



General Assembly Second Committee Topic Background Guide
Topic 1: Eradicating Poverty and Hunger¹

14 October 2011

When the UN Charter was signed in 1945, promoting “higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development” was seen as a way to achieve international peace and security.² Since 1945, member states have come to see development not only as a means to peace but as good in itself and a fundamental human right. In the 2000 Millennium Declaration, member states asserted, “We will spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected. We are committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want.”³ To this end, member states articulated eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), each with a target completion date of 2015. The goals are to:

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

In addition to demonstrating the central focus of development in UN activities, the MDGs illustrate a profound change in the understanding of “development” since 1945. In the 1950s and 1960s, development was defined in primarily national economic terms and was symbolized by rising gross domestic product (GDP) and large infrastructure projects, such as dams. In the 1970s, development began to be measured in terms of benefits to individuals, measured by rising GDP per capita (per person) and social programs such as education. With the fall of the Soviet Union and other authoritarian states in the 1980s, it became obvious that development had to consider political factors such as good governance; otherwise the economic gains made in one decade could be wiped out by the political losses of another. Finally, with the rise of environmental awareness in the 1980s and 1990s, development came to be defined in terms of environmental progress, as well.

Together, these refinements in the definition of development have resulted in the notion of “sustainable development.” Today, most development agencies try to give careful consideration to the mutual effects of economic, social, political, and environmental policies, in both the short and long term. Their goal is to develop programs that advance individual well-being in ways that are economically, socially, politically, and environmentally sustainable so they can contribute to long term national and international progress.

Because of the number of factors to consider and the number of things that can go wrong, achieving sustainable development is a challenging task, even for developed countries. The current financial crisis illustrates this very well. High rates of economic growth and high levels of personal consumption in many parts of the developed world were based on debt and unrealistic asset values. Because this was not a sustainable strategy for long-term prosperity, developed countries have entered a period of recession (low or negative economic growth), with far-reaching consequences for the economic, social, political, and environmental prosperity of their citizens.

¹ This document was written by Karen Ruth Adams, faculty advisor, and Emily Tutvedt (2008). Copyright 2011 by Karen Ruth Adams.

² “Charter of the United Nations,” Chapter IX, available at <http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter>

³ General Assembly Resolution A/55/L.2, “United Nations Millennium Declaration,” September 8, 2000, available at <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

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For example, Iceland, which was ranked #1 in terms of human development in 2007/2008, experienced such an acute credit crisis that it had to ask the International Monetary Fund for a loan.⁴

Developing countries have far less margin for error. In such countries, the tradeoffs among economic, social, political and environmental challenges are often very stark. This is especially true for people in extreme poverty. Until 2008, the World Bank defined extreme poverty as living on less than \$1 per day. In 2005, there were approximately 1 billion people living in extreme poverty. Thus, in referring to the problem of extreme poverty, people often refer to “the bottom billion.”

In 2008, due to price increases for food and energy, the World Bank redefined extreme poverty as living on less than \$1.25 per day. With the new poverty line, the number of people living in extreme poverty increased to 1.4 billion, or one of every four persons in the developing world. Although the good news was that this was down from 1.9 billion in 1981, the bad news was that “400 million more people live in poverty than earlier thought.”⁵ These 400 million newly-recognized poor are more numerous than the entire US population of 313 million.⁶

History and Current Events

To meet MDG #1 and eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015, it is necessary to understand the overall challenge of sustainable development, as well as specific facts about the worldwide incidence of poverty and hunger.

The Challenge of Sustainable Development

According to Paul Collier, an economics professor at Oxford University and author of the award-winning book, *The Bottom Billion*, in thinking about development it is important to realize that

The Third World has shrunk. For forty years the development challenge has been a rich world of one billion people facing a poor world of five billion people. The Millennium Development Goals ... encapsulate this thinking. By 2015, however, it will be apparent that this way of conceptualizing development has become outdated. Most of the five billion, about 80 percent, live in countries that are developing, often at amazing speed. The real challenge of development is that there is a group of countries at the bottom that are falling behind, and often falling apart.⁷

Most of the bottom billion live in Africa and Central Asia. Because Collier does not want to stigmatize these countries, he has not made a list of them. He does, however, describe their situation:

In the bottom billion average life expectancy is fifty years, whereas in the other developing countries it is sixty-seven years. Infant mortality -- the proportion of children who die before their fifth birthday is 14

⁴ United Nations Development Programme. “2007/2008 Human Development Index Rankings,” available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>. Eric Pfanner, “Iceland, in Financial Collapse, Is Likely to Need I.M.F. Help,” *New York Times*, October 9, 2008, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/10/business/worldbusiness/10icebank.html?scp=4&sq=iceland&st=cse> International Monetary Fund (IMF), “Iceland and the IMF,” available at <http://www.imf.org/external/country/isl/index.htm>

⁵ Reuters, “World Bank Finds More People Live in Steep Poverty,” *New York Times*, 26 August 2008, available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/27/washington/27worldbank.html> See also World Bank, “World Bank Updates Poverty Estimates for the Developing World,” 17 February 2010, available at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/0..contentMDK:21882162~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:469382,00.html>

⁶ US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), “United States: People and Society,” July 2011, World Factbook, available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>

⁷ Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p. 3.

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percent in the bottom billion, whereas in the other developing countries it is 4 percent. The proportion of children with symptoms of long-term malnutrition is 36 percent in the bottom billion as against 20 percent for the other developing countries.

In the countries where the bottom billion live, development has not only not been sustainable, it has not happened. From 1990 to 2001, a “golden decade” for the rest of the world, the incomes of the bottom billion declined by five percent. Why is this? According to Collier,

the answer is traps. Poverty is not intrinsically a trap, otherwise we would all still be poor. Think, for a moment, of development as chutes and ladders. In the modern world of globalization there are some fabulous ladders; most societies are using them. But there are also some chutes, and some societies have hit them. The countries at the bottom are the unlucky minority, but they are stuck.⁸

Development economists have written about a number of such traps, especially “the poverty trap,” in which poor people “are unable to mobilize the resources to make the investments required for economic growth,” resulting in “a vicious circle of poverty, ill health, and chronic hunger” that worsens with population growth.⁹ In such situations, the focus is on short term survival. A woman needs to eat today, so she fishes in an already over-fished river. A man needs farmland to replace the now infertile ground from the last clearing, so he clears more rainforest. In a few years, he will clear still more. Any policy attempting to remedy the environmental damage will have to address the underlying problem: poverty.

In the poorest countries, diseases such as malaria, which are highly treatable and highly preventable, kill millions of people per year. Yet all that is needed to avoid them are “very modest investments could lead to enormous breakthroughs in human well-being and economic development.” According to economist Jeffrey Sachs,

The UN Millennium Project's Working Group on Malaria ... found that \$2 billion to \$3 billion each year is ... needed to enable poor African countries to achieve substantial control over the disease. The required annual investment would amount to a mere \$2 to \$3 for each of the roughly 1 billion people in the developed world. These sums are therefore tiny for rich countries, but they are out of reach for the impoverished people and governments in the sub-Saharan Africa's malarious regions.¹⁰

Recognition of the poverty trap is why the first MDG is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, and why the final MDG is to develop a global partnership for development. Unless MDG #1 is met, the other MDGs will be difficult to achieve. But MDG #1 cannot be met without help from the developed countries.

According to Collier, the poverty trap is not the only reason poor countries stay poor and grow poorer. There are other traps, as well, including “the conflict trap, the natural resources trap, the trap of being landlocked with bad neighbors, and the trap of bad governance in a small country.”¹¹

In addition, there can be a globalization trap, in which countries that have broken free of the other traps find it difficult to sustain their growth because of external factors such as international financial or environmental crises.¹² Thus, in addition to consideration of short-term vs. long-term sustainability and economic vs. social vs. political vs. environmental stability, one must consider national vs. global sustainability. A country may decide that financing its development with foreign debt is worth the risk. But, if it goes bust, other countries will suffer as well.

⁸ Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, p. 5.

⁹ Jeffrey D. Sachs, “Achieving the Millennium Development Goals — The Case of Malaria,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 352:2, January 13, 2005, available at <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/352/2/115>

¹⁰ Sachs, “Achieving the Millennium Development Goals — The Case of Malaria.”

¹¹ Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, p. 5.

¹² Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, p. 5.

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Similarly, a country may decide that having many coal-fired power plants is worth the environmental cost. But because of the role of carbon emissions in climate change, that country's policy will create sustainability problem for the rest of the world.

Poverty and the difficulty of weighing all of the trade-offs are not the only obstacles to sustainable development. In developed and developing countries alike, there are many actors who benefit from things as they are. When large industries employ large numbers of people or pay significant taxes, they may be able to persuade politicians not to adopt policies that would enhance sustainability.

When economic development creates wealth for some people but leaves others behind, there can be conflicts between the haves and the have-nots. These changes can destabilize society and lead to social unrest. Mexico, for example, has very high levels of income inequality, especially across regions. This has led to high levels of discontentment, especially in the very poor, heavily indigenous, southern region that does not benefit from proximity to US markets. In 1994, the Zapatista army waged a war in the state of Chiapas against the Mexican government as a form of protest against the North American Free Trade Movement (NAFTA), which opened the Mexican economy to competition from the US and Canada.

Internationally, too, there are political obstacles to sustainable development. The first is that governments are the members of most international organizations such as the UN, which means that the very governments that create "the trap of bad governance in a small country" are often the ones voting against or diverting funds from programs that could improve the situation. In addition, development has become a sort of industry, and many development agencies prefer to focus on the countries that are easier to deal with and more pleasant to work in. Thus, according to Collier, "every development agency has difficulty getting its staff to serve in Chad or Laos; the glamour postings are for countries such as Brazil and China. The World Bank has offices in every major middle-income country but not a single person resident in the Central African Republic."¹³

A final, and perhaps the main, obstacle to sustainable development is the sustained commitment of states. This is why MDG #8 (developing a global partnership for development) is so important. Putting the countries of the bottom billion on a path towards sustainable development requires sustained aid and attention from developed states. Yet few developed states have met their foreign aid promises. Sustainable development also requires developing countries to develop an economic, social, political, and environmental base that will allow programs to be sustained when the aid is gone.¹⁴ Part of the challenge is to realize that the details of projects matter. According to William Easterly, "the West spent \$2.3 trillion on foreign aid over the last five decades and still [has] not managed to get 12-cent medicines to children to prevent half of all malaria deaths. The West spent \$2.3 trillion and still [has] not managed to get \$4 bed nets to poor families. The West spent \$2.3 trillion and still [has] not managed to get \$3 to each new mother to prevent five million child deaths."¹⁵ Simply giving more aid without looking at how aid is given, who decides how it is used, what effect it will have on local industry, or how it might change existing social structures is not a solution.

Microcredit: An Over-Hyped Solution?

Some people argue that microcredit -- making loans to individuals and small firms -- is a solution to many of these problems because it allows development to occur from the ground up. People are able to identify their own needs, such as a new roof for their house, and ask for a small loan to help them meet the need. Once they have paid the loan off, another person has a chance to make similar progress, and the first individual has achieved a higher living standard and gained some knowledge about how to make further steps. Over time, through the linkages of many people, a community can experience improvement in many areas of life, and because so many people are

¹³ Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, p. 4.

¹⁴ UN News Centre, "Conditions 'shackling' aid with millennium goals risk plunging poor countries into dependency, Second Committee panel discussion told," November 16, 2007, <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gaef3201.doc.htm>, accessed 9 September 2008.

¹⁵ As quoted by Virginia Postrel, "The Poverty Puzzle: *The White Man's Burden* by William Easterly," *New York Times*, 19 March 2006 [book review], available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/books/review/19postrel.html>

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involved, the improvement is more sustainable than it would be if just a few firms or the national government had received a large loan.

Microcredit was the brainchild of Muhammad Yunus, winner of the Nobel prize in Economics in 2006, who started the Grameen Bank in 1976 to grant small loans to people who have no collateral and therefore no access to loans, except through money lenders charging exorbitant interest. The Grameen bank uses social capital, a system of peer pressure, to induce people into paying back their loans. Women seeking loans are put in groups of five; one of the five receives a loan, and when that loan has been paid back one of the remaining four receives a loan. The women waiting for loans will make sure that the other pays back her loan. When a woman has paid back her loan, she becomes eligible for a somewhat larger loan. These loans are used to start and grow small businesses so that women may support their families, repair their homes, and educate their children.¹⁶

Recently, there have been accusations that the benefits of private microcredit schemes such as those of the Grameen Bank have been over-hyped, and that their individual and social costs have been ignored. Development practitioners and scholars see this as a good thing, because it is encouraging people to recognize the fundamental fact that there will never be a single solution to poverty, hunger, and other development problems. Instead, because these problems are interrelated, they must be addressed at many levels and in many ways by many types of international actors, from individuals, to non-governmental organizations, corporations, national governments, and international organizations such as the UN.¹⁷

One approach of this nature that has had good results is what is known as the “capabilities”¹⁸ or “Oxfam model.” Oxfam International is a non-governmental development organization that is based in the UK. For decades, its philosophy has been to begin every project by trying to identify and respond to peoples’ “felt needs.” Then Oxfam brings together local, national, and international resources to help people help themselves.¹⁹

The Incidence of Extreme Poverty and Hunger in the World Today

In 2000, the GA did not simply declare that it wanted to eradicate all poverty and hunger worldwide by 2015. Instead, in articulating MDG #1, the GA set three, more limited targets:

Target 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day.

Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.

Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.²⁰

Due to the international economic crisis that began in the US housing market in 2008 and spread to the rest of the world via banking crises, rising unemployment, and falling demand for goods and services, progress on all three of these targets has been far less than expected in the early 2000s. According to the UN, “since the economic crisis, more workers find themselves and their families living in extreme poverty,” and “progress to end hunger has been stymied in most regions.”²¹ Nevertheless, according to the UN:

¹⁶ Grameen Bank, “A Short History of Grameen Bank,” available at http://www.grameen-info.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=19&Itemid=114, accessed 15 September 2008

¹⁷ Kentaro Toyama, “Lies, Hype, and Profit: The Truth About Microfinance,” *Atlantic*, 28 January 2011, available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/01/lies-hype-and-profit-the-truth-about-microfinance/70405/>

¹⁸ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹⁹ Oxfam International, <http://www.oxfam.org/>

²⁰ United Nations, “Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty & Hunger,” accessed 14 October 2011, available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml>

²¹ United Nations, “Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty & Hunger.”

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Progress on poverty reduction is still being made, despite significant setbacks due to the 2008-2009 economic downturn, and food and energy crises. The developing world as a whole remains on track to achieve the poverty reduction target by 2015. The overall poverty rate is still expected to fall to 15 per cent by 2015, which translates to around 920 million people living under the international poverty line—half the number in 1990.²²

According to the UN and World Bank, the poverty target of MDG #1 is still reasonable because the economic crisis has not erased all of the gains made from 1990 to 2007. In addition, despite the economic downturn, two countries with very large populations that live on less than \$1.25 per day have continued to carry out policies that enable people to get out of that situation, either by providing them with work or by providing them with money or the basic necessities of life. “In China and India combined, the number of people living in extreme poverty between 1990 and 2005 declined by about 455 million, and an additional 320 million people are expected to join their ranks by 2015.”²³

According to the UN and World Bank, even the projections for sub-Saharan African countries are “slightly more upbeat than previously estimated. Based on recent economic growth performance and forecasted trends, the extreme poverty rate in the region is expected to fall below 36 percent” by 2015, compared to 58 percent in 1990.²⁴ That would not be a 50% reduction in Africa’s poverty rate, but MDG #1 does not aim to halve the population in poverty in each country or region. Instead, MDG #1 seeks to halve the overall percentage of people in poverty worldwide. Thanks to dramatic gains in India and China, this goal may still be in reach.

It would be a remarkable accomplishment for MDG #1 to be realized by 2015, given the development problems that predated the economic crisis and their exacerbation by the crisis. Yet, one wonders if a worldwide target was really the best way to approach the MDGs. As Paul Collier points out, the people at the very bottom are the ones who need help the most. Perhaps, then, the GA-2 should prepare to establish a second round of MDGs to begin in 2015 with one of their targets being to halve the percentage of people living in poverty in each country or region of the world, with particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa.

One of the reasons to focus on Africa is that the UN’s and World Bank’s data for sub-Saharan African countries is very poor. Little is really known about the situation of most people in most African countries. According to the UN, “between 2007 and 2009, the countries that had collected, analysed and disseminated survey data represent only 20 per cent of the region’s population.”²⁵

Yet it is clear that the rate of extreme hunger is higher in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other region of the world. According to the UN, only African populations have “very high” levels of hunger (more than 35% of their population undernourished). Moreover, “high” levels of hunger (25-34% of population undernourished) are rare outside of sub-Saharan Africa. What is more, every sub-Saharan African country except South Africa (which has a large white population) and Gabon (which is rich in oil), has at least “moderately low” levels of hunger (undernourishment between 5-14%).²⁶

²² United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2010*, p. 4, available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/reports.shtml>

²³ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, p. 7, available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/reports.shtml>

²⁴ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, p. 7.

²⁵ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, p. 7.

²⁶ United Nations, *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*, p. 12.

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Unfortunately, these statistics on hunger, which are the most recent available, are for the period from 2005 to 2007 – before the international economic crisis began, and before the outbreak of severe droughts and famine in the Horn of Africa.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), “famine in Somalia has killed tens of thousands of people in recent months and could grow even worse unless urgent action is taken. ...Hundreds of people are dying every day and if we do not act now many more will perish.”²⁷ Specifically, according to the UN, “750,000 Somalis are at risk of starving to death in the coming months.” As Somalis move from their homes in the world’s least-governed country to seek food and other assistance in neighboring countries, they will be vulnerable not only to starvation and disease but also to theft, rape, assault, and murder.²⁸

Previous Committee Work on This Topic

The UN has been at the forefront of sustainable development. In 1980, the UN General Assembly adopted the World Conservation Strategy, which included the new concept of sustainable development. In 1983, the GA established the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) to define the concept and develop a strategy for reaching it. In 1987, the WCED declared that sustainable development is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”²⁹

In 1992, national representatives converged on Rio for the UN Conference on the Environment and Development. This conference affirmed that states have a right to develop and exploit their resources, that poverty eradication would require international cooperation, and that poorer countries should receive greater financial assistance. It was agreed that developed countries would increase their aid budgets to 0.7% of GDP by the year 2000. The Rio conference also established regional and sub-regional commissions to promote sustainable development.³⁰ Finally, the convention adopted Agenda 21, which is a comprehensive framework for dealing with the social and economic aspects of development while also taking care of environmental considerations. The document ends with strategies ranging from increased education, to technology transfers, to changing international institutions.³¹ Among the international institutions created was the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). Since then, the CSD has been folded into the UN’s Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), which sponsors and monitors a variety of sustainable development programs worldwide.³²

One of the DSD’s main objectives is to collect data on development programs so they can learn from one another. One program it has highlighted is in Burkina Faso, where several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that joined forces to promote innovative farming techniques developed by local farmers. The soil is very poor, and labor is very cheap. It was determined that a soil improvement program would be necessary. Some changes were fairly easy to implement; for example, electing not to burn stubble increases organic matter in the soil. Other

²⁷ UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), “Famine in Somalia,” 20 July 2011, available at <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/82387/icode/>

²⁸ Nicholas Kristof, “On Top of Famine, Unspeakable Violence,” *New York Times*, 24 September 2011, available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/25/opinion/sunday/kristof-on-top-of-famine-unspeakable-violence.html?_r=1&scp=9&sq=kristof&st=Search#

²⁹ WCED, “Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development,” A/RES/42/187, December 11, 1987, available at <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/42/ares42-187.htm>

³⁰ Karen A. Mingst and Margaret P. Karns, *The United Nations in the 21st Century*, 3rd Edition. (Boulder: Westview, 2007), 217.

³¹ United Nations Conference on Environment & Development, “Agenda 21,” 1992, <http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?documentID=52>

³² UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Sustainable Development, Commission for Sustainable Development, website, <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/aboutCsd.htm>

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changes were less obvious. Farmers were spreading manure and compost on the fields, but between the sun, the wind, and the rain, the soil was not retaining nutrients. The solution they found was to dig holes, add seed, and cover the seed in organic matter. Termites would chew up the organic matter in the dry season, leaving it sponge-like in the rainy season. This method increased crop yields by three to six times in the 87 villages willing to test it.³³

Climate change has increasingly come to the center of the discussion about sustainable development. The fact that China is now the largest emitter of carbon dioxide has many wondering if the planet can truly sustain the kind of economic growth that its current development policy seeks. A recent Human Development Report published by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) focuses almost entirely on climate change as the dominant threat to development. Climate change is especially dangerous for the poorest regions. People living in what are now barely inhabitable locales will likely have to relocate when faced with rising temperatures and changing precipitation patterns. This migration will likely cause conflict as locals compete with newcomers for scarce resources. Projected increases in droughts and flooding could interfere substantially with global food production, and wreak havoc on subsistence and small-scale farmers.³⁴

Conclusion

Sustainable development is a worthy goal and a demanding strategy with many elements: short term and long term; economic, social, political, and environmental; and local, national, and global. Sustainable development requires careful consideration and commitment to helping those in extreme poverty. Some countries see this as a sacrifice, while others see it as a necessity for their own long term economic, social, political, and environmental sustainability. How UN member states as a group see this issue and what they do about it will have implications for more than a billion people for decades to come.

In developing your country's position on this issue, consider the following questions:

- If your country is a developing country, how is it doing in meeting the MDGs? What are its greatest accomplishments and challenges? Where does it receive and need the most assistance?
- If your country is a developed country, what is its standard of living? How is it doing in helping other states meet the MDGs? What percentage of GDP does it give in foreign aid? To what countries and what type of projects does it contribute? Where and how could it do more?
- Is your country's development sustainable in the various ways discussed in this paper? In particular, is it politically and environmentally sustainable? Why or why not? How could it be made more so?
- What should the UN's development priorities be? Is it appropriate to think of development as a right? Is it correct to focus on extreme poverty and hunger? Is one of the elements of sustainability more important than the others?
- How can and should the GA-2 encourage UN member states to pursue sustainable development?
- What should the GA-2 do to lay the groundwork for a new round of MDGs when the current ones expire in 2015? How should the goals, the targets, and the methods for gathering and evaluating data be changed?

³³ UN Division for Sustainable Development, "Zai Technology in Burkina Faso," <http://webapps01.un.org/dsd/caseStudy/public/displayDetailsAction.do?code=584>

³⁴ UN Development Programme, "Summary Human Development Report 2007/2008 Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a divided world," http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_20072008_Summary_English.pdf

Recommended Reading

Kristof, Nicholas D. "Nicholas D. Kristof's Columns." *New York Times*. Available at <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/opinion/editorialsandoped/oped/columnists/nicholasdkristof/index.html>

Nicholas Kristof is a *New York Times* columnist who often writes about poverty, hunger, and other development issues. In addition, he has a strong interest in Africa and often posts riveting videos of his interviews with ordinary (and extraordinary) people on that continent. Reading several of the stories and watching a few of the videos on this site will give you some good background information, as well as some creative ideas, to include in your position paper and resolution.

United Nations. *Millennium Development Goals Report 2011*. United Nations. Available at <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/reports.shtml>

This report details the progress that has been made in meeting each of the MDG goals and targets in particular countries and regions and offers suggestions for improvement.

United Nations Development Programme. "Human Development Report 2007/2008. Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World." Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr2007-2008/>

This annual report categorizes states by level of development, based on several indicators, including GDP per capita and literacy. It provides an alternative way to think about development in your country. The 2007/2008 report also addressed the potentially devastating effects of climate change on development. You can seek your country's ranking for the current year at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). "Millennium Development Goals: Tracking Country Progress." Available at <http://www.undp.org/mdg/countries.shtml>

On this site, you can read country reports on the Millennium Development Goals. Focus on MDG #1 (eradicating poverty and hunger) and MDG #8 (increasing international cooperation, especially foreign aid from developed countries).

United Nations Division for Sustainable Development. "CSD Indicators of Sustainable Development." 3rd edition. October 2007. Available at <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/factsheet.pdf>

This document provides a set of 58 indicators (facts) about sustainable development. In addition, this website provides access to DSD information on particular countries. See, for example, "National Information by Country or Organization," available at <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm>

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). "News Archive 2011." Available at <http://www.fao.org/news/archive/stories-2011/en/>

On this site, you can keep up with the latest news on the famine in Somalia, global food prices, and hunger. You can also read about successful projects to alleviate such problems.

World Bank. "Poverty headcount ratio at \$1.25 a day (PPP) (% of population)." Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.DDAY>

The World Bank is the main source of development statistics. On this page, the Bank provides information about what percentage of the population in each country of the world lives on less than \$1.25 per day.