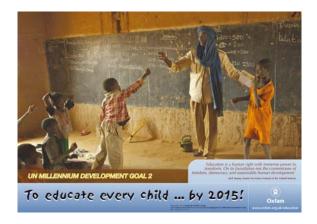
www.oxfam.org.uk/education

The Millennium Development Goals Millennium Development Goal 2 – To achieve universal primary education Information and activities

Information and activities



Target – Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Education is vital for combating poverty and disease. It creates more opportunities for people and gives them a stronger voice in society. Without education there can be no development – personal, economic or social.

In 1990, many countries pledged to achieve primary education for all children by the year 2000. However, the target was missed. There are still 72 million children not in school. Most of these are in developing countries, and 40 per cent of them are girls.

In order to achieve this target by 2015, governments must ensure that all children are not only enrolling in primary school but completing their primary education as well. Currently, only 52 out of 155 developing countries have achieved universal primary completion.

Activities for this goal include

Mali case study

Information about a teacher in Mali.

Why can't some children go to school?

Class brainstorm about why some children can't attend school. Looking at quotations from children who can't go to school.

Education and conflict

Examining the links between conflict and lack of education: the story of a child soldier in Liberia.

Millennium Development Goal 2 – To achieve universal primary education

Target – Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Education is vital for combating poverty and disease. It creates more opportunities for people and gives them a stronger voice in society. Without education there can be no development – personal, economic or social.

Some progress is being made towards this goal. In 1990, 140 million children worldwide were unable to go to school, but by 2005 this number was down to 72 million, about 40 million of whom were girls. In order to achieve the goal by 2015, governments must ensure that all children are not only enrolling in primary school but completing their primary education as well. Currently, only 52 out of 155 developing countries have achieved universal completion of primary education.²

Many countries are close to delivering universal primary education, yet in other countries and regions the task remains enormous. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, around 33 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2005,³ which means that the region as a whole was home to nearly half of the world's out-of-school children of primary school age. In South Asia over 17 million remain out of school, over two-thirds of them girls.⁴ Often other things take priority over education. Climate Change has caused severe floods and droughts in some countries. This interrupts schooling and funding is diverted to emergencies caused by the weather.

Well-trained teachers are vital to a country's ability to educate its children. Some 15 million new primary teachers will be needed by 2015 in order to achieve primary education for all. Developing country governments often cannot afford to pay for this without receiving the aid they have been promised by richer countries. Richer countries must give the right amount of aid, in the right way, in order to help poorer countries provide a basic education for all children.

For more information about the current campaign to achieve universal primary education, see www.campaignforeducation.org.

- 1 UN Millennium Campaign: www.millenniumcampaign.org
- 2 Fast Track Initiative 2008: www.efafasttrack.org/default.asp
- 3 Education for All by 2015: Will we make it? EFA Global Monitoring Report 2008, UNESCO
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School in Mali

Aboucrine Ag Tadima is a teacher in the remote village of Intadeyni on the fringes of the Sahara desert in Mali. In this picture he is teaching basic health education to his class. There are about 250 pupils at the school, which was built 20 years ago; before that, children stayed at home and helped with the housework and animals (goats and camels). The community lived a traditional pastoralist lifestyle, with the men taking the animals to find water and vegetation wherever they could in the dry conditions. The women did domestic work and grew a little food in the wet season.



The people in the village wanted the opportunities that education could bring them and their children, so they built a school and persuaded the government to send them a teacher. Aboucrine says that people in Intadeyni value education, not just because it brings them better employment opportunities, but also because it has benefits for the whole family: better awareness of health issues, business skills, self-confidence and independence.

However, Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, and teachers' pay is low. The government cannot afford to send its teachers for extra training, or even to pay for enough books, blackboards, desks and all the other things that are needed to keep the school running.

Aboucrine says 'The parents tell me that I am a good role model for the children – to see someone from their own community get a good education and do well. That makes me very happy.'

You will need

 Sticky note thought bubbles

Poster Activity (ages 7–11)

- 1. Ask pupils to look carefully at the poster, and tell them only that this man's name is Aboucrine Ag Tadima.
- 2. Ask them where Aboucrine is. Do they think he is happy there? What do they think he is saying?
- 3. Brainstorm some thoughts for Mr Ag Tadima and his pupils, write them on sticky note thought bubbles, and stick them around the photograph. Read the story and discuss the situation.
- 4. Ask pupils to think again about the thought bubbles that are around the photo. Are there any that they would change? What new thought bubbles would they add?

Quotation activity (ages 9–14)

In groups, pupils should discuss the quotation on the poster and decide whether they agree with it or not. They should support their opinions with reasons.

Activity 2.1

Aim

 To explore attitudes towards school and education.

You will need

 Some space to do this activity – you could clear a space in the classroom, or use the games hall or a space outside

Thinking about school (ages 7–14)

- 1. Mark one side of the room as 'Agree' and the opposite side as 'Disagree'.
- Read out the statements below (or use your own statements) and ask pupils to place themselves along an imaginary line between the two sides of the room, depending on how much they agree or disagree with each statement.
- 3. Encourage pupils to talk to each other about why they chose their particular position.
- 4. Encourage pupils to suggest other statements to use.

Agree/Disagree statements

- Everyone should be able to go to school.
- Teachers should not raise their voices.
- Pupils should not have to go to lessons on time
- Everyone should be able to talk in class whenever they like.
- Pupils should be allowed to wear whatever they like at school.

Activity 2.2

Aims

- To explore attitudes to school and the benefits that we get from it.
- To explore the consequences of not going to school.

You will need

- · This poster, displayed
- A copy of School in Mali to refer to

Why is school important? (ages 7-14)

- 1. Read School in Mali to the class, and ask them to think about why education is so important to his village.
- 2. Ask pupils to buzz in pairs the reasons why education is important to them, then to exchange their ideas in groups of four. Ask the groups to feed their ideas back to the whole class.
- Get the whole class to choose the nine most important reasons why education is important. List them on the board.
- 4. Ask pupils to work in groups of four and to diamond-rank the nine agreed reasons in order of importance. (Younger pupils can use normal ranking.) Ask the groups to explain why they made their decisions. Discuss some of the issues that arose.

 Finally, ask pupils to consider what the consequences of not having an education would be.

Activity 2.3

Aim

To explore reasons why children cannot go to school.

You will need

 A photocopy of 'Why they can't go to school' on page 6 for each group of pupils



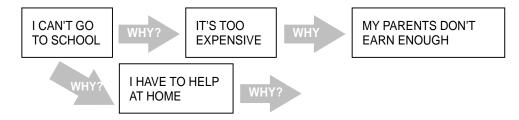
Why can't some children go to school? (ages 9-14)

- 1. Ask the class what they understand as a 'right'.
- 2. Explain to them that free education is a right under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (see www.unicef.org/crc). Explain that this means that everyone should be entitled to education, no matter where they live, and no matter who they are. Why do they think everyone should have this as a right?
- 3. Refer back to School in Mali and remind them why children in the village of Intadeyni used not to be able to go to school. Explain that currently over 72 million children worldwide cannot go to school. Can they think of any reasons why children are not able to go to school? You may also want to get pupils to consider reasons that stop children in the UK from attending school.
- 4. In groups, ask pupils to use the sheet 'Why they can't go to school' (page 6) to note down a list of reasons why so many children miss out on their education.
- 5. Ask pupils as a class to think about what could help to make a difference and who has the power to change things.

Further work (ages 11-14)

Rebecca (left) and Mariam are cousins. Both go to school "but we can't attend classes everyday; there is work at home that needs our attention; we also catch shrimp fries. When it rains, the roads in our area become very slippery. Mother said it is important to find some help."..Their homes are still under water. "The water came from the river, all salty. In our village, most of the lands are occupied with shrimp firms and owned by the rich people. Our fathers also work there from time to time."..Both the cousins walked few kilometres tip toeing through the slippery muddy road and reached the embankment around midday. And it will be another few hours before relief will be distributed..."People were saying that, this storm was big; the waves came high and fast. Father and uncles were chatting that they've never seen such a bad storm. We never had to come and ask for help from others like this. We feel shy. If we don't have anything to take back home, mother will scold, and our fathers will be angry."

- 1. Pupils could be asked to do research into the reasons why children cannot go to school and the issues behind them (e.g. poverty, conflict, illness, climate change). How is the lack of an education linked to, say, conflict? Can they find any stories of young people who have missed their education through conflict?
- 2. Use WHY-WHY-WHY chain (illustrated below)



Activity 2.4

Aim

 To help pupils to understand how conflict stops others from going to school.

You will need

- A copy of James' story to refer to
- Materials to make a display
- Old newspapers for pupils to cut up. Alternatively, pupils can look through newspapers at home in the preceding week and bring in relevant articles. They could also search for suitable articles on the websites of newspapers and on the BBC news website (http://news.bbc.co.uk)

Education and conflict (ages 11-14)

James' story

'It first happened in 1991,' says James. 'That's when the rebels came to our village in Lofa County in Liberia. They beat my father and put him in jail. Then they asked me if I would join them ... I said yes, because I wanted to protect my father because I was sure they were going to kill him. I was six years old. Then they sent us to fight at the front lines. I did that for the next five years ... There is nothing more bad than war.' James stopped being a soldier after five years of fighting in the bush. He is now 18 years old. He has been going to school since he left the front lines. 'I've been asked to fight again, but I've refused. My education is too important to me and I still have a lot to learn in life. If I am educated, I will have a better future, much better than my past.'

Interview conducted on 20 May 2003, Monrovia, Liberia

- Explain that in many countries children miss out on their education because of conflict. Give some examples such as Israel and Palestine, Sierra Leone (where many children became child soldiers) and the conflict in Darfur.*
- 2. Read James' story (above) to the class.
- Ask pupils to look through newspapers and identify situations around the world where young people are being prevented from receiving an education because of war and conflict.
- 4. Pupils can use these articles to produce a display. They could mark up the countries affected on a map of the world.
- * For more information on these countries see www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam_in_action

Why they can't go to school

I'm not sure that I will be going back to school next term. There was no rain, and my father's crops have failed. I might have to go out to work to earn money for my family.

> I have four brothers and sisters. My parents can only afford to send two of us to school. My two brothers go. My sisters and I stay at home.

There is no school in my village. The next village has a school, but it is five miles away. That is too far to walk each day.

My father died when I was seven years old. He owned a small farm, which brought in all our money. When my father died, I had to leave school to help in the house and look after my brother and sisters so my mother could work on the farm.

There are 60 children in the class that I teach. There just aren't enough teachers.

My parents didn't go to school. They can't read or write. They want me to go to school so I can get a good job. But they can't afford the school fees that we have to pay.

I have to go to the hand pump to collect water twice a day for my family. The water pump is two kilometres away, and often I have to wait in a queue before it is my turn. I do this before I go to school in the morning, so I am often late and miss a lot of my lessons. It is hard work having to collect water after school and still trying to find time for homework.

I am a coffee grower. I was getting hardly any money for my crop, so I couldn't send my children to school. Now I sell my coffee to a Fair Trade company and am guaranteed a good price. At last I can afford to send at least two of my children to school now.

We need money for school uniforms, shoes, books, pens and school bags. I don't think my father will be able to pay for all these things!

Success Stories in Education

A strong partnership of government, donors and civil society has been instrumental in the rapid improvement in access to and completion of primary education in the United Republic of Tanzania since the six goals were agreed in the Dakar framework for action, 2000. In 2001 the government abolished primary school fees and launched a programme to simultaneously improve access and quality at the primary level. The main components of the programme were:

- Increased spending on education, with a focus on primary education.
- School construction and rehabilitation through school development grants. Between 2002 and 2004 some 30,000 new classrooms were built.
- Recruitment of teachers and upgrading of current staff. An additional 32,000 primary school teachers were recruited between 2002 and 2004.
- Grants have paid for teaching and learning materials, including textbooks, to help provide money for school operating expenses and to support teachers' professional development.

How To Take Action

Success stories like the one above have come about through partnerships between donor countries, like the UK, and developing countries, like Tanzania. 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.

Actions

- Sign up for 1GOAL: Send my friend to school in time for the day of action (June 11th 2010)
- Hold World Cup opening ceremony celebrations in your school maybe have a mini World Cup match
- Invite your MP to school, show them how important you think education is and ask them to support MDG 2
- Make internet connection with another school & share lessons, this could be in the UK or in another country.
- Present an assembly to the rest of the year/school about what you have learnt about MDG 2
- Peer education, use what you have learnt to teach another class about MDG 2

Fundraisers

• Go on a sponsored read – set a target of how many books you think you could read in a week. It must be challenging to make it worthwhile.

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

For more resources on Education for all try:

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

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/bring on the world

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

Name of Teacher:

Name & Address of School:

Description of MDG learning:

Postcode:

Please return this slip to:

Coxfam Youth & Schools Team
Oxfam House
Number of pupils taught about the MDGs:

John Smith Drive
Oxford OX4 2JY

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.

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