

MDG Progress Report 2013: Goal 7 To ensure environmental sustainability



Progress to date	
Target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. • Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss. • Halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. • By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest resources are still being lost but at a slower speed than before • Greenhouse gas emissions are still rising, despite a dip linked to the 2009 financial crisis • Biodiversity loss is still happening very quickly, but at a slightly slower rate than before because of increases in protected areas • The target of halving the proportion of people without access to improved sources of water has already been met, but there are great challenges • Sanitation has improved but the target will not be met • 200 million slum dwellers have experienced improvement in their living conditions, but unfortunately, the number of people living in slums is increasing.

Resources such as forests are still being lost, but the speed at which they are being lost has slowed, changing from 8.3 million hectares per year in the 1990s to 5.2 million hectares per year in the last decade. Largest losses were in South America and Africa, and also, as a result of drought and forest fires, in Oceania. However Asia's forests grew by 2.2 million hectares per year because of large reforestation programmes in China, India and Vietnam.

Greenhouse gas emissions have risen every year from 1990 through 2008. There was a slight dip in 2009 emissions, mainly from **MEDCs** because of the economic crisis. Decreases in developed areas were balanced by increases in **LEDCs** areas. Per person emissions remained 3 times higher in the developed regions, at 10 metric tons of CO₂ per person in 2009, compared to 3 metric tons in **LEDCs** and just 0.6 metric tons in sub-Saharan Africa.

Protected areas of land and sea have increased by over 50%, but still more and more species are becoming threatened with extinction every year, although the speed at which this is happening is slowing down because of conservation efforts.

In 2010, only 11% of the world's population had no access to **'improved' water** which was a reduction from 24% in 1990, meeting the UN target. By 2015 it should be 8%. Over 2 billion more people now have

improved water, a large number in China and India. However still over 700 million people do not, and 'improved' doesn't really measure safety and reliability well. Over 4 times more people in rural areas lack safe water (19%) compared to urban areas (only 4%), and there is *inequality* with poorer people affected much more than richer people.

Sanitation coverage increased from 36 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2010 in developing regions, but the target is 75% by 2015. This will not be met. Half the population in these regions (i.e. 2.5 billion people) still lack access to improved **sanitation** facilities, mainly for rural areas and poorer people (due to *inequality*).

More than 200 million slum dwellers now have **improved water** sources or sanitation facilities, or less crowded housing. This far exceeds the target of 100 million. However while the *proportion* of urban residents living in slums in **LEDCs** has declined, from 39 per cent in 2000 to 33 per cent in 2012, slums have still grown in size (just slower than the cities as a whole), so now 863 million people are now estimated to be living in slums compared to 650 million in 1990.

Source: Millennium Development Goals Report 2012 (<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/publications/mdg-report-2012.html>)

CASE STUDY 1 | Isau Mudzingwa fetching water, Zimbabwe

This picture shows Isau collecting water and passing it up to his mother, Louice in the Gutu region of Zimbabwe.

Here water is drawn from a hole in a sandy river bed and there is no toilet.

Louice explains: "We've lived here since 1993 when we were staying at our grandmother's house across the river bed, near here. Then when we got this land we built these buildings as our home. As you can see the biggest challenge we have while living here is drinking water. Our water point is in the river bed. We have to get our water out of the sand on the river bed and the hole is so deep I can hardly be seen when I'm standing in it. I can't manage it now and have to send my sons to scramble down. We can't afford to make a deep well or build a proper structure.

The water isn't clean. It's turbid from the sand and sometimes you can see small worms but we boil it before we drink it. Occasionally it goes dry, especially if there have been some years without rain and then we have to walk for 2 hours to fetch it from a house where there is a borehole we can use."



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Source: Oxfam



Photo to be shown to pupils before case study 2

CASE STUDY 2 | Drilling a borehole, Ruti Irrigation Project , Zimbabwe

This photo shows men working on the Ruti Irrigation Project operate machinery to dig a **borehole**.

This Oxfam project in the Gutu region of Zimbabwe is to bring water for farmland to the people living here. Over the past decade, the rains which usually come in November-December and then perhaps briefly again later in the year have totally changed. Instead of getting a dependable season of rain, there is now just erratic bursts of rain which may or may not come at set times. When they do come, there's no knowing how long they will last and crops often wither away and die.



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Using large machinery to drill boreholes, water is accessed from the ground **water table**. This can provide water for crops and also wells for drinking water for the people living here. This will help families like Isau and Louices access safer drinking water, and enable them to grow food to eat and sell.

Peter Dobe, the Oxfam Project Officer, explains: “Community members come to build the concrete base of the new **borehole** which has a cap to stop contamination, a firm base, and a run-off section so that the surrounding area doesn't become muddy. At the same time, we hold training sessions for men and women in the community on water and **sanitation**, health issues, and borehole maintenance so that from the very beginning the community can take over ownership. The local community then decide between themselves how and when they will use the water as needed”.

Source: Oxfam

ACTIVITY

Aim	To help pupils appreciate that not everyone has access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.
You will need	The progress update, case study 1 and case study 2. Words that are in bold are defined in the glossary.
Title	Thinking about an individual's basic needs.
Age	11-14.
Task/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have pupils read the update information on MDG7. What questions do they have about these targets? Are these things hard to achieve? Where has progress been made? What more needs to be done? • If they were to give MDG7 a <i>traffic light</i> colour, what would it be? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Red (way off) ○ Amber (mixed progress) ○ Green (good progress) • Show pupils case study 1. Ask pupils to consider what it would be like to live without safe water? What would it be like having to take water from somewhere like Isau is fetching it? What impact would that have on their lives? • Ask pupils to make a table logging all the risks Isau, Louice and their family face. What could Isau, Louice and their family do to help overcome each risk? • Now show them the photo from case study 2. How does this relate to their risk log? • Ask them to read the case study. How will this scheme help families like Isau's? • Why do they think it is important to involve the local community? • Do they see any evidence that the problem with water in Gutu links to any other aspects of MDG7? (Hints: What has happened to the rainfall? What's the link to greenhouse gas emissions?) • Are problems like this part of a wider set of issues?

FURTHER WORK

Age	11-14.
Task/s	<p>Encourage students to think about how people's access to basic needs link to the way we use the environment throughout the world.</p> <p>Points for discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does every individual in the world have everything that they need to survive? If this is not the case, who does not and why not? • What do they consider to be a person's basic needs? Get them to make a list or draw a picture to represent these. Suggest students discuss their list or image with one of their peers. Did they have items that were the same or different? • Do different individuals throughout the world require different basic needs or should we all have access to the same things to ensure equality is promoted?

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If everyone is to have the same basic needs met, is it possible to achieve this without using up more of the worlds resources?• Does the way we use the planet affect whether some people can have their basic needs met? For example does climate change or cutting down forests affect how some people can live?• Whose responsibility is it to make sure everyone has their needs met, and that we also sustain the planet we are living on?• What should these people do?• In 2013, David Cameron, the UK Prime Minister, is attending a High Level meeting to review progress on the MDG goals. He is an example of one person who can do something.
Ask students if they could send him, or someone like him, a tweet or series of tweets (maximum 140 characters each) about MDG7, what would they say?• Afterwards, students should form a small group to share the content of their tweet or series of tweets. Did they have the same thoughts or very different viewpoints to others in their group? |
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Glossary of terms

Biodiversity: The degree of variation of life forms within a given environment.

Borehole: A hole driven into the ground to release water.

Improved water: Water from a source that has been built to protect the water from outside contamination.

LEDCs: Less Economically Developed Countries.

MEDCs: More Economically Developed Countries.

Sanitation: The provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and faeces.

Sustainable development: When people can satisfy their basic needs now, while making sure that future generations can also look forward to the same quality of life.

Water table: The level below which the ground is completely saturated with water.