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#Eradicate Poverty

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Millennial Goals

Planet Earth as viewed from a great distance is an insignificant spec of solar dust. While it’s certainly not a solar fusion furnace pumping out the building blocks of our universe, this inconceivably miniscule rock is home. It is here on Earth ,that seemingly out of nowhere, animated life forms took hold and have been clinging on for dear life ever since. Humans are perhaps the most perplexing of all life forms that came to be because of an innate sense of wonder. Our unique pursuits have bestowed upon us great power, and with great power comes even greater responsibility. It is with this assertion in mind, that the United Nations convened to establish a set of millennial goals in order to better the world around us.

In order to asses the progress we have made towards these goals we must first understand what they are. The United Nations has delegated eight arenas in which chance must be made and established a timeline for their completion. These goals include :

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: A) halve the portion of people who live on less than $1.25 per day and B) halve the number of people suffering from starvation between 1990 and 2015.
2. Achieve universal primary education: ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling
3. Promote gender equality: eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015
4. Reduce child mortality: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate
5. Improve maternal health : Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio
6. Combat HIV, Malaria and other diseases: A) Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. B) Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.
7. Improve environmental conditions: A) Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources. B) Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. C) Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers
8. Develop a Global partnership for development: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction? Both nationally and internationally)

While all of these resolutions are worthy of international cooperation and resources, the environment is the most pressing issue of our time. If our planet becomes inhospitable than social, moral, and economic issues will be superseded by the lack of life and resources on our planet. Due to deforestation, green house gas emissions and pollution we are currently experiencing a mass extinction event whose magnitude has only been rivaled by six other events in the history of earth. There has not been such a rapid loss of biodiversity in the world since the Cretaceous–Paleogene extinction event 66 million years ago. One major concern is the loss of mega fauna (large vertebrates). They live long lifespans but do not produce many offspring in a lifetime. There absence has been shown to have detrimental “shake down” effects on their respective ecosystems. Even more pressing is the rate of deforestation. Deforestation results in damage to air quality as well as soil quality. Soil quality is of paramount importance because the vast majority of earth’s eco system and human agriculture depends on plant life that cannot grow in the barren wastelands deforestation leaves behind. The ramifications of poor air quality are quickly becoming apparent. Beijing China is learning the importance of air quality first hand. Beijing's concentration of pm 2.5 particles (particles who’s size allow them to top enter the bloodstream via the lungs) has reached and subsequently exceeded 500 micrograms /m^3 (the maximum measurement on most air pollution apparatus). To put Beijing’s pollution into perspective, the World Health Organization recognizes 25 micrograms/m^3 as a “safe” level of air pollution. The smog in China has been so thick recently that it has brought agriculture to a standstill and threatens to cause mass starvation.

The problems we face today may appear to be more daunting than ever. This is a common misconception not only of our time but of all times. In reality, there will always be challenges to face but we have come a long way since the days of our ancestors and even our parents. The fact that we have acknowledged our global shortcomings and set out to remedy them is a testament to our progress in it’s own right. Since 1990 there has been a nearly 50 % decrease in the number of starving children. Despite impressive progress at the beginning decade access to primary education has not improved in recent years, especially in conflict ridden areas. Women are occupying more positions in government, business, and science and most countries have established legal presidents to ensure gender equality. Despite substantial progress ,the goals for the reduction of Child mortality have no been met. While AIDS is still a pressing issue, the scientific community has found ways to prevent HIV from developing into AIDS and there has even been instances of cured AIDS following bone marrow transplants from decedents of bubonic plague survivors. Environmental progress has not been made despite substantial efforts on the part of many organizations across the globe. Official development assistance is currently higher than it’s ever been and has met all goals set in this regard. While on paper, the UN may not have achieved all of it’s goals, the real goal in the first place was to make progress and we most certainly have.

Work Cited

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