they are too ill to attend.

GIRLS' EDUCATION

Girls are often prevented from going to school as they may be needed to help at home. Sometimes, their parents do not think education is important for girls.

NOT ENOUGH MONEY

People who have no work, and people who are unable to sell what they grow for a fair price, cannot earn enough to pay for their basic needs – food, clothing, shelter.

ENVIRONMENT

People who live in slums are more likely to become ill because they do not have proper washing and toilet facilities and clean water.

POVERTY

About a quarter of the world's children live in poverty

ILLNESSES

Many people have illnesses, such as diarrhoea and malaria, which could easily be prevented or be less serious if they had better medicines and health care.

DEATH IN CHILDHOOD

Young children who do not have proper food and health care are more likely to die before they grow up.

THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS

Pregnant women who do not have good medical care, food and health education will be more likely to die in childbirth.

How many people are poor?

Definitions of poverty

Relative poverty: Measures how far a household's income falls below the average income in a country.

Absolute poverty: Measures the number of people living below a certain level or the number of people who cannot afford basic goods and services.

60p a day represents a minimum standard of living in the poorest countries, so the 1.3 billion people who today live on less than this are living in absolute poverty.

In the UK

- Two million children live in workless households.
- Nearly one in four people lives in poverty.

In the world

- 20 per cent of the world's population consumes 86 per cent of the world's goods.
- Nearly 3 billion people (more than half the world's population) live on less than £1.20 a day.
- 1.3 billion people have no clean water.
- 3 billion people have no sanitation.
- 2 billion people (about one-third of the world's population) have no electricity.

(Sources: United Nations Development Programme and World Bank)

Activity 2.3

Aim

- To encourage pupils to think about the nature of poverty.

You will need

- Photocopies of the sheet, *How many people are poor?* for each pupil

What is poverty? (ages 11–14)

Note: Pupils should have done either Activity 2.1 or Activity 2.2 before taking part in this activity.

1. Ask pupils to consider whether they feel they are rich or poor. Ask them whether, in doing so, they thought about whether they were richer or poorer than other people. Are any of them as rich as well-known sports stars or pop stars?
2. Ask them to consider whether they are richer or poorer than the boys on the poster. How did they arrive at their answers?
3. Tell them that 1.3 billion people live on less than 60p a day. 60p (or one dollar) represents the minimum standard of living in the poorest countries. Ask the pupils to consider what would be the lowest amount that someone could live on in the UK. They should consider what they learnt from the previous activities and justify the amount they decide on.
4. Give pupils the sheet, *How many people are poor?* and ask them to look at the definitions of absolute and relative poverty. Relate them to the discussions you've just had. Perhaps as a class you could rewrite the definitions in your own words.
5. Ask pupils to work in groups of no more than four and to decide whether they agree (or how far they agree) with the following statements. They should use the definitions and statistics to inform their discussions.
 - Poverty has nothing to do with money.
 - Poverty can mean something different in different circumstances.
 - Poverty is about not having any control over your life.
 - You cannot be happy and poor at the same time.
 - The UK is a wealthy country. That means that no one here is poor.
6. Ask the groups to feed back to the whole class. Did most groups have the same views?