

# Climate Change, Poverty and Women

## Introduction

Explore the impact of climate change on poor people and, in particular, women. This controversial and contemporary issue challenges how we think about global interdependence, poverty and development.

These resources are suitable for ages 13-16 and can be amended to meet the needs of younger and older students.



Help your students to understand and assess how climate change is affecting the world's poor. Support them in taking appropriate action that will help to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Climate change presents a challenge to those working to alleviate world poverty. The world's poor and vulnerable, in particular women, are facing the brunt of extreme weather, shrinking resources and the unpredictability of growing seasons.

The 1.2 billion poor people in the world, living on less than \$1 per day, are having their poverty compounded by climate change. Women make up the majority of the world's poor and climate change is having a disproportionately large impact on their livelihoods and security.

Climate change poses a serious challenge to the global community's commitment to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. It calls into question our whole understanding of 'development' and how best to achieve it.

This resource challenges learners to understand climate change as a controversial and contemporary human crisis that requires engagement and action. It places the focus of the impact of climate change on the world's poor, especially women; and encourages learners to actively participate in a range of actions to address the crisis.

The questions raised by this resource provide an excellent opportunity for ongoing research, discussion and action drawing on resources from Oxfam's and other websites, newspapers and TV. A list of references for teachers is included with the resource.

## Aims

- To set up a framework of study beginning with the learners' own experiences of global connections and interdependence
- To critically evaluate the impact of climate change on livelihoods and security in the South
- To review a range of possible solutions to the issue of climate change and develop an understanding of the terms 'mitigation' and 'adaptation'
- To examine why climate impacts particularly on women, and why women are leading efforts to adapt to climate change
- To inspire appropriate action on climate change by students and provide resources and strategies to support this action

## Learners

- Explore global interdependence and how it relates to the human impacts of climate change
- Use Bangladesh as a case study to explain how poor communities are affected by climate change and assess the role of women in leading efforts towards adaptation to existing climate change
- Evaluate strategies for mitigation and adaptation; and assess the respective roles of individuals, states and global institutions.

- Reach conclusions about why poor women are primarily affected by climate change
- Take appropriate action as responsible citizens to mitigate climate change.

## Curriculum Links

The new National Curriculum for England requires that young people become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. These resources provide opportunities for

Successful learners who:	Responsible citizens who:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are creative, resourceful and able to identify and solve problems</li> <li>• Have enquiring minds and think for themselves to process information, reason, question and evaluate</li> <li>• Are able to learn independently and with others</li> <li>• Know about big ideas and events that shape our world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge injustice, are committed to human rights and strive to live peaceably with others</li> <li>• Sustain and improve the environment, locally and globally</li> <li>• Take account of the needs of present and future generations in the choices they make</li> <li>• Can change things for the better</li> </ul>

*National Curriculum for England 2007, pg 7*

In particular the programmes of study of the following subjects provide rich opportunities for examining climate change through the lens of its human impact

## Geography

1.6: Environmental interaction and sustainable development

3h: Interactions between people and their environments

4f: Participate in informed responsible action in relation to geographical issues that affect them and those around them

## KS4 Citizenship

2.3: Taking informed and responsible action

3n: The challenges facing the global community, including international disagreements and conflict, and debates about inequalities, sustainability and use of the world's resources

4e: participate in different forms of individual and collective action, including decision-making and campaigning

## Science

4: Applications and implications of science

8: Environment, Earth and universe.

## What to do

The activities are set out in the following sequence

Activity 1 – Globingo

Activity 2 – Why did Mrs Camara's stall close down?

Activity 3 – Sahena's Story. Adaptation in Bangladesh

Activity 4 – Women and Climate Change

Activity 5 – Taking Action

You will need the following resources. They can all be downloaded here

- Class copies of 'Globingo'
- Class copies of 'Why did Mrs Camara's stall close down?' (taken from '*Lessons in Sustainability*' Tide – Global Learning 2003)
- Class copies of Why did Mrs Camara's stall close down? Solutions
- Class copies of the 'Action Cards'
- Oxfam's 'Sisters on the Planet – Sahena's Story' film (06'50") – either as a download or in DVD format.
- Class copies of Sahena's Case Study – 1
- Class copies of Sahena's Case Study –2
- Class copies of Sahena's Story – prompt cards
- Class copies of Sahena's Story – role cards

Sisters on the Planet is available to download at:

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get\\_involved/campaign/climate\\_change/sisters/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/climate_change/sisters/)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqYgDGy8Z4M> (Sahena's Story)

A free DVD copy can be ordered at:

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get\\_involved/campaign/climate\\_change/sisters/dvdform.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/climate_change/sisters/dvdform.html)

## Further Information

Climate change is a fast moving and open ended issue. This resource is intended to take a fresh look at some of the main issues and promote engagement. It cannot and does not provide textbook answers, either for educators or for learners.

The following websites and resources provide updates and lively debate on the impacts of climate change. Educators are encouraged to review them regularly.

## Websites

Oxfam

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam\\_in\\_action/issues/climate.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action/issues/climate.html)

Oxfam's pages on climate change and how it's affecting poor communities and women.

Stop Climate Chaos

<http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/>

A coalition of over 70 organisations dedicated to action on climate change and limiting its impact on the world's poorest communities.

The United Nations Climate Change Conference, Copenhagen, 2009

<http://en.cop15.dk/>

Website of the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference

One Climate

<http://www.oneclimate.net/>

Website reporting on a wide range of campaigns and action on climate change

Ashden Awards

<http://www.ashdenawards.org/schools>

How schools can do help mitigate climate change.

Eco Schools

<http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

Award programme for sustainable schools

Do the Green Thing

<http://www.dothegreenthing.com/>

Seven ways to lead a greener life.

Climate Change – from the BBC Weather Centre

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/climate/>

## Reports and resources

Poverty and Climate Change. Reducing the Vulnerability of the Poor through Adaptation (2003)

[www.oecd.org/dataoecd/60/27/2502872.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/60/27/2502872.pdf)

Multi-agency report summarising the relationships between climate change and poverty

DfID – Key Sheets on Climate Change and Poverty

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/climatechange/keysheetsindex.asp>

A series of DfID briefings on the impact of climate change on poverty and the MDGs

UNDP report 2007/08 – Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World'

<http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/>

The full report is a worthwhile and lengthy read. You may prefer the summary and the Youth Report is accessible to higher-level students.

The Guardian Climate Change Atlas – 8 December 2008

[Useful map showing carbon emissions country by country](#)

World Mapper

<http://www.worldmapper.org/>

The World as you've never seen it before. Check the A-Z index or search for 'carbon emissions'

The Paperboy

<http://www.thepaperboy.com/>

An online newspaper directory – follow climate change stories in the press.

Tide Global Learning

<http://www.tidec.org/>

Development Education Centre based in Birmingham – authors of 'Why did Mrs Camara's stall close down?' from 'Lessons in Sustainability' (2003).