

# "CLIMATE CHANGE, MDGs AND WASH.... Which is Challenging which?"

## What is Climate Change and the MDGs?

*Climate Change and Global Warming refer to an increase in average global temperatures. Natural events and human activities are believed to be contributing to an increase in average global temperatures.*

*The MDGs are international target to half the World Poverty by 2015 or to reduce the world poverty by half.*

### **PAPER OBJECTIVE:**

to sensitize policy makers, intervention agencies, donor organizations, NGOs, CBOs, philanthropists and other NSAs (Non state Actors) on the need to build with climate change in view in each and all aspects of their intervention.

To sensitize the above organizations on the need to focus resources on projects aim at mitigating and combating climate change along side their target goals.

To sensitize the policy makers on the imperative need to incorporate climate change mitigation into international and national policies and make it part of all development projects.

## **1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger**

Climate change is seriously increasing the poverty lever especially in developing countries. While MDG is targeting on eradicating extreme poverty in one end, Climate Change is exacerbating it at the other end. If Climate Change is not put into proper control, meeting this target by 2020 would be highly implausible. The level of drought in the north and flooding in the south would make agricultural practices difficult and this is going to be an impending tragedy on the entire globe. In the mean time, in the Himalayan, the water that feeds most of the world rivers and streams is disappearing which implies that agricultural practice would be adversely affected.

"Africa's Lake Chad, once a landmark for astronauts circling the earth, is now difficult for them to locate. Surrounded by Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria . . . , the lake has shrunk by 95 percent since the 1960s. The soaring demand for irrigation water in that area is draining dry the rivers and streams the lake depends on for its existence. As a result, Lake Chad may soon disappear entirely, its whereabouts a mystery to future generations" (Plan B 2.0—Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble, by Lester R. Brown). So, you can imaging how this would affect food security in this part of the world!

Since climate change would affect the annual rainfall in these regions, only little rain would be available to recharge their lakes and dams thus making irrigation farming difficult to sustainably practice. This would adversely affect food security. One might rationalize that after all drought would not affect the south but we should also realize that as Climate Change continues to intensify flooding in the south, many lands that supposed to be used for agricultural purposes and this would make agricultural practice difficult to be sustainably practice as well. There is no room and time for procrastination. We need to act decisively because food security is at stake.

## **2. Achieve Universal Primary Education**

During flooding and water related disasters (which has been proved to be induced by climate change), people get destabilized, children become wandered about and displaced. People suddenly find themselves in conditions they are unprepared. The education of their children would be the number one prize that would be paid in exchange for food, cloth & shelter. During drought children are mostly used to assist in searching day and night for food and water for their families thus abandoning school. With increase in sickness and related calamities, most children are likely to face interference in their educational life. Malnutrition for instance, brings about lower rates of concentration in school. Since climate change has high potentials toward affecting parent's economics status, they may no longer able to fund their children's education which may lead to all or some of the children dropping for others. All stakeholders in this sector should plan with climate change in view if they are to plan towards sustainable development and achieve this MDGs target.

## **3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Woman**

As global warning intensified climate change, the target to empower women as part of decision making, governing and self-dependent arms of the society would hardly be achieved. This is because as climate change threatens the globe with drought, food scarcity, water scarcity, desertification, etc, women would be wholly involved searching for food, water, fire wood and other domestic activities especially in developing countries while the men would sit at home. Because of the effect of desertification, women would have to involve more in deforestation thus aggravating climate change. Although, this challenge varies from one part of the world to another, however, women in comparison to men have limited access to decision-making & economic assets which has been historically proved and which would aggravate if climate change is not put into proper control. It is imperative therefore that a gender analysis be applied to all aspect of climate change and that gender experts should be consulted to spell out individual gender's role in combating climate change so that sustainable development would be focus driven.

## **4. Reduce Child Mortality by $\frac{2}{3}$ for Children Under Five**

This is one of the most sensitive aspects where climate change challenges the MDGs. This is because it has an immediate long term effect on child mortality. Every year, 1.5 million children die of diarrhoea which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest single cause of child mortality and kills more children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined (WHO/UNICEF 2009). Malaria kills more than 1 million children and pregnant women in Africa, central Asia & Latin America. It causes 500 million illnesses annually. Around 40% of the world's population are currently living in malaria – endemic areas. Climate change would expand this range especially as global temperature rises. High temperature favours the condition at which mosquito breeds. As climate change intensifies flooding, diseases like diarrhoeal, malaria, cholera, typhoid, Hepatitis-A, dysentery etc would be increased. Children are most likely to be affected by malaria-carrying mosquito because they lack immunity to malaria and since they play outside at nights especially in this climate change induced era.

Climate change would also increase the geographical distribution of Lyme diseases which is spread by tick. Children are more vulnerable because they tend to play on the ground where they can easily be exposed to tick. Due to the low immunity, children under 5 are the potential primary target.

## **5.Improve Maternal Health**

As one of the primary stakeholders in the vulnerability group, women, especially the pregnant and the nursing ones would be adversely affected by climate change. The combined effect of climate change on goal 3 and 4 would definitely be applicable for goal five. We are experiencing the impact of climate change all around us now. We are looking forward to an unprecedented effect beyond the climate change modelling estimation effect. The rate of maternal mortality would be on increase because pregnant and nursing mothers would be restlessly looking for food, water, fire-wood and some other necessities especially in the developing countries.

More so, since water quality would be affected, pregnant women as well as nursing mothers would be threatened by water borne diseases. The resulting flooding would also exacerbate poor sanitation related diseases which would definitely affect maternal health. It is imperative therefore that all programmes designed to reduce maternal mortality in achieving the MDGs are designed with climate change in view. There is need for all stakeholders in this field to look at the areas where climate change could possibly affect the sustainability of their programme and incorporate its mitigation in their project. This should be reflected in their risk analysis and the control measure should be spelt out.

Awareness education on climate change to the grass-root level should be re-intensified. The media, the Civil Society Organisation (CSOs), Non Governmental Organization (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), Parents, Teachers Association (PTs) and other formal/informal institutions should be involved because they are all primary stakeholders in disseminating awareness education on

climate change. Working with climate change experts in educating these groups and working in collaboration with these groups in every level of implementation would go a long way in building towards sustainable development. Donor organizations should also make climate change one of their primary focus, bearing in mind that the huge amount of money invested into sustainable development towards achieving the MDGs would be a waste if climate change is not put into proper control. There is need to act precisely, urgently and decisively.

## **6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases**

People coping with HIV and AIDS related illnesses, malaria and other diseases are not immune to the effect of climate change. Since the improvement of the health of the sufferers and the eradication of these diseases is the primary target of this goal, we have to be duly concerned about how climate change would adversely affect meeting this target.

Research has shown that good water and sanitation practices improve our immune system and reduce our chance of contracting HIV virus. In other words, the immune system of the people living with HIV and AIDS related illnesses would be better – off if they have access to potable water and sanitation. Since global warming/climate change is affecting water quality and induce poor sanitary environment, we should be expecting this to affect the health quality of people living with HIV/ AIDS.

As mentioned earlier, malaria causes 500 million illnesses annually and more than 1 million deaths, mostly among children and pregnant women in Africa, central Asia and Latin America. This value is subject to an unprecedented increase if climate change is not decisively controlled. Already, 40% of the world population currently lives in malaria-endemic areas. Climate change would cause greater exposure. Global warming may have already exacerbated malaria outbreak in North America, given that locally transmitted malaria had occurred in Texas, Georgia, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Toronto.

Diarrhea is the second highest single cause of child morbidity and it's said to be killing 2.4 million annually of which 1.62 million are children under five. It kills more than malaria, measles and AIDS combined. As we all know, all diarrhoeal diseases is caused as a result of poor or contaminated water provision, poor sanitation and unhygienic practices. Climate change would intensify the spreading of diarrhoeal diseases most especially in developing countries because of water borne diseases and unsafe environment. Air borne diseases are not an exemption when it comes to climate change induced diseases. Since we know that everything started in the space, air pollution has been identified as primary cause of global warming, and increase in air pollution will affect air quality, thus inducing air borne diseases. So, in promoting or combating diseases to meet the MDGs, air quality controls should be taken into consideration.

## **7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

There is no much explanation needed on how climate change would affect this goal seven. This goal is the primary target of climate change and at the same time the solution to climate change verse-versa. How do I mean, if we get goal seven right, or if we give goal seven the priority it deserves, climate change would be mitigated to the bearest minimal.

Environmental sustainability is the key factor in combating climate change. In other words, ensuring environmental sustainability is the main goal with various targets aiming at combating climate change. This is the general opinion and beliefs. Anyway while these beliefs and opinion are not disputable, however, for environmental sustainability to cut across all phases of sustainable development as far as Climate Change is concerned, all stakeholders in each goal of the MDGs should also recognized the fact that environmental sustainability cut across their own aspect of the MDGs.

Until there is collective realization by all stakeholders that a collective drift of partnership can take place which mark the central target of goal 8.

Therefore, ensuring environmental sustainability should be part of each of the MDGs. All stakeholders in these fields should be made to recognize this. They all have to incorporate environmental sustainability with climate change in view to their developmental programmes from pre-policy to post-implementation stage. All hands should be on desk to advocate these effects of climate change on the MDGs.

## **8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

Climate change is also affecting global partnership if not seen and viewed from the right perspective.

All intervention agencies that focuses primarily in each or some of the MDGs should realize the fact that climate change affects their own aspects of sustainable development and thus the imperative need to combat or mitigate the effect of climate change. This collective realization would bring about a collective action for global partnership. This will enable us to act precisely and decisively. When every aspect of the MDGs is designed or re-designed with climate change in view, then more resources would be focused to this aspect of development, which would reinforce a top-down drift of partnership.

## **WASH AND THE MDGs**

What is **WASH** and what is **MDGs**?

**WASH** is an acronym used to represent “**Water Sanitation and Hygiene**” projects.. Originally it is called WES (Water and Environmental Sanitation) but as at 2007, after

the UN has realized that any Water and Sanitation project without Hygiene Education is not completed and would not be sustainable, they adopted the acronym that incorporate hygiene into the existing one. It is an integral part of the MDGs.

The MDGs are international target to half the World Poverty by 2015 or to reduce the world poverty by half.

## Background MDGs and WASH

- **September 2000:** The United Nations General Assembly adopted the eight Millennium Development Goals that challenged the global community to reduce poverty and increase the health and well-being of all peoples.
- **September 2002:** The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, reaffirmed these goals (the MDGs) and adds access to basic sanitation as centre piece of the poverty eradication commitments.

The target to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015 was defined in the Johannesburg Plan of Action (JPOI)

- **April 2004:** The Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD – 12) held in New York, reviewed the state of implementation of the Goals and Targets in the thematic areas of water, sanitation and human settlements. CSD -12 identified constraints to and continuing challenges for the implementation of these goals including the J POI targets on access to basic sanitation.
- **April 2005:** on the basis of the foregoing, CSD/-13 recommended policy action to be implemented by member States in addressing these challenges.
- **December 2006:** The United Nations General Assembly decided to declare 2008 the International Year of Sanitation (GA Resolution 61/192 of 20 December 2006)

The General Assembly encouraged member of State to take advantage of the International Year to increase awareness of the importance of sanitation to promote action at all levels, taking in to account, the recommendations of CSD-13.

**November 2007:** The International Year of Sanitation (IYS) was formally launched at the United Nation Headquarters in New York.

## HOW WASH CAN BE USED TO ACHIEVE THE WHOLE MDGs

It has been proved beyond every reasonable doubt that Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) are crucial to poverty reduction and form the bed rock of a healthy, productive society. WASH Project will make a significant contribution to reaching the goal especially through action to half the proportion of people without access to safe water and sanitation, which are specific target within goal Seven. Sanitation is a good economic investment. Improved sanitation has positive impacts on economic growth and poverty reduction. Without health and education, people will continue to remain trapped in the stranglehold of poverty and disease. Below is how WASH relates to each of the MDGs:

### 1. ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER

Time-Consuming Water Collection greatly contributes to poverty. WASH programme will provide convenient water supply and this will allow people to look after their family's water quickly, freeing up the rest of the day for earning much-needed cash or tending to agriculture. In addition, healthy people are better able to absorb nutrients in food than those suffering from water-related disease, particularly worms which rob their host of calories.

There are important side benefit from the establishment of wells and Pumps. Excess water is often used to nurture kitchen garden which provides a sustainable sources of vegetable to vary people's diets. WASH will also advocate the use of composing latrine which produces a free, viable and sustainable alternative to expensive and often polluting fertilizers

## **2. Achieve Universal Primary Education**

School attendant especially among school girls is affected by time-consuming water-carrying burdens and poor health. A lack of adequate sanitation facilities in School also prevents girls from attending schools, particularly when they are menstruating. Convenient access to clean water and improved sanitation facilities in schools not only give children time and an appropriate environment, it also help to recruit and retain Professional teachers. So, Water and Sanitation facilities in schools make school more appealing and attractive to children even more than their homes. So, that will make them to yearn more for schooling than staying at home especially in developing world.

## **3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Woman**

It is vital for women to be actively involved in all stages of community Projects. With their details knowledge of local water resources and as the main user of future Water Points, women are best placed to choose the ideal location for new water project. Women will also be used as Hygiene Educators as they would be able to talk to other women freely. Involving women in projects has a positive impact on women positions and status in the community and in the society at large. Women are given the priority as a must to be members of Community **WASHCOM** (Water Sanitation and Hygiene Committee). Any Committee they are forming in the community in respect to WASH project would encompass men and women with gender equality in view.

## **4. Reduce Child Mortality by $\frac{2}{3}$ for Children Under Five**

Children are most vulnerable to those diseases that result from lack of water, injection of polluted water, poor sanitation and unhygienic practices. Diarrhoeal is the biggest single killer of children in the developing world where 5,000 children die every day from water related illnesses. In Nigeria a child die at every 4minutes due to same reason. Hygiene Education, Potable Water Provision, Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Innovative Programme, School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) Programmes will and put in places, measures to improve the health conditions of the children

## **5. Improve Maternal Health**

During pregnancy, women in developing countries still have to travel far to collect water and a lack of Sanitation facility and available water mean that basic hygiene practices cannot be carried out effectively. After child birth, women are often unable to wash themselves or the baby. Access to clean water and sanitation help woman to minimise their chances of contracting water born and poor sanitation related diseases which maternal mortality and ill health to the innocent Baby or themselves

## **6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases**

Over a billion people in the world do not have access to safe water and over two billion lack adequate Sanitation. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation help prevent water-related diseases including deadly diarrhoeal disease. Improved water management also reduces transmission risks of malaria and dengue Fever.

Research has revealed that, clean water and sanitation assists **HIV/AIDS** Sufferer from early maturity of their illnesses. People contracting Water-Related illnesses are very likely to have compromised their immune system, which may cause them to succumb more quickly to the HIV virus and Develop AIDS-Related illnesses. Conversely, the immune system of those living with HIV will be less likely to fight or recover from Water-related illness. If people living with HIV can imbibe Sanitation culture and have access to potable water, their immune system will be better off and not easily succumb to the attach of the virus.

## **7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

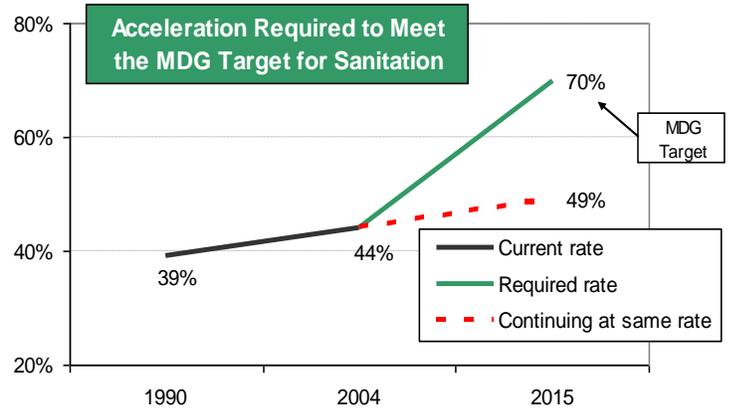
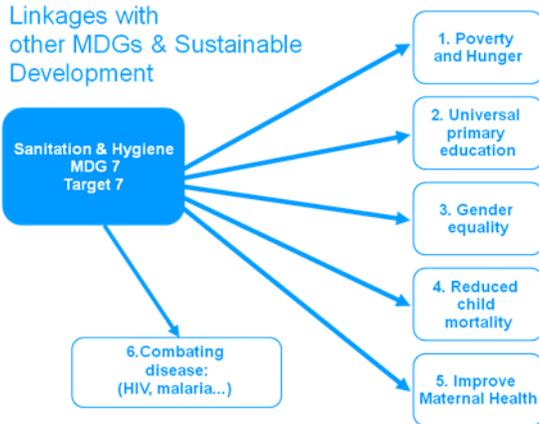
The MDGs target 3 in Goal 7 is to half the Proportion of people without access to Water and Sanitation. This is primary target on WASH and it would be strongly supported by all intervention on WASH project embark upon by our organization. We are working in local communities. We will still be working with other partners/stakeholders to ensure that appropriate technologies are used and that the completed projects are handed over to the communities.

By putting in place a well structured WASH unit or department, WASH project can be easily executed consistently and sustainably. M&E activities should be well structured to enhance sustainable development of project works. It should also include capacity building of primary stakeholders, TOT training of facilitators seminars and workshops for staff. Advocacy and awareness creation through various media should not be underestimated. Another key part of the strategy is to ensure all future water supply and sanitation Projects supported by any organization we are working with to address the issues of water depletion and contamination through appropriate integrated Water Resource Management and ensure that they are inline with international Policy and Guideline.

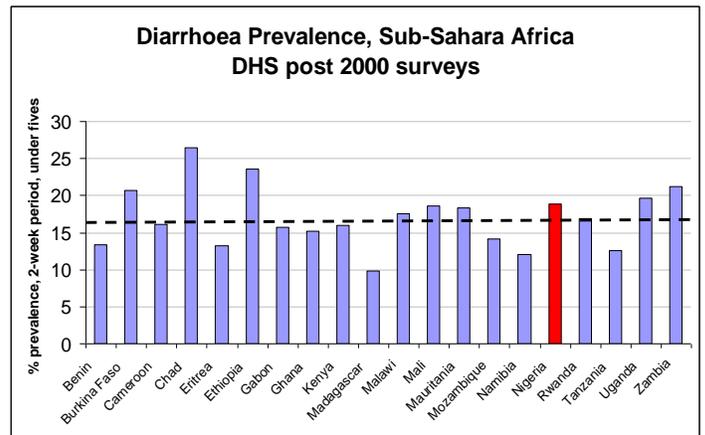
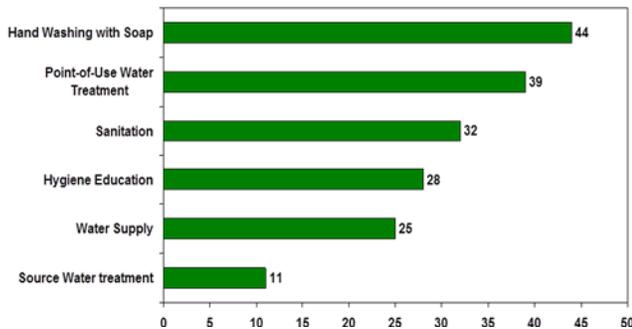
## **8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

WASH project can only be achieved through collaborative efforts. You can start feeling the trend, International NGO are partnering with Nation NGOs, National NGOs with Local NGOs, Local NGOs Partnering with one another, CSOs with CBOs, National NGO with government and government in turn with NGOs and so on. So, there is no limit to the extent to which partnership is needed in implementing WASH project.

This serves as part of a mutual reinforcing framework to improve overall human development. The MDGs provide a vision of development with health and education at its core and Poverty Alleviation as its Overall target. Development is not all about economic growth. Indeed, economic development is totally dependent on Healthy people having time to work.



### Reduction in diarrhoea Morbidity (%) Per Intervention Type



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