

Millennium Development Goals

Millennium Development Goal 7 –

To ensure environmental sustainability

Information and activities



Target – Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target – By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water.

Target – By 2020, make a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Our environment is under threat as never before. Human activities combined with improved technology and transport mean that forests are disappearing, fish and animals are dying out, and pollution is increasing. Uncontrolled use of natural resources affects all of us, although poor people are often less able to protect themselves from it.

There are sometimes hard choices to be made between economic growth and a clean environment – choices we need to confront for the sake of future generations. Newly developing nations, such as India and China, are major polluters. However, if prosperity comes at the cost of a damaged environment, we are destroying the very source of our wealth. The countries of the world need to tackle this problem together.

The environment of people living in slums also needs to be improved urgently. Currently, one third of the world's population lives in urban slums or shanty towns. Many cities in developing countries continue to experience very rapid population growth, yet do not have the resources to plan for it.

A better environment is possible for all of us. To achieve it, we need to hold world leaders to their promises.

Activities for this goal include

Haiti case study

Information about the city of Port-au-Prince in Haiti, where some people have to live in slum conditions.

The truth about slums

Pupils do a quiz about slums, then think about how this problem could be overcome.

Preferable futures

Pupils draw diagrams to map out what the future will probably be like if we do nothing about the environment.

Oxfam is committed to providing the best possible support to schools and youth groups and we wish to assess the impact of our work with young people.

Please use the slip below to tell us about your MDG lessons and projects or e-mail us at education@oxfam.org.uk

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X.....

Name of Teacher:

Age of pupils:

Name & Address of School:

Description of MDG learning:

Postcode:

Please return this slip to:

Email*

Oxfam Youth & Schools Team

Oxfam House

John Smith Drive

Oxford OX4 2JY

*Please provide your email address to receive messages from us about our projects and activities. You can unsubscribe at any time.

We would like to keep you informed about our projects and activities. However, if you'd rather not receive such information, please either email us at changes@oxfam.org.uk, phone 0300 200 1300 or write to Supporter Relations, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Oxford OX4 2JY

Millennium Development Goal 7 – To ensure environmental sustainability

Target – Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.

Target – By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water.

Target – By 2020, achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.

Our environment is under threat as never before. The rapid growth of industrial production and the spread of transport systems based on fossil fuels are causing forests to disappear, fish, animals and other biodiversity to die out, and pollution to increase. This uncontrolled use of natural resources affects all of us, but poor people are often less able to protect themselves from its consequences.

There are often hard choices to be made between economic growth today and a clean and healthy environment in the future. If prosperity for some people comes at the cost of a damaged environment for all of us, we are destroying the very source of our long-term wealth and well-being. The countries of the world need to tackle this problem together.

While a minority of the world's people enjoy unprecedented material wealth, many others still lack the basic necessities of life. More than one billion people have no access to safe drinking water,¹ and nearly two-and-a-half billion lack sanitation such as toilets and sewage facilities.²

Currently, nearly half the world's population lives in cities or towns, and in 2005 a third of urban dwellers were living in slums. Many cities in developing countries continue to experience very rapid population growth, yet do not have the resources to plan or manage it. These countries' governments must do more to provide services such as water and sanitation to slum dwellers – but they need more international aid to succeed.

A better environment is possible for all of us. But to achieve it, we need to hold world leaders to their promises.

1 In the Public Interest, Oxfam International 2006

2 UN Millennium Campaign: www.millenniumcampaign.org

Living in Port-au-Prince, Haiti

This poster shows a street in Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti, one of the world's poorest countries. People are moving from rural areas to Port-au-Prince in the hope of finding work, but there is not enough housing for them, and very little spare land. They build shacks on whatever space they can find, often in unsuitable locations such as ravines or floodplains. This puts them in danger when there are floods, hurricanes or landslides.



Because of a lack of urban planning, there is no provision for services such as water, sanitation or rubbish collection. People have to buy water from the market. Roads are of poor quality. The number of people living in poverty in cities around the world is increasing year by year. They have to live in crowded, dirty conditions with unsuitable housing, no clean water or mains electricity, and no proper toilet facilities. This leaves them vulnerable to illness, hunger and crime. Achieving the seventh Millennium Development Goal would mean that these people, poor through no fault of their own, would have their basic needs met.

Poster activity (ages 7–11)

You will need

- Large sheets of drawing paper to stick around the outside of the poster
- Blu tack®
- Marker pens

Activity 7.1

Aim

- To encourage pupils to empathise with slum dwellers in developing countries.

You will need

- Poster 7, displayed
- Sticky note speech bubbles, or pieces of paper cut out in the shape of speech bubbles

What is it like in Port-au-Prince? (ages 7–11)

1. Ask pupils to have a look at the poster and discuss what they can see in it. Ask them to imagine what sounds they might hear. What do they imagine it smells like?
2. Ensure that pupils understand that slums are places where people are often forced to live and where there are few if any facilities such as electricity, running water and sanitation.
3. Ask pupils to work in groups of three or four, and give each group three speech bubbles. Ask the pupils to think carefully about what they can see in the photograph and to imagine what the people might be thinking or saying. Discuss some of their ideas with the class and then stick the speech bubbles around the poster. Look at the words the pupils have come up with to describe what they sensed.
4. Ask the pupils to write a poem, either individually or in groups.

Activity 7.2

Aims

- To encourage pupils to think about waste disposal in the UK.
- To help them to consider the problem of increasing waste.

What happens to our rubbish? (ages 7–11)

1. Ask pupils the question 'What is rubbish?' What does the rubbish that they throw away at home consist of?
2. Ask them how their rubbish at home is disposed of. Do they know where it ends up? Explain that rubbish is usually taken to a landfill site by lorry and tipped out into a big hole, often a disused quarry.
3. Introduce some of the issues behind waste. Is there enough room for all our rubbish? What should we do to reduce the amount of waste we create? Is anything recycled? If so, what? Who organises this? Ask pupils what alternatives there are for dealing with waste, e.g. recycling, composting, creating energy from waste. What do they recycle at home? Can they reduce waste in other ways, for example by buying fewer things or having things repaired instead of buying new ones?
4. Ask pupils to put to one side for one week all the packaging that comes with the things they have in their packed lunch. Collect all these items and show them to the class after a week. How could we use less packaging? What does the school do about waste? Ask them to take photographs to show how their local area or school could be improved.

Further work

You can make a display of the photos along with pupils' writing about improvements they would like to make to their local area. You could also encourage the class to take environmental issues to the school council. They could suggest, for example, that the school provides recycling bins for cans, paper, cardboard, plastic and other materials that can be recycled.

The truth about slums

Using the websites below and what you know about Port-au-Prince (the city pictured on the poster), tick the boxes to show which of these statements are true and which are false.

www.dfid.gov.uk/Global-Issues/Millennium-Development-Goals/7-Ensure-environmental-sustainability/
www.citymayors.com/report/slums.html

	True	False
1 Many slum households in Bangkok have a colour television.		
2 In Nairobi 60 per cent of the population lives in slums.		
3 More than 41 per cent of Kolkata's (Calcutta's) slum households have lived in slums for more than 30 years.		
4 About 550 million people in Asia live in slums.		
5 Slums are places where basic services are lacking.		
6 At least 900 million people in the world live in slums.		
7 Slums are temporary settlements.		
8 People living in slums are often in danger of being evicted from their homes.		

Statistics are from *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*, UN Human Settlements Programme 2003.

What is a slum?

Slum households are defined by UN-Habitat (the UN Human Settlements Programme) as households that lack a decent water supply, adequate sanitation facilities, sufficient living area (overcrowded), decent structural quality and/or security of tenure.

Activity 7.3

Aim

- To teach pupils about life in a slum.

You will need

- A photocopy of *The truth about slums* on page 5 for each pupil

The truth about slums (ages 9–14)

1. Ask pupils to do the true/false quiz and discuss their answers with a partner. Was there anything that surprised them?

Answers to the quiz: 1 true, 2 true – Nairobi is home to one of the largest and most densely populated slums in the world, 3 true, 4 true, 5 true, 6 true, 7 false, 8 true – they don't usually have any security of tenure.

2. Go through the following list with the class and ask them how they think each could improve the problem of slums:

- the improvement of roads, transport and livelihoods in rural areas
- providing services such as water and sanitation to slums
- stable government
- access to credit for poor people
- ensuring people who live in slums have their rights respected
- providing free primary education.

Activity 7.4

Aims

- To explore the issues of global warming and sustainable development.
- To allow pupils to think about how they would like the future to be.

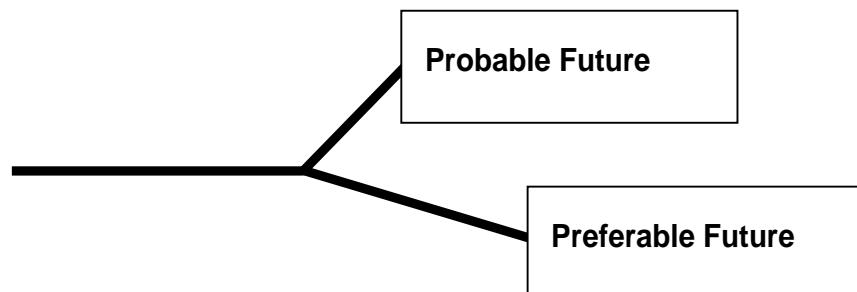
You will need

- Newspaper articles about climate change or
- Access to the internet or the school library

Preferable futures (ages 11–14)

Note: You will need to ask pupils to collect newspaper articles about climate change a few days before you do this activity. Alternatively, they could search the internet for these articles. Good sources for this kind of thing include the websites of national newspapers and the BBC news website (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>).

1. Using the articles as a starting point, draw out the main issues in the debate about climate change. List some of the questions pupils have that arise from the discussion. Allocate these questions to small groups and ask them to research the answers using the internet or reference books.
2. Ask the groups to share the results of their research with the class and then begin to think about:
 - what has contributed to the present situation
 - what the probable future for the world will be in ten, twenty or thirty years' time if we do not take action.
3. Ask the groups what they would like the world to be like in ten, twenty or thirty years time. They can record their thoughts on 'probable' and 'preferable' timelines, as illustrated below. They could draw pictures.



Success Stories in Sustainable Development

One of the five major water treatment plants in Basra, the Al Hartha Pump Station, had rapidly ageing electrical and mechanical equipment which meant that the water supply from the station had been unreliable. In November 2006 DFID funded a project to bring the pump station up to date. The project replaced 15 pumps, refurbished seven others, provided new electrical items and built a new guard house. Work was completed in February 2007, improving the water supply for some 500,000 people (over a quarter of the population of Basra and its suburbs.)

Impact: These projects were overseen by Iraqi contractors and have created approximately 25,000 work days for Iraqis. Since 2003 water supply has increased by up to 30 per cent in some provinces, has improved the electricity supply to 1.5 million people in Basra, and replaced 200 kilometres of water mains in southern Iraq.

In order to ensure that the improvements are sustained, DFID has also funded a training centre that teaches essential maintenance skills to engineers. It provides practical lessons in fixing leaks, repairing equipment, treating water and working safely. The centre in Basra which opened in March 2006 has supported the development of over 2,000 staff in four provinces.

DFID is the part of the UK government that manages Britain's aid to poor countries and works to get rid of extreme poverty. It is led by a cabinet minister, one of the senior ministers in the government.

How To Take Action

Success stories like the one above have come about through partnerships between donor countries, like the UK, and Iraq. To ensure our government continues to support projects like this, campaigning NGOs like Oxfam take actions to remind those in power of promises they have made. Here are some suggestions of things students could do to support projects like this around the world.

Actions

- Complete the worksheet on page 8
- Do an environmental audit of your school and report back to your Headteacher/Chair of Governors.
- Start a campaign directed at your LA, Headteacher/Bursar and Chair of Governors to get them to switch to a green energy supplier in school.
- Do a litter pick around your school or town & weigh it!. Write an article in your local paper/school newsletter about how much litter you found. Set a target to reduce this by the next litter pick. Give advice on how to reduce, re-use and recycle waste.
- Make a mural from recycled/thrown away materials and display it prominently in school with important points about creating a sustainable environment.
- Invite your Headteacher to lunch in your school canteen and discuss what the school could do to clean up its act, including reducing food waste.

Fundraisers

- Hold a photography exhibition of the local environment and charge an entrance fee. Try to include positive as well as negative images.
- Take part in the *Here and Now Challenge* and get people to sponsor you for a month.
www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/activists/village

NB Please remember to pass on stories of any actions you or your pupils take. education@oxfam.org.uk

For more resource on the environment try:

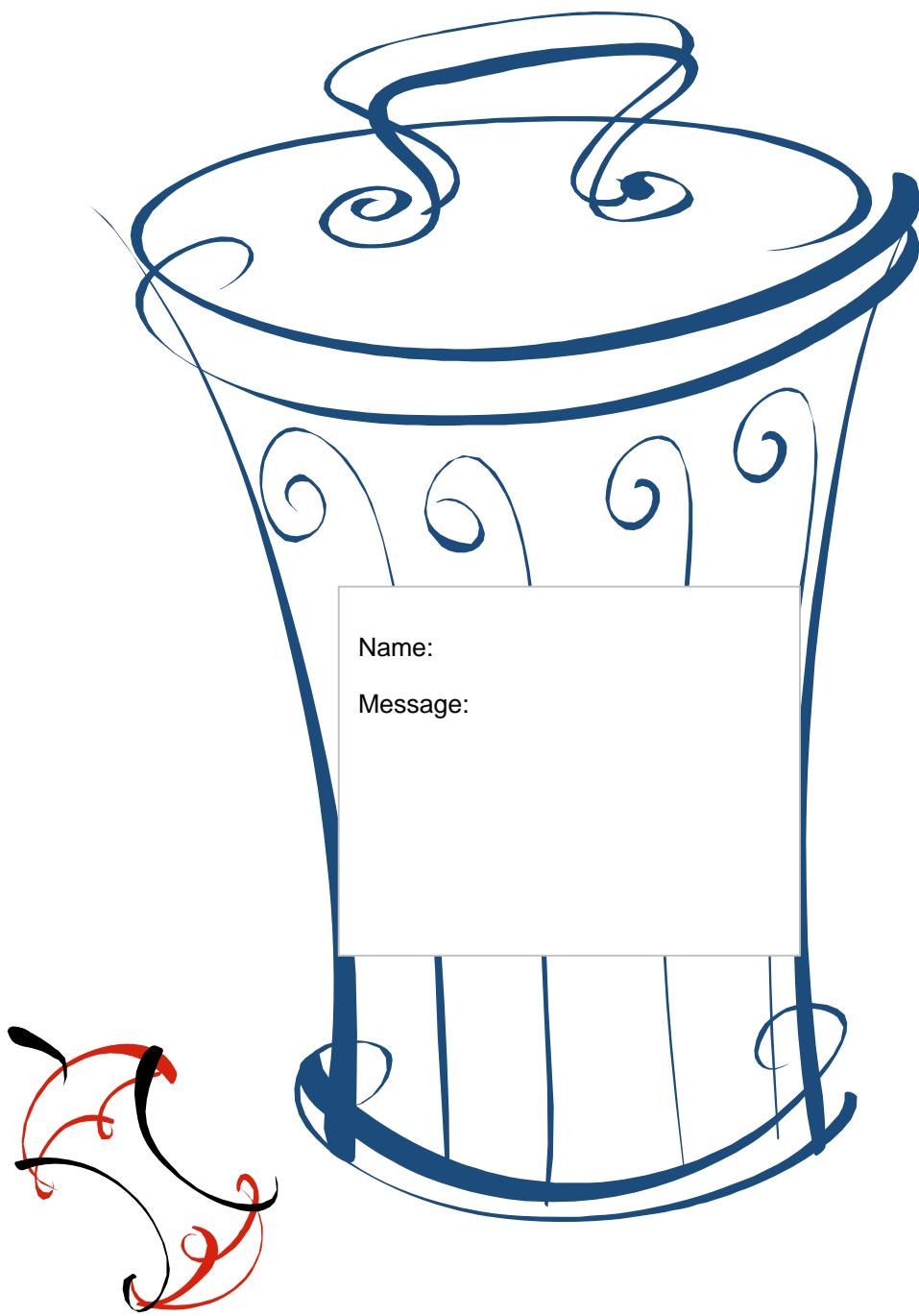
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate_change_past_present_future

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate_change_responses

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate_change_the_human_impact

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate_chaos

Take Action on the Environment
– Tell them that wasting resources is rubbish!



1. Write your name and message about Millennium Development Goal 7.
2. Decorate your dustbin. Think about things that get thrown away that could be re-used or recycled.
3. Make a display of your dustbins for others to see or cut it out and send it to:

*Youth & Schools Team
Oxfam House
John Smith Drive
Oxford OX4 2JY*

And we'll tell others how you feel