

Goal 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability

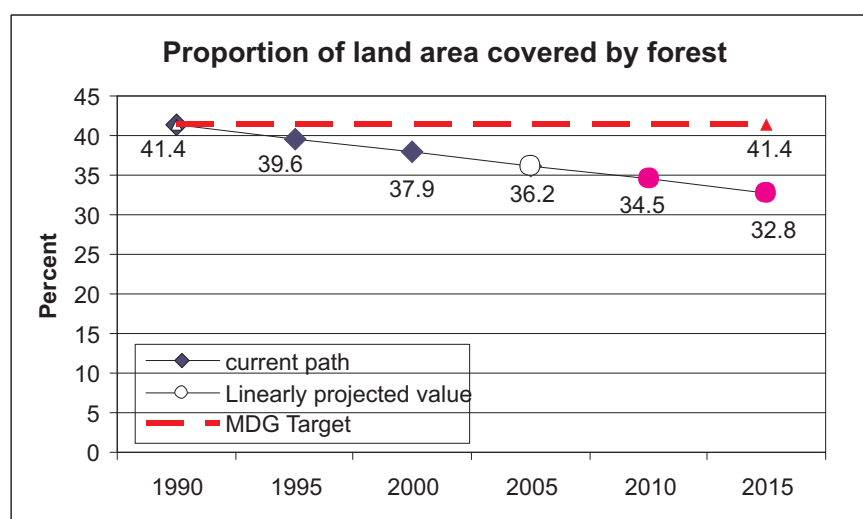
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Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources

Indicator: Proportion of land area covered by forest

Since Malawi became independent, the country has continued to experience rapid environmental degradation. Some of the causes of degradation include increasing population growth, poverty as well as inadequate alternative livelihoods and affordable energy technologies. This has resulted in various forms of environmental degradation including soil erosion, siltation of rivers and lakes, over growth of water weeds, deforestation, over fishing, decline in wildlife, and air and water pollution.

Chart 23: Proportion of Land Area covered by Forest

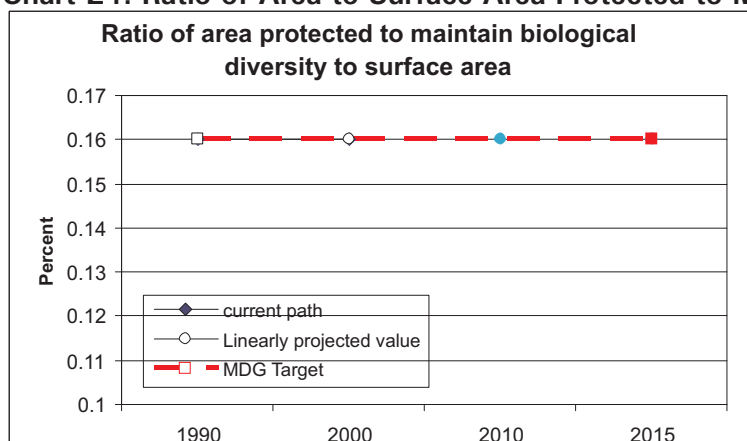


Source: FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment, 1990, 2000 and 2005

Chart 23 above shows that the proportion of land area has been declining from around 41 percent in 1990 to around 36 percent in the year 2006. If this rate of deforestation continues, by 2015 only about 33 percent of land area will be covered by forest. This implies that the country will have failed to increase or maintain the area under forest.

Indicator: Proportion of area protected to maintain biological diversity

Chart 24: Ratio of Area to Surface Area Protected to Maintain Biological Diversity



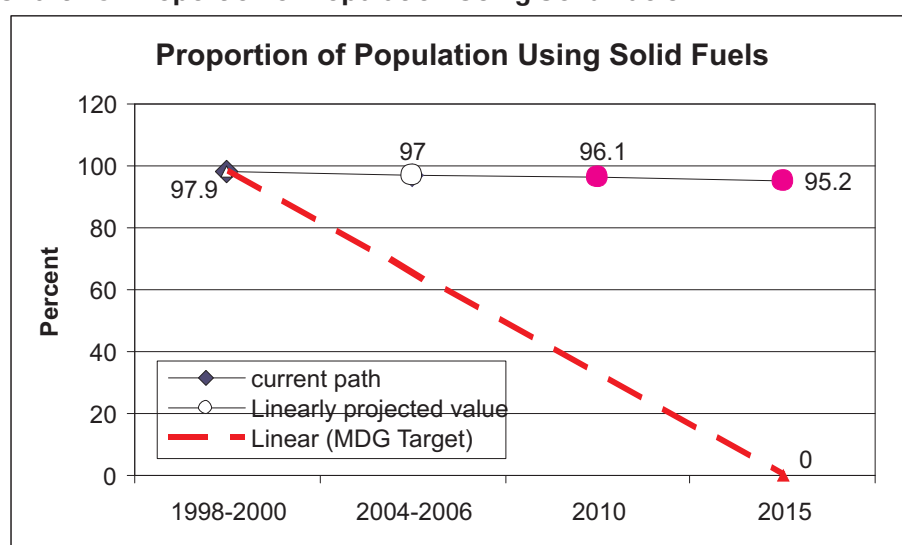
Source: UNEP, online databank: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_series_results.asp?rowed=616

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The proportion of protected area has remained constant since 1990 as shown in Chart 24 above. Even though no specific target has been set for this indicator, under the Millennium Development Goals, the requirement is that either a country increases the proportion of protected area or keeps it constant. By keeping the proportion of protected area constant, it can be concluded that the country is in line with the MDGs requirement.

Indicator: Proportion of population using solid fuels

Chart 25: Proportion of Population Using Solid Fuels



Source: 1998 Census and 2004 MDHS

The proportion of population using solid fuel has not declined much as can be seen from Chart 25 above. The Figure above shows that in 2000 about 98 percent of population were using solid fuels and by 2006 the percentage had only reduced to 97. This then implies that the country is far from achieving an MDG target of 0 percent because the projection shows that by the year 2015, the proportion of population using solid fuel will be around 95 percent. As already indicated, the country has been experiencing environmental degradation such as soil erosion, deforestation, over fishing, among others.

Policy Framework and Strategies

In order to address these problems several initiatives have been put in place, some of which include the following:

- Revision of the natural resources policies, National Environmental Policy including the Environmental Management Act with an aim of halting the rate of environmental degradation;
- Development of regulations on waste disposal management and sanitation, toxic substance and chemicals;
- Promoting community participation in environment and natural resources management;
- Implementation of a tree planting season to address deforestation;
- Developed measures for mitigating the negative impacts of climate by reducing green house gas emissions and the use of clean energy technologies such as wind and solar powered energy;
- Implementing the Malawi Rural Electrification Programme to bring electricity to rural areas with an aim of minimizing recourse to biomass energy, which remains the main source of energy, accounting to over 90 percent of total energy consumption in the country.

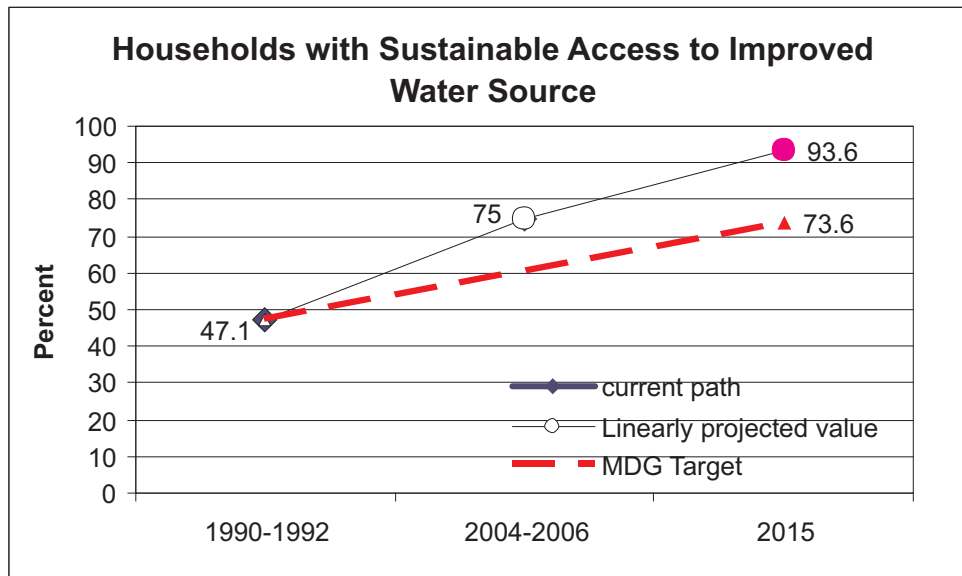
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Target 10: Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

Indicator: Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved Water Source

The MDG on Water and Sanitation declares that the population without sustainable water and basic sanitation be reduced by 2015. It is reported that in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) target, about 1.6 billion people in the whole world should have access to improved safe water supply and basic sanitation between 2005 and 2015.

Chart 26: Household with Sustainable Access to Improved Water Source



Source: 1992, 2000 and 2004 MDHS

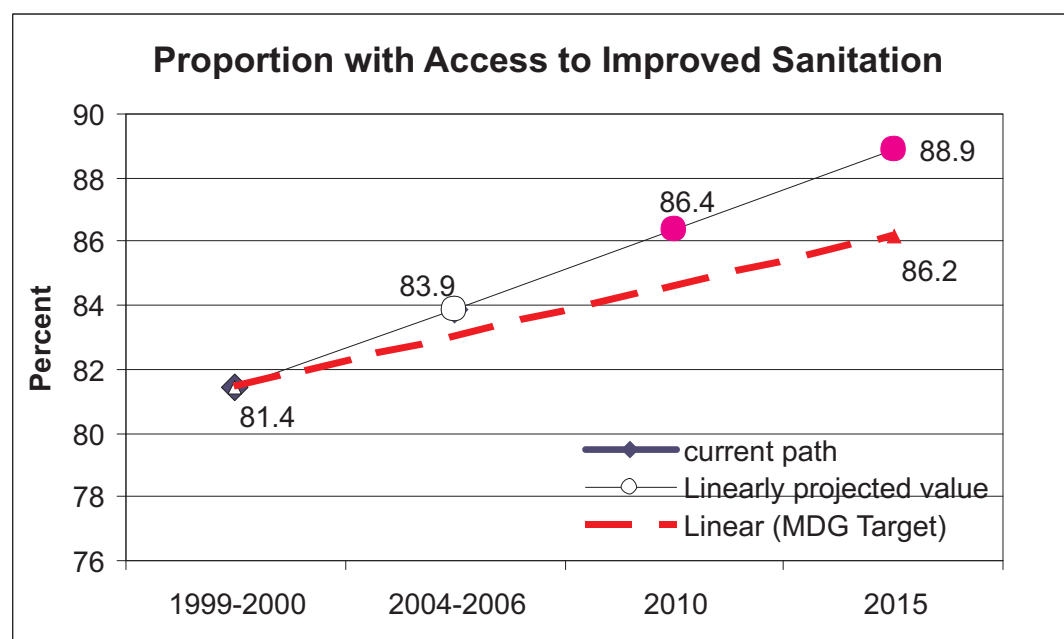
The MDG target portrays that by the year 2015 about 74 percent of the Malawi population should have access to sustainable safe drinking water (from an improved water source). Chart 26 above shows that the country is making good progress towards attainment of the MDG target. Access to water resources had significantly improved from about 47 percent in 1992 to 75 percent in 2006. At this rate of change, the projection shows that by 2015 about 94 percent of population will have sustainable access to an improved water source, which is above the MDG target of 73 percent.



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Indicator: Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation

Chart 27: Proportion of the Population with Access to Improved Sanitation



Source: 1992, 2000 and 2004 MDHS

Chart 27 above shows that Malawi is making good progress towards achieving improved access to good sanitation. In 2000, the proportion of households with access to improved sanitation was about 81 percent. Access has increased to about 84 percent in 2006. At this rate of improvement, about 89 percent of households will have sustainable access to improved sanitation by 2015, which is above the MDG target of 86.2 percent.

The water and sanitation sector is facing many challenges. These challenges include degradation of water resources, inadequate service coverage, increasing water demand as a result of increasing population, HIV and AIDS prevalence, insufficient capacity, inadequate promotion of hygiene and sanitation, climate change and lack of mitigation measures for water-related disasters. These challenges will be addressed through a number of strategies, some of which include:

- Improving the quality of surface and ground water by developing a system for pollution control;
- Improving sustainable access to water supply and sanitation in urban, peri urban and rural areas by establishing water supply and sanitation systems using demand responsive and demand driven approaches;
- Establishing contingency water supply reserves and sanitation backups;
- Integrating rural water supply with participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation;
- Establishing good monitoring systems; and
- Empowering national authorities to manage water resources using integrated water resource management approaches.

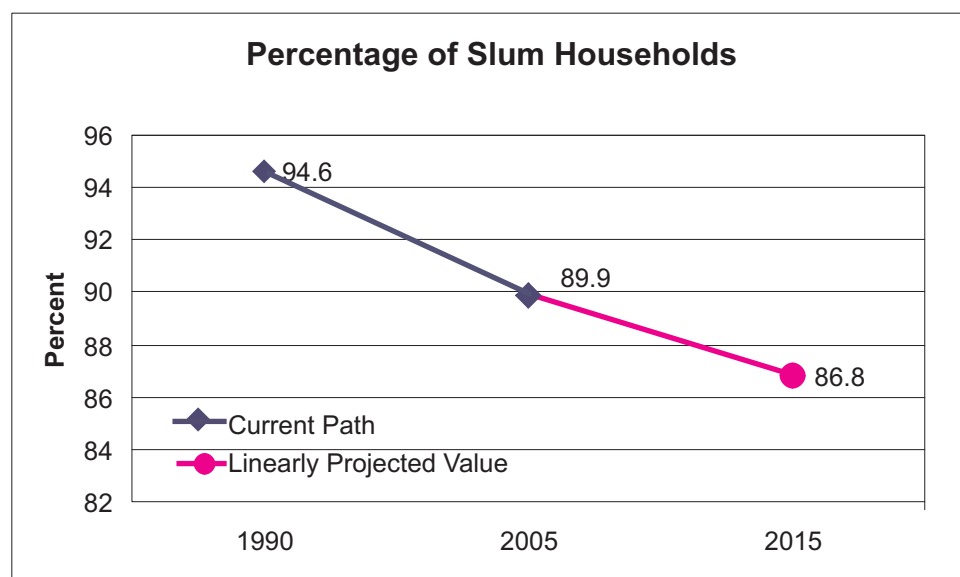
Target 11: Achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

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Indicator: Slum population as a percentage of urban population

A slum household refers to a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following five conditions: durable housing, sufficient living area, access to improved water, access to sanitation and secure tenure.

Chart 28: Percentage of Slum Households



Source: UN-HABITANT State of the World Critics Report 2006/2007

Although Chart 28 above is showing that slum percentage has declined from about 95 percent in 1990 to 90 percent in 2005, absolute numbers of slum dwellers have almost doubled between 1990 (1.03million) and 2005 (1.9 million) as reported in the 2006 UN Habitant State of the World Report. Malawi has been experiencing a high urbanization rate of 6.3 percent, despite the fact that the cities do not have the capacity to absorb on a sustainable basis this rate of urbanization. This has in turn compounded the problem of slum formation. It is clear therefore that unless effective interventions are put in place, the country may not be in a position to address this problem by 2015.

Some of the challenges that the country is facing in relation to the achievement of cities without slums' include the following:

- Inequitable access to land especially land that is serviced with basic facilities including water and sanitation by the urban poor
- Low priority that has over the years been placed on shelter (and urban development) issues by Government and its cooperating partners which has resulted in low public sector investment in ensuring that the urban poor have access to decent shelter and basic services.
- Lack of access to affordable housing finance
- High cost of building materials
- Lack of appropriate building standards/regulations
- Capacity of urban assemblies to formulate pro-poor policies and city development strategies that would support inclusive cities and accelerate local economic development.

To address the above challenges, government has embarked on a number of programmes some of which include:

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- Formulated a National Housing Policy (under preparation) to help upgrade slums and reduce slum formation in the cities;
- Introduced “Cities without Slums” initiative with the support from UN-HABITAT which will help mobilize resources for slum upgrading in the cities;
- Developed a national slum upgrading programme to improve the conditions of life in slums in the country's major cities of Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba.
- Initiated a Water and Sanitation project to be supported by the World Bank in the cities of Blantyre and Lilongwe targeting the urban poor to enable them access portable and safe water.