



# UNDP

## MITMUNC 2014

Greetings MITMUNC 2014 Delegates,

Welcome to MITMUNC 2014 and to the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP). My name is Sabrina Ahmed Iqbal, and I am your head chair for this committee. I will be chairing along with my vice chair, Jiapei Chen.

The UNDP is a part of the General Assembly as an executive board. In order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the UNDP focuses on poverty reduction, establishing democratic governance, environmental and energy sustainability, and crisis prevention. The two topics we have chosen for debate encompass all of the main issues the UNDP focuses on. We hope you find this committee to be interesting and thought provoking about some of the most pressing issue in developing countries. In order to provide further understanding of the topics at hand, there will be special presentations during committee by students currently solving the same issues being debated.

In this committee, we are looking for specificity in resolution papers along with originality in problem solving. There are many typical or generic solutions to the topics at hand, but we are looking for better, more efficient, and more original solutions. So, do not be afraid to think outside the box.

Some information about me and my vice chair:

I am a freshman thinking about majoring in mechanical engineering with a concentration in biological engineering. I have been in model U.N. clubs since middle school and have organized high school conferences in the past. I try to keep up with global issues as best I can which is why I like to be involved in MUN.

Jiapei Chen, the vice chair for this committee is also a freshman. She is interested in International Affairs as well as Linguistics and Cognitive Sciences. Her favorite subject is biology, and she would like to major in bioengineering.

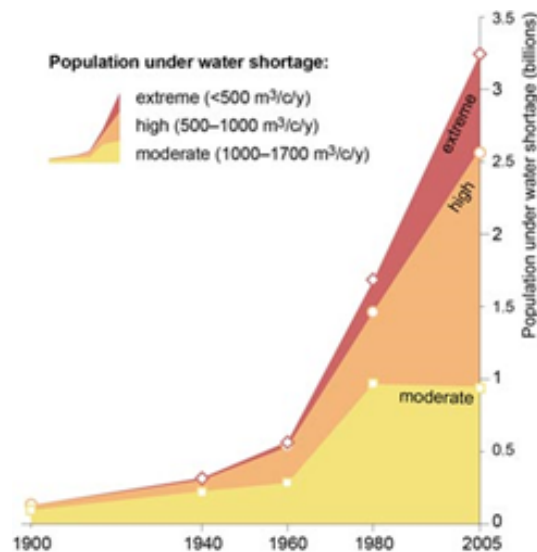
I look forward to hearing stimulating debates in February,

*Sabrina Ahmed Iqbal*

# Water, Water everywhere and not a drop to spare

## Introduction and History:

In the world today, 1.1 billion people do not have clean drinking water<sup>1</sup>. There is a global water crisis and much of it is in third world developing countries. Water shortage has been a problem since the 1800s. A sharp increase in water shortage occurred in the mid-1900s. This water crisis stems from the rapid population growth. Researchers in Finland and the Netherlands have found that population increase has had four times the impact on water shortage than climate change<sup>2</sup> has had. The graph depicts how much of the worldwide population is facing varying levels of water shortage.



Water shortage leads to further poverty in regions and it inhibits development. An example is how much of Sub-Saharan Africa is faced with economic water scarcity. Here, there is a lack of monetary means with which to develop infrastructure.

Much of this water crisis, however, is caused by people. It is a fact that there is sufficient freshwater available in the world for 7 billion people. Yet, according to the

U.N. Water for Life, this water “is distributed unevenly and too much of it is wasted, polluted, and unsustainably managed”<sup>3</sup>.

The other issue at hand is the energy crisis. Current sources of energy, most commonly fossil fuels, are not renewable forms and are not readily available in many developing nations. Further, a lack of sustainable energy can lead to poverty and a lack of development, and many forms of nonrenewable energy cause pollution. Thus, the topics of alternative energy and the water shortage are intertwined. A trend in using water as a source of alternative energy has developed in recent decades.

## Subtopics and the Current Situation:

Currently, 34 percent of the UNDP’s budget is focused on poverty reduction while 16 percent is focused on energy and sustainable development<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, U.N. Water has been playing a major role in managing the water crisis. The U.N. General Assembly established on July 28, 2010 that having water and sanitary conditions was a human right. They further proclaimed that human rights are realized when people have access to these resources. The General Assembly passed a Resolution that calls on nations and organizations to give monetary aid, help with capacity-building, and aid in technology transfer so that developing countries can have safe, affordable, and clean drinking water<sup>5</sup>.

The U.N. Water Thematic Priority Area on Transboundary Waters was established to coordinate the efforts and actions by the various member nations and partners of

U.N.-Water. They allow for information exchange and foster a united front. They also work to promote in the political arena the importance of protecting, sustaining, and using transboundary waters in order to bring larger awareness to the issue of water shortage<sup>5</sup>.

The use of water for alternative energy and a means of poverty reduction can be seen in the recent happenings in Myanmar. In Myanmar, many villages are beginning to use micro hydropower plants as their main power source. Previously, they relied on firewood

Another example of current hydropower technology is the Ethiopian Renaissance Dam. This dam, which is currently being built, is intended to supply hydropower that will then be sold in Ethiopia and neighboring countries. The creation of this dam brought to light the extent to which water is valued, and how precious of a commodity it has become. Conflicts between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia have arisen in what is called the “Water Wars”<sup>7</sup>. As part of this dispute, the Egyptian Government claims Ethiopia is infringing on Egypt’s portion of the Nile. However, the Ethiopian government states that they are only making up for past discrepancies in water sharing and distribution. This encompasses the issue at hand. Water is naturally unequally distributed causing certain nations to have an abundant supply while others have little to no supply of clean drinking water.

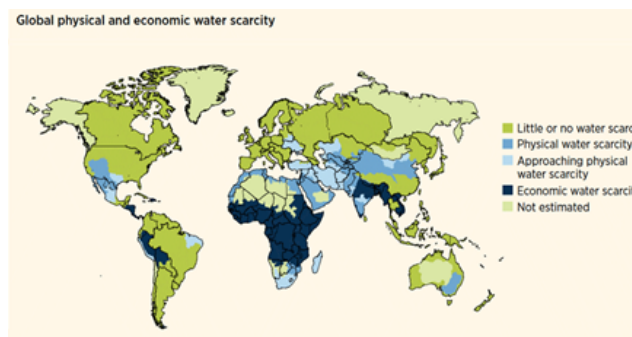
causing many families to venture into forests 12 km away to obtain wood. 12 such micro hydropower plants were built using community-based organizations that were greatly helped by the UNDP. The impact of this new energy source is dramatic in Myanmar. It has led to a steadier source of energy for families. Many now own televisions and are able to view programs that are further educating them about sanitation, hygiene, and the importance of clean drinking water. The cost to build and implement these hydropower plants was only \$3,250<sup>6</sup>.

### Possible Country Blocs:

Possible country blocs become evident when the map of water distribution is considered. Most of the Western Hemisphere does not have water scarcity issues while most of the African nations do have high scarcity. 20 percent of the population in Eastern Asian and North African nations has faced some type of water shortage ever since 1900. Water shortage developed in the Middle East much later in the 1960s. Presently, South Asia has extremely high water shortages with more than 90 percent of the population facing this problem<sup>2</sup>.

### Challenges and Possible Solutions:

A possible solution to this water scarcity problem could be establishing a trading system for water in which nations that have more abundant access to clean drinking water can supply water to nations with higher water scarcity. This system could be similar to how oil is currently traded throughout the world. A body that is similar to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) could be created to head the trade of water. A



body that would monitor this trade could also be created to ensure efficiency and equal distribution.

A challenge that is presented is the ethics of water usage. When so many nations lack sufficient clean water, is it ethical for those that have enough to use their surplus for energy? Limitations and guidelines could be set to determine which nations can and cannot utilize water for energy. The question is how can a balance be established in which all nations can have both sufficient clean water and sufficient hydropower energy?

### Questions to Consider:

1. Is it ethical to use water for energy even though many countries do not have enough drinking water?
2. How can a system of water trade be monitored and guaranteed to work efficiently if such a system were to be implemented?
3. How can drinking water be made into a more sustainable resource (think about more scientific approaches)?
4. What are the pros and cons of using water as alternative energy?

5. How can the present system, the one set forth and implemented by the UN, be improved?

1. "World Water Council - Water Crisis." *World Water Council - World Water Council*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/library/archives/water-crisis/>>.
2. Kalaugher, Liz. "The rise and rise of water shortage - environmentalresearchweb." *Environmental Research - environmentalresearchweb*. N.p., 7 Sept. 2010. Web. 23 Nov. 2013. <<http://environmentalresearchweb.org/cws/article/news/43685>>.
3. "Water scarcity | International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015." *Welcome to the United Nations: It's Your World*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/scarcity.shtml>>.
4. "UNDP Projects." *UNDP Projects*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Nov. 2013. <<http://open.undp.org/#2013>>.
5. "Activities." *Welcome to UN-Water*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.unwater.org/activities.html>>.

# Boost the Economies of Poverty-Stricken Cities Through Tapping Local Resources

## Introduction and Background

Since establishing the eradication of extreme poverty as one of its Millennium Development Goals (MDG) in 2000, U.N. Development Program (UNDP) has worked hard to improve the situation in many poverty-stricken areas throughout the world. In the past three decades, the number of extreme poor has dropped by 650 million; nevertheless, there are still over a billion people suffering from extreme poverty [1].

The solution to poverty is not easy: not only it involves boosting the economy, but also it has to be inclusive and equitable, prioritizing the needs of the marginalized, especially of women in the targeted developing countries. Some of the more specific goals of UNDP to eradicate poverty include: build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities of poor-stricken regions, scale up local development innovations, promote inclusive globalization, and strengthen resource management for sustainable human development [1].

In the past, UNDP has attempted to solve the poverty issue by increasing employment opportunities through local development and providing financial education to low-income populations. For instance, UNDP's *Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme* created 12,000 permanent jobs in the occupied Palestinian Territory through supporting the development of microenterprises [1]. UNDP also collaborated with the IKEA foundation to train over 12,000 women to become financially literate in India [1]. In Rwanda,

UNDP worked with the U.N. Capital Development Fund (UNDCF) to implement the *Building an Inclusive Financial Sector in Rwanda* (BIFSIR) program, which enabled low-income populations, especially women and youth, to access affordable financial services [2].

For MITMUNC VI, UNDP will focus on two ways to help eradicate extreme poverty. One of them will be to boost the travel industry in poor areas, through which we hope to establish a sustainable economic development in these designated regions. The other will be to secure women's financial independence, encourage them to start their own businesses, and help them to become financially independent. Delegates may focus on one of these two ways as well as find their solution in a combination of the two.

## Boosting the Travel Industry

In 2011, the travel industry, along with tourism, contributed \$6.3 trillion to the global economy, which accounted for 9.1 percent of the world's GDP through its direct and induced effects.[3] Even more impressively, international tourism industry continues to grow despite economic slowdowns and financial crises. According to U.N. World Trade Organization (WTO), international tourist arrivals increased by 4.4 percent in 2010, a year known for volatile politics in the Middle East and North Africa, major natural disasters in Japan, and a delayed global economic recovery [3]. Nevertheless, the travel industry in general fares better in advanced economies than in



developing regions, which presents this year's UNDP delegates the question and challenge of how to expand the industry in these less advanced economies.

In the past, UNDP has partnered up with UNESCO to preserve Ethiopia's cultural heritage by providing a three-year program to train over 100,000 of its participants on how to strengthen their skills in producing traditional crafts [4]. This preservation of local cultural heritage can very well help the region to increase its tourism appeal. UNDP also established the Poverty Thematic Trust Fund (PTTF), which funds innovative, catalytic and strategic projects that aim at promoting inclusive development [5]. Delegates are encouraged to make use of the PTTF to fund effective and innovative projects in designated countries in order to promote local travel industries. Delegates should also keep in mind to establish a sustainable economic development in the chosen regions, which means that any policy should not over-exploit natural resources and leave behind negative impacts on the local environment as well as social customs.

### **Securing Women Financial Independence**

Approximately 70 percent of the two billion poor are women, not to mention that almost two thirds of illiterate adults are women [6]. This means that emphasis should not only give to educate women, but also enable them to become financially independent. As a result, women should be seen as a wonderful resource with tremendous potentials when it comes to solving poverty. However, the conditions of women worldwide are far from ideal. For instance, 75 percent of women cannot get

bank loans because of their unstable jobs and the fact that they are not entitled to own properties. In fact, women consist of half of the world's population but only 1 percent of the world's wealth [7]. Delegates of this year's UNDP are thus presented with the task of empowering women through education and financial assistance in designated regions.

In the past, UNDP has helped Cambodia to empower women economically by providing training programs and entrepreneurship initiatives [8]. It also established the Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Program (DEEP), a \$121 million project funded through the Islamic Development Bank, to provide microfinance opportunities in regions like the West Bank and Gaza [9]. Moreover, UNDP launched a MDG Trust Fund to support projects in nine countries as well as globally. Some of the projects that MDG Trust Fund helped to realize include: assisting the government of Lao People's Democratic Republic in delivering improved services for women, providing job training and financial support to women in Haiti, and promoting local entrepreneurship and access to microfinance in Darfur, Sudan [10]. Delegates are encouraged to make use of DEEP and the MDG Trust Fund to establish effective and innovative projects in designated areas to help women achieve financial independence through educational training programs.

### **Possible country blocs and positions:**

Colombia, Timor-Leste, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Rwanda are five targeted countries for the MDG Trust Fund and should consider working together to provide

a joint solution. Sudan and Haiti can also pair up with more economically advanced countries like the Republic of Korea and U.S. of America to arrive at some possible solution.

## Further Readings

1. Tourism in developing countries:  
Refining a useful tool for economic development  
<http://fama2.us.es:8080/turismo/turismo1/economia%20del%20turismo/economia%20del%20turismo/tourism%20and%20developing%20countries.pdf>
2. How tourism can alleviate poverty  
<http://www.bbc.com/travel/blog/20130320-how-tourism-can-alleviate-poverty>
3. The Global Gender Gap Report 2013  
[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GenderGap\\_Report\\_2013.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf)

[1]  
<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/fast-facts/english/FF-Poverty-Reduction.pdf>

[2]  
<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/fast-facts/english/FF-Poverty-Reduction-and-Local-Development.pdf>

[3]  
<http://www.worldfinancialreview.com/?p=2740>

[4]  
[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/successstories/in-ethiopia-cultural-crafts-help-lift-families-out-of-poverty-/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/successstories/in-ethiopia-cultural-crafts-help-lift-families-out-of-poverty/)

[5]  
[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/poverty-thematic-trust-fund-pttf-/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/poverty-thematic-trust-fund-pttf/)

[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/poverty-thematic-trust-fund-pttf-/](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/poverty-thematic-trust-fund-pttf/)

[6]  
<http://www.3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2010/07/womens-freedom.html>

[7]  
[http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/focus\\_areas/focus\\_gender\\_and\\_poverty.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/focus_areas/focus_gender_and_poverty.html)

[8]  
<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/fast-facts/english/FF-Poverty-Reduction.pdf>

[9]  
<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/successstories/a-flourishing-business-woman-no-longer-only-a-housewife/>

[10]  
<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/povertyreduction/korea-mdg-trust-fund/>