

# USING THE WEB TO EXPLORE THE 2015 UN TARGETS

The Internet, or web as it is more popularly known, has opened up new and exciting opportunities for learning about development. There is a wealth of information available ranging from data to support topic or country studies, to news and views from around the world, to detailed case studies and campaign news from non-governmental organisations [NGOs].

Information on the web is usually more current than that available in printed form and so is particularly good for learning about recent trends and events. Many websites also monitor progress such as achievements or setbacks in reaching the international development goals of 2015.

Of particular interest and importance are those sites that allow learning about development from alternative perspectives; such as those that feature articles and views written by people from 'Third World' countries. Such sites are being added almost daily and are often listed under a gateway site [a site that provides access to many others, usually by a search function] such as the OneWorld network <http://www.oneworld.net>.

## Information Overload

There is a danger that with so much information on the web it can become a little overwhelming. There is also a lot of information that could be misleading or which presents a very biased view of a particular place or development issue. There are unfortunately no hard and fast rules for how to deal with such

realities, but there are things you can do to limit wasted surf time. For example start with the sites of major organisations such as the United Nations, World Bank or major NGOs such as Oxfam or ActionAid. Such sites are a generally reliable source of information and most provide links to other sites that are likely to have been tried and tested. If you visit a site you are not sure about then look for more information about the authors before you use it - most sites will have an 'about us' section for this purpose.

Book-marking [adding to your favourites list] useful sites can save time in trying to re-find useful sites, but if you are using a communal computer then your settings may not be saved. **Web cards** can provide a simple and efficient way to store information about useful websites. These can be used to build an individual collection or combined to make a department collection. The process of developing cards is offered as a framework for students to organise their web searching.

## Get Web-Wise

Most importantly the web cannot be relied upon to give us answers. It is just another learning tool that provides ideas and perspectives, some of which are more valid than others. We, and our students, need to develop the skills to glean information from the web which will enhance our understanding of development and stimulate our own thinking. There is much credence to be gained from the web, but no easy answers.

## Summary of UN 2015 targets

### Economic Well Being

- ◆ A reduction by one-half in the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015

### Human Development

- ◆ Universal primary education in all countries by 2015
- ◆ Demonstrated progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women by eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005
- ◆ A reduction by two-thirds in the mortality rates for infants and children under age five and a reduction by three-fourths in maternal mortality, all by 2015
- ◆ Access through the primary health care system to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages as soon as possible and no later than the year 2015

### Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration

- ◆ The implementation of national strategies for sustainable development in all countries by 2005, so as to ensure that current trends in the loss of environmental resources are effectively reversed at both global and national levels by 2015

Use the web card template to store information about useful websites that you have found to help you learn more about development. Here are a few tips to help you complete your web cards. It may also be useful to refer to the completed cards that came with this pack.

**Description**

Write a few words to remind you what the web-site is about.

- ◆ What are the main things it is good for?
- ◆ How is it useful for studying development?
- ◆ Is it user friendly?
- ◆ Does it have good links?

**Special Interest**

Is there anything of special interest on this site? For example, an education section or a page that provides views and links from people in less developed countries.

**Interactive Element**

Is there an interactive section of the website? [It could be a quiz or activity, or perhaps an interactive tour.]

**Navigation**

Briefly describe whether it is an easy or difficult site to get around.

- ◆ Can you offer any tips for future users?

**Weaknesses**

Few [if any] sites are perfect, so make a note of any weaknesses here. It may save others time in looking!

**Address**

Write the full address of the website you have found in here for future reference.

**Score**

Look again at the information you have written and give the web site an overall score out of 5. Colour in or highlight the appropriate score.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?". The browser's address bar contains "http://www.". Below the browser window is a form with the following sections:

- Address:** A text box containing "http://www." with an arrow pointing to the "Address" label above it.
- Organisation:** A text box.
- Description:** A text box with an arrow pointing to the "Description" label above it.
- Special interest:** A text box with an arrow pointing to the "Special interest" label above it.
- Interactive element:** A text box with an arrow pointing to the "Interactive element" label above it.
- Navigation:** A text box with an arrow pointing to the "Navigation" label above it.
- Weaknesses:** A text box with an arrow pointing to the "Weaknesses" label above it.

At the bottom of the form, there are two score scales:

- Our score [out of 5]:** A row of five '@' symbols.
- Your score [out of 5]:** A row of five '@' symbols.

A long arrow points from the "Score" section header to the "Your score [out of 5]" scale.

