

# Introduction

Millions of people are unable to access basic needs such as enough food and clean water, but across the world countries are seeking ways to improve the living conditions of their people. The Development Studies syllabus gives an understanding of this process and of how politics and economics, together with social and environmental issues contribute to the reduction of poverty. Although the various sections of the syllabus deal with different aspects of development, it is important to understand the interrelationships between these issues and to consider a holistic approach to the development strategies studied in the text.

## **The political process**

A government makes decisions on how a country's natural resources are to be used, where industries will be sited and how the environment will be protected. It decides how taxes will be spent. Conflicts with other countries may result in more money being spent on weapons than on providing clean water. Palaces for the leader may be built instead of hospitals and schools. A government may pass laws to improve the rights of women and abolish child labour, or it may ignore these and other important development issues.

## **The economic process**

Economic growth from industrial production and commercial agriculture will make a society wealthier but it can make the living conditions worse for some local people. If people have an income from work, they pay tax to the government and they can purchase goods and satisfy their basic needs. They can make sure their children get an education and all the benefits that this brings. Companies trade goods, earn foreign exchange and also pay tax. However, industries use up resources such as oil and they produce waste which can damage the environment where people live.

## **The social process**

Development is a process of change that usually improves the living standards of the people of a country. Education, health care, clean water and good sanitation, a varied diet as well as human rights are all social aspects of development. These need funding from economic growth and the political will to provide them. If people are educated and healthy they are able to contribute to the economy and so drive development forward.

Population growth means more resources will be used up which makes it difficult for governments to provide services for everyone.

## The environmental process

Economies and societies depend upon natural resources provided by the earth, whether it is raw materials for industry or clean air to breathe. Waste produced is often dumped in the environment on which people depend for their survival. Governments determine whether resources are exploited for short term gain or conserved for use by future generations. Biodiversity must not be destroyed, minerals must not be exhausted, soils must not be eroded and water must not be polluted if people's quality of life is to improve. In general terms, all natural resources must be used responsibly.

Through a combination of these processes poverty is reduced, living standards improve and countries develop. The international community is working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals which are a means of measuring this progress. Partnerships between nations, charities and community groups promote development so that people in developing countries can access the services that people in developed countries take for granted. The world is a dynamic place with people and goods constantly moving around it. Information about anywhere and anything is available, almost instantly, almost everywhere. Globalisation continues to bring countries together.

## Sustainable development

Development is also influenced by local decision making and often different strategies have to be considered in order to solve local problems in the best way. To meet the needs of people now as well as in the future, policies must be developed which balance economic growth with rises in living standards for all people in society as well as the protection of the environment. To achieve this is one of the biggest challenges facing mankind.

Case studies which illustrate sustainable projects are used to show how people around the world are tackling this issue. Improving living standards today with consideration for the quality of life of those in the future is certainly possible if governments and a country's people care enough to use the planet's resources wisely. The following is a quote from the website of The Green Belt Movement which shows the importance of protecting the natural environment if improvements to people's quality of life are to be made and sustained.

### **How It All Started**

The Green Belt Movement (GBM) was started in 1977 by Dr Wangari Maathai, the first African woman and the first environmentalist to receive the Nobel Peace Prize (in 2004). What began as a grassroots tree planting program to address the challenges of deforestation, soil erosion and lack of water is now a vehicle for empowering women.

The act of planting a tree is helping women throughout Africa become stewards of the natural environment. But that's just the first step.

By protecting the environment, these women are also becoming powerful champions for sustainable management of scarce resources such as water, equitable economic development, good political governance, and ultimately..... peace.

### **Our Achievements**

Today, more than 40 million trees have been planted across Africa. The result: soil erosion has been reduced in critical watersheds, thousands of acres of biodiversity-rich indigenous forest have been restored and protected, and hundreds of thousands of women and their families are standing up for their rights and those of their communities and so are living healthier, more productive lives.

Yet, so much remains to be done. Forests are still being lost, democracy is fragile, and poverty is still widespread.

### **Our Vision for the Future**

Our goal in the next decade is to plant one billion trees worldwide. A healthy natural world is at the heart of an equitable and peaceful society. And protecting the environment is something every individual can take part in.

**Source:** <http://greenbeltmovement.org/a.php?id=178>

### **The Millennium Development Goals**

Wangari Maathai has long supported the aims of the MDGs, and believes that environmental conservation must play a central role if the MDGs are to be achieved. Unless there is adequate food security, based on the care of ecosystems, poverty and hunger cannot be eradicated (1), children will die (4), and education (2) will be impossible, as children are pulled out of school to work in the fields or are too malnourished to learn.

There can be no development (8) or combating of tropical diseases or HIV/AIDS (6), or healthy (5) and empowered women (3) unless we stop polluting and destroying the environment in which we live and begin to relieve the burden of women, who have to walk so far to get firewood or spend so long gathering food. Only when we acknowledge the centrality of the environment (7) will we have a hope of reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

(The numbers 1–8 refer to the Millennium Development Goals)

**Source:** <http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/w.php?id=40#mdg>

# Unit 1 Poverty and development

Chapter 1: Poverty and education

Chapter 2: Poverty and health

Chapter 3: Poverty and gender equality

Chapter 4: Poverty and politics

Chapter 5: Global patterns of development

## 1

# Poverty and education

## Learning Objectives

- To understand the meaning of poverty and basic needs
- To understand how a country's wealth can be measured
- To consider the Millennium Development Goals as a global action plan
- To realise the importance of education to development
- To be able to describe the different levels of education
- To consider ways to achieve universal primary education.

## The meaning of poverty

People who live in poverty are unable to provide themselves with basic needs such as food, water, clothing and shelter and therefore suffer from hunger and illness. Access to health care and education may also be regarded as basic needs. Basic needs are essential if someone is to have a reasonable quality of life. 'Wants' are not necessary for living but make life easier and more enjoyable. People who are poor spend their whole day trying to survive and they have little time, energy or knowledge to try to improve their situation.

### task

A

List the six basic needs and draw up your own list of six 'wants'. Rank these in order of importance. Compare your list with others in your class.

Poverty is usually seen in monetary terms and may be defined as the situation for people who live on less than US\$1.25 per day. This figure refers to the equivalent amount of goods and services that would be worth \$1.25 in the United States. People who live on less than US\$1.25 per day are said to be below the poverty line. Of the 1.4 billion people in the world that live below the poverty line, the majority live in rural areas. People who live in rural areas often grow their own food to survive and the success of the harvest may be the difference between life and death. Tens of thousands of children die each day and many of these are in remote areas, far from medical services and far away from the eyes of the world's media.

### Definition

**Rural:** describes the countryside including its villages and isolated settlements



## Living on waste – an example of urban poverty

Children live in oil drums on the edge of one of Manila's huge rubbish dumps in the Philippines. Each time a truck arrives with a fresh load of stinking waste from the city's 15 million inhabitants, there is a rush to find scraps of food to eat and items to collect and sell for recycling. The children suffer from diarrhoea caused by rotten food, polluted water and lack of sanitation. They get injuries from having no protection against sharp objects and their little lungs are damaged by gases given off from the rotting rubbish. They rarely attend school or access medical help; although charities are working to help these very poor families. A common sight at these dumps is shown in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1** Living on waste

## The river has run dry – an example of rural poverty

Mesela has walked for five kilometres to collect water for her family. Now she is in despair as the river is dry as seen in Figure 1.2. The crops have already failed due to the drought and she will struggle to feed her family. She has no income to buy food, new seeds or any fertilisers for next year. The family will become weak and so work on the land will be even more difficult. There is certainly no money to afford medical care or schooling and in any case the nearest clinic and school are far away in the town and they have no transport.



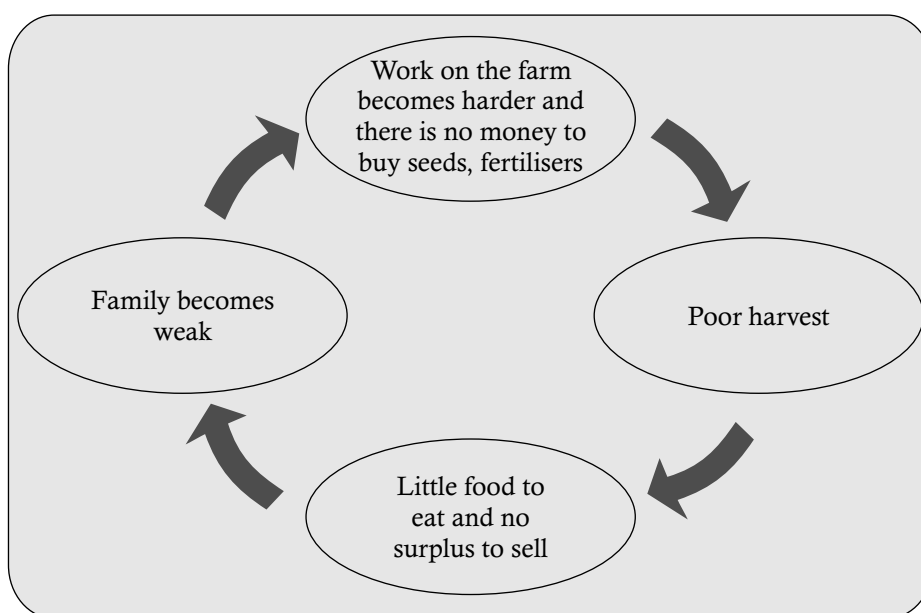
**Figure 1.2** The river has run dry

## The vicious circle of poverty

The sort of situations described above may be termed a 'vicious circle of poverty' or a 'poverty trap' such as the one shown in Figure 1.3. Once a family is caught up in this desperate poverty, it is very hard to break out of it, and things just get worse.

In order for people to break out of this vicious circle of poverty it is vital that their basic needs are satisfied. In the short term, aid agencies may offer desperately needed support. In the longer term it is money generated from economic growth, such as improved agricultural production, small craft shops or large factories, which provides the essential wealth for improvements to be made to water supplies, diet and housing.

Education and health care are possible when the government has money from tax revenues to build clinics and schools and people can afford these services when they have an income.



**Figure 1.3** A vicious circle of poverty

## A country's wealth

A country's wealth is measured in terms of its Gross National Income (GNI). This measurement was previously known as Gross National Product (GNP). GNI is the total income from the goods and services that a country produces each year, including its earnings from other parts of the world. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the income from the production of goods and services within a country.

Goods are products such as oil, beans and computers; services include education, transport and shops. Money from the economic activities such as street shoe cleaning is not likely to appear in government data.

For comparisons between countries to be made, the GNI in a country's currency is first converted to American dollars. The more people there are in a country, the smaller the share of the wealth there is for each person. Therefore the size of a country's population also has to be taken into account.

The GNI divided by the population gives a figure for the GNI per person. GNI per person is obviously an average figure for wealth and often hides huge differences in the country's population between those who are very wealthy and those who are in extreme poverty. Table 1.1 shows a list of countries at different levels of development that have been ranked in descending order according to their GNI.

**Table 1.1** GNI and Population Data for Selected Countries (2010)

Country	Population (Millions)	GNI (US\$Billion)	GNI Per Person (US\$)
China	1338	5668	4236
France	65	2746	42,246
Brazil	195	1859	9533
India	1225	1539	1256
Philippines	93	192	2065
Chile	17	184	10,824
Morocco	32	93	2906
Kenya	41	33	805

Source: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/>



Rank these countries in descending order in terms of their GNI per person and describe how the list compares with the order in Table 1.1. Explain why Chile has moved up the list and why China has moved down it.

## The Millennium Development Goals

In the year 2000, leaders from all countries adopted The United Nations Millennium Declaration and committed themselves to achieve 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was the creation of a global partnership to reduce extreme poverty, hunger and disease and to promote gender equality, access to education and sustainable development. Each goal has a number of targets to enable monitoring of progress towards achieving these goals to be made. The MDGs shown in Table 1.2 may be seen as a global action plan to improve the lives of the world's poor by the year 2015. The United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 seeks to build on the MDG framework while at the same time considering other global challenges.

**Table 1.2** The MDGs

Goal 1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
Goal 2	Achieve universal primary education
Goal 3	Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4	Reduce child mortality
Goal 5	Improve maternal health
Goal 6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
Goal 7	Ensure environmental sustainability
Goal 8	Develop a global partnership for development



The measurement of poverty is important if it is going to be eradicated. Governments will know the challenge they face and will be able to target their efforts in those places where the need is the greatest. By measuring progress in reducing poverty, it may be possible to determine which approach has the best results.

### Definition

**Discrimination:** the treatment of a particular group of people in a less favourable way than others

**Empower:** give confidence and power to someone to help them make decisions

## MDG 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

MDG 1 has three targets which are as follows.

1. Target 1A is to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than US\$1 a day. (US\$1 has been altered to US\$1.25 since the MDGs were drawn up)
2. Target 1B is to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.
3. Target 1C is to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

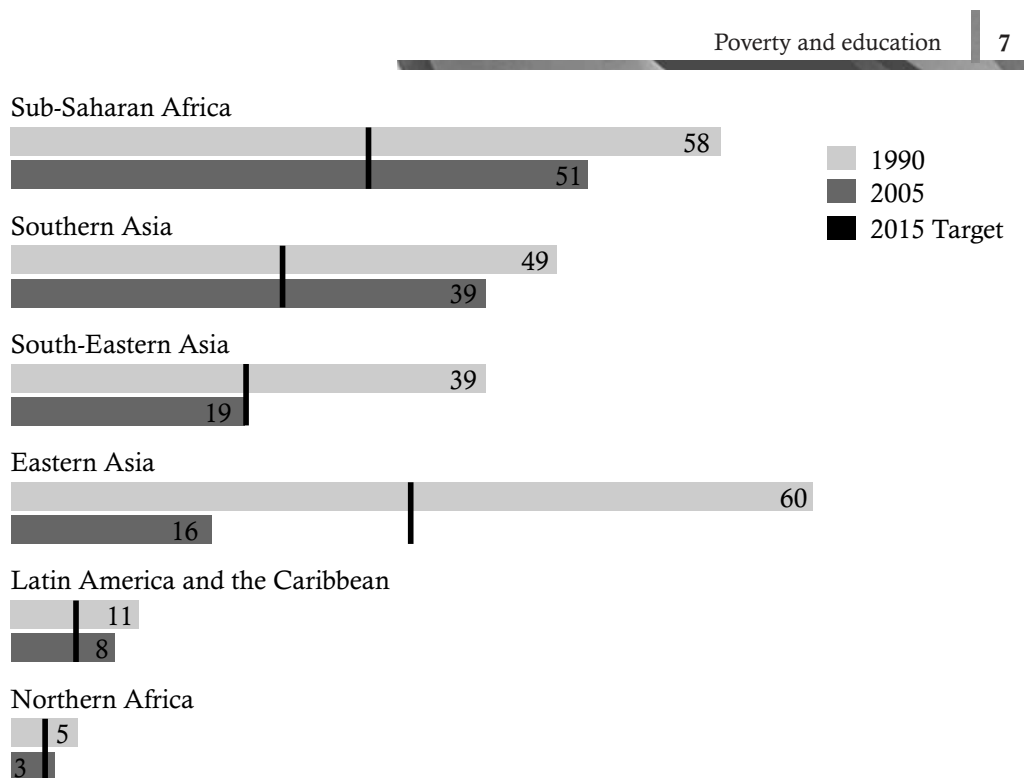
If Target 1A is achieved by 2015, poverty would not be eradicated but there would be a considerably smaller proportion of people who could not meet their daily basic needs. These targets are obviously linked together because poverty leads to hunger and malnutrition. If people have employment, they have an income and so they are less poor and can afford more and better quality food.

More opportunities for work will improve the lives of billions of people but providing full employment for its citizens is a major challenge to any government. Discrimination against women is also a serious problem in many parts of the world. If women are not empowered (MDG 3) and children do not receive an education (MDG 2), boys and girls will not acquire the skills needed for different roles in a growing economy. Employment will be difficult to find and people will remain poor (MDG 1).

### Progress that has been made

Developing regions as a whole look set to achieve Target 1A of MDG 1. Table 1.3 shows progress that has been made in some regions. Eastern Asia has shown the largest decrease in the proportion of people living below the poverty line and its target for 2015 had easily been met by 2005. In Sub-Saharan Africa, progress is much slower and it is very unlikely that this region will meet its target.

India and China have already made significant contributions to the large reduction in global poverty. There will, however, still be several hundred million people around the world living below the poverty line in 2015. As populations continue to increase in many countries, it becomes more difficult for them to meet targets for poverty reduction.



**Figure 1.4** Percentage of people living on <US\$1.25 per day in selected regions

Source: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20>



1. Which regions shown in Figure 1.4 have already reached their Target 1A for MDG 1?
2. Do you think Southern Asia is likely to reach its target?
3. Do you think Latin America & Caribbean is likely to reach its target?
4. Explain why a region may reduce the proportion of its people living below the poverty line but yet have more people living on less than US\$1.25 per day.

## Education

In some of the most poverty stricken settlements, after providing food and water for their children parents save towards their children's schooling. They recognise that the best way to reduce poverty and improve living standards is to gain an education. This is because:

- educated children are literate and numerate and are more likely to get jobs with a good income
- education teaches the importance of a balanced diet, hygienic living conditions and disease prevention and so leads to better health