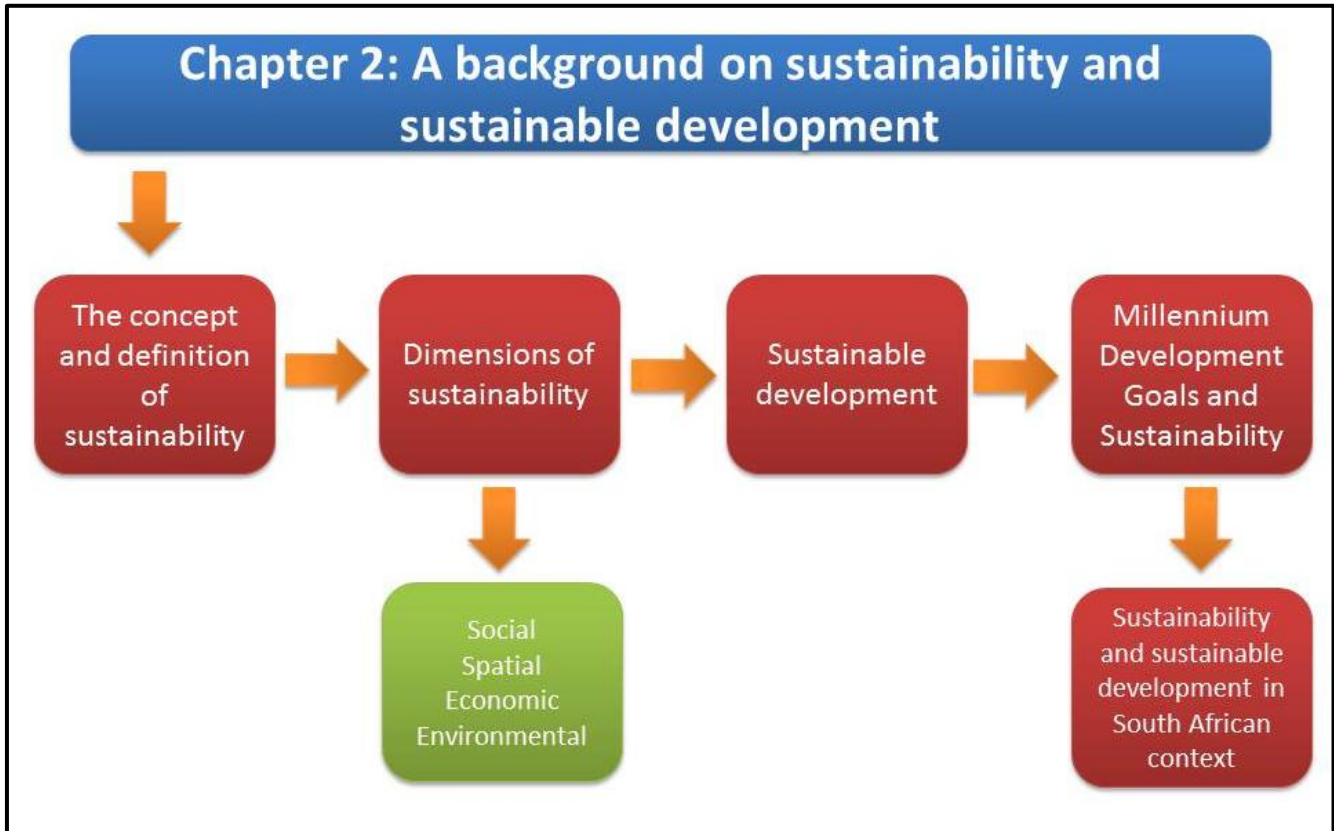


# CHAPTER 2: A BACKGROUND ON SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

*Figure 2.1* provides a graphical overview of the organization and structure of this chapter.



**Figure 2.1: A concept map of Chapter 2**

Source: Own construction

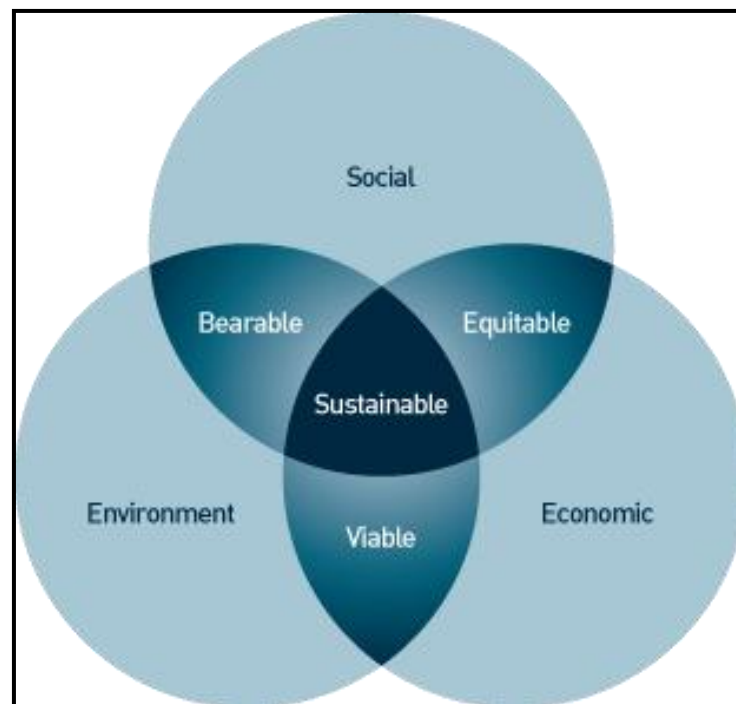
## 2.1 The concept and definition of sustainability

The most well-known definition of sustainability was given at the 1987 UN conference on the environment and development. It defined sustainable developments as those that “meet present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (Bruntland, 1987:15).

Mahaffy (1999) states that this well-established definition sets an ideal premise, but does not clarify specific environmental and human parameters for modelling and measuring sustainable developments. The following definitions are more specific:

- "Sustainable means using methods, systems and materials that won't deplete resources or harm natural cycles" (Rosenbaum, 1993).
- Sustainability "identifies a concept and attitude in development that looks at a site's natural land, water, and energy resources as integral aspects of the development" (Vieira, 1993)
- "Sustainability integrates natural systems with human patterns and celebrates continuity, uniqueness and place making" (Early, 1993)

Sustainability affects every level of organisation. While many associate sustainability solely as a 'Green' concept the truth is that it is a multi-faceted notion. The concept of sustainability relates to the economic, social and environmental aspects of human society. **Figure 2.2** graphically represents the three aspects of sustainability and how they overlap.



**Figure 2.2: The aspects of sustainability.**

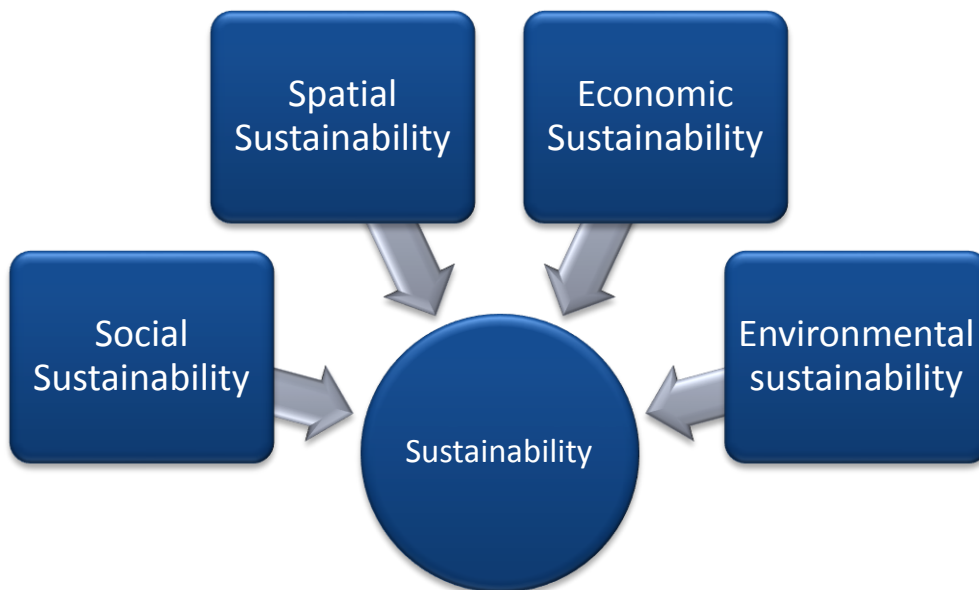
Source: Merensky, 2009

According to Project Sustainability (2011) sustainability is intended “to be a means of configuring civilization and human activity so that society, its members and its economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems, and planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals indefinitely”.

The core of the concept of sustainability, is the belief that environmental, social and economic objectives should be in harmony with each other and interdependent in the development process. The interrelation of these three factors in sustainability was seen as an imperative step forward in development thinking.

## 2.2 Dimensions of sustainability

The dimensions of sustainability relate to the ecological and spatial environment, social aspects and economic aspects. It is vital to take these aspects into consideration during the planning and development of communities to ensure their sustainability.



**Figure 2.3: Dimensions of sustainability**

Source: Own construction

## 2.2.1 Social sustainability

This form of sustainability involves “meeting the basic social needs of all communities”. (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 2007:18) Dempsey, Bremley, Power and Brown (2009:292) are of the opinion that the social sustainability, much like the concept of sustainability, is neither an absolute nor a constant. It is a dynamic concept that will continue to change and evolve over time. The concept will also develop differently from place to place. External influences may have an effect on social sustainability: for example, a change in local service delivery may increase social cohesion and interaction.

Dempsey et al (2009:293-294) argue that for a community to be sustainable the following five dimensions of social sustainability need to be addressed. These five dimensions can be seen in **Figure 2.4**.



**Figure 2.4: Dimensions of social sustainability**

Source: Own construction from Dempsey et al (2009: 294)

**Figure 2.4** illustrates that the sustainability of a community relates to the joint aspects of social life (Dempsey et al, 2009: 294)

Chan and Lee (2008: 245) say that for a project to be socially sustainable it has to create a harmonious living environment, reduce social inequality and improve the general quality of life. The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (2007: 18) then goes on to argue that social sustainability can be facilitated through:

- Ensuring community participation
- Creating democratic institutions
- Paying attention to gender sensitivity and equality
- Being transparent and fair in the planning and allocation process.
- Prioritizing the needs of the poor and disadvantaged.

Lastly Dempsey et al (2009:298) states that to ensure that social sustainability doesn't come at the expense of the other two dimensions of sustainability (economic and ecological) the balance between the different dimensions is required.

## **2.2.2 Economic sustainability**

According to the World Bank (2012a:1) current growth patterns are unsustainable and deeply inefficient which results in hampering of sustainable development. The World Bank (2012a:5) goes on to argue that rapid economic growth is needed to meet the pressing development needs of the world's poor, but that this growth will be unsustainable in the long run. To ensure economic sustainability economic growth has to be socially inclusive and guarantee that the earth's natural assets are able to adequately provide resources.

The World Bank (2012a:1) states that over the past two decades it has been shown that the economic and social goals of sustainability are highly compatible and complimentary to each other. Poverty reduction is driven by growth and improved social outcomes are good for growth. This is however not the case with the economic and environmental pillars of sustainability, as is illustrated below in **Figure 2.5**.



**Figure 2.5: Three pillars of sustainable development**

Source: World Bank (2012a:2)

According to the World Bank (2012a:2) economic growth for the past 250 years has come at the expense of the environment. The level of environmental damage has reached such a scale that it is threatening both global growth and progress made in social indicators. What is needed to rectify the situation is growth that is efficient in its use of natural assets, clean, resilient and inclusive.

A community is economically sustainable when that community has adequate employment and livelihood opportunities, economic growth and an increase in general, as well as individual, prosperity. (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 2007: 18)

According to the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (2007:18) economic sustainability in a community can be achieved through:

- Ensuring adequate access to education at all levels
- The redistribution of wealth
- The creation of work opportunities
- Encouraging local production, trading and service provision

### **2.2.3 Environmental sustainability**

Goodland and Daly (1996:1003) say that “although environmental sustainability is needed and originated because of social concerns, environmental sustainability itself seeks to improve human welfare and social sustainability by protecting the sources of raw materials used for human needs and ensuring that the sinks for human wastes are not exceeded”. They also argue that in order to establish environmental sustainability humanity must learn to live within the boundaries of the environment, both as a provider of resources and as a refuse for wastes.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (2007:18) agrees that protecting and conserving non-renewable natural resources forms the backbone of environmental sustainability. Environmental sustainability in communities can be reached through:

- “Ensuring sufficient open spaces
- Limiting pollution
- Protecting sensitive environments
- Ecological construction methods
- Use of renewable energy sources such as solar or wind power
- Protecting agricultural land
- Ecological sanitation systems
- Recycling and minimisation of solid waste” (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 2007:18)

Goodman and Daly (1996:1006) maintain that there are four degrees of environmental sustainability ranging from weak to intermediate to strong and finally to absurdly strong. These levels depend on how much substitution exists between types of resources. Although environmental sustainability is always an objective to strive for social and economic sustainability may have conflicting objectives.

### **2.2.4 Spatial sustainability**

Hillier (2009:2) says that the concept of spatial sustainability is not a new one and has made its appearance in literature regarding regional studies and the ecological footprint of cities. Regional studies concerning spatial sustainability generally pertained to the spatial distribution of economic and related activities, while ecological footprint studies showed the ecological demand that a city has on its surrounding area.

Hillier (2009:2) is of the opinion that “that some generic ways of arranging the primary spatial structure of the city, that is its street network, might be more sustainable than others”. He says that the concepts of structure need to be brought to bear on sustainability because structures are already the products of interaction between the three principal domains of sustainability.

The spatial properties of retail and commercial centres can be linked to economic functioning and so to economic sustainability (Hillier, 2009:9). The role that space plays in social sustainability has, according to Hillier (2009:15) typically been in terms of the overriding variable of community formation. Hillier (2009:15) goes on to say that “if space can in some sense support community formation, then it can play not only a positive role in creating social sustainability, but also as a direct consequence play a role in the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour”.

## **2.3 Sustainable development**

Initially the concept of sustainability gave attention only to the aspects of environment and called for the preservation of habitats and species. The realisation came that there will never be ecological sustainability if we as a planet don't enforce sustainable practices on all aspects of our lives, and that includes the cities in which we work and live.

Dunphy, Benvinste, Griffiths and Sutton (2000: 21) state that there is a difference between sustainability and sustainable development. They see sustainable development as a term that gives priority to development, while sustainability deals primarily with the environment.

The Brundtland Commission's report (Brundtland, 1994:15) identifies the crucial elements of sustainable development as:

- Meeting basic needs,
- Recognizing environmental limits, and
- The principles of intergenerational and intragenerational equity.

Dresner (2003:63) states that “the starting point for the concept of sustainable development was the aim to integrated environmental considerations into economic policy”. More importantly, sustainable development was conceived as an attempt to link environmentalist ideas with the central area of policy. Sustainable development is thus an interface between environmentalists,

spatial planning and development. By adding “development” the focus shifted from ecology to society.

According to Monto, Ganesh and Varghese (2005:23) there are five broad requirements that sustainable development seeks to respond to. These are:

- The integration of conservation and development.
- The satisfaction of basic human needs.
- The achievement of social justice and equity.
- The provision of social self-determination and cultural diversity.
- To maintain ecological integrity.

Baker (2006:6) is of the opinion that sustainable development is a “cross-cutting policy task.” This means that sustainable development cuts across the areas of public policy. These areas include international development, trade, urban and land-use planning, environmental protection, agriculture and industry. All these areas of public policy must work together if they are to address the five broad preconditions of sustainable development.

North (developed countries, e.g. Europe) and South (developing countries, e.g. Africa) often differ in its approaches and definitions of sustainable development. This is largely due to the fact that the lifestyles of the people, and their own visions of sustainable development, differ. Developing countries face problems of poverty, disease and overpopulation and its vision/focus of sustainability is to address these issues within the context of depleting resources and a polluted environment in order to meet huge needs for survival. In contrast developed countries are faced with the difficulties of sustaining their high standards of living, and the high resource use associated with this, in the context of depleting global resources. According to Monto, Ganesh and Varghese (2005:31) the “only global consensus pertaining to sustainability is that human sustenance is at severe threat, and that the North and South have to work together if sustainability of human society is to be achieved globally”.

**Table 2.1** below illustrates the difference in the definition of sustainable development as seen internationally, nationally and locally. The table also illustrates that different policies, laws and planning instruments attributed to each sphere.

**Table 2.1: International, national and local perspectives on sustainable development.**

<b>Sustainable development</b>	<b>International Focus</b>	<b>National Focus</b>	<b>Provincial / Municipal Focus</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	According to the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), (Act No. 107 of 1998) Sustainable development means the integration of social, economic and environmental factors into planning, implementation and decision-making to ensure that development serves present and future generations.	In the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) for Tlokwe Local Municipality it states that the principle of sustainable development is the integration of environmental factors into development policies, programmes and projects within a strategic environmental framework.
<b>Policy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agenda 21</li> <li>• Kyoto Protocol</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Framework for Sustainable Development</li> <li>• Breaking New Ground</li> <li>• National Development Plan</li> <li>• Upgrading Informal Settlements Programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Air Quality Management Policy and Action Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Law</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Development &amp; Regional Integration Agreements</li> <li>• Sustainable Development in World Trade Law and Competition Law</li> <li>• Legal Aspects of Sustainable Water Management</li> <li>• Sustainable Corporate Law</li> <li>• International Public Health and Trade Law</li> <li>• Climate Change &amp; Kyoto Protocol Implementation Legal Research and Scholarly Dialogue</li> <li>• Gender, International Health and Environmental Law</li> <li>• Legal and Policy Analysis of the Impacts of Climate Change in the Canadian Arctic</li> <li>• Trans-systemic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constitution Act No 108 of 1996.</li> <li>• National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998</li> <li>• Biodiversity Act of 2004</li> <li>• Coastal Management Bill of 2006</li> <li>• Waste Act of 2000</li> <li>• National Water Act of 1998</li> <li>• National Forest Act of 1984</li> <li>• National Veld and Forest fire Act of 1998</li> <li>• National Spatial Land Use Management Bill</li> <li>• Integrated Environmental Management and Planning Bill</li> <li>• Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Bill (SPLUMB)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Land Use Management Bill</li> </ul>

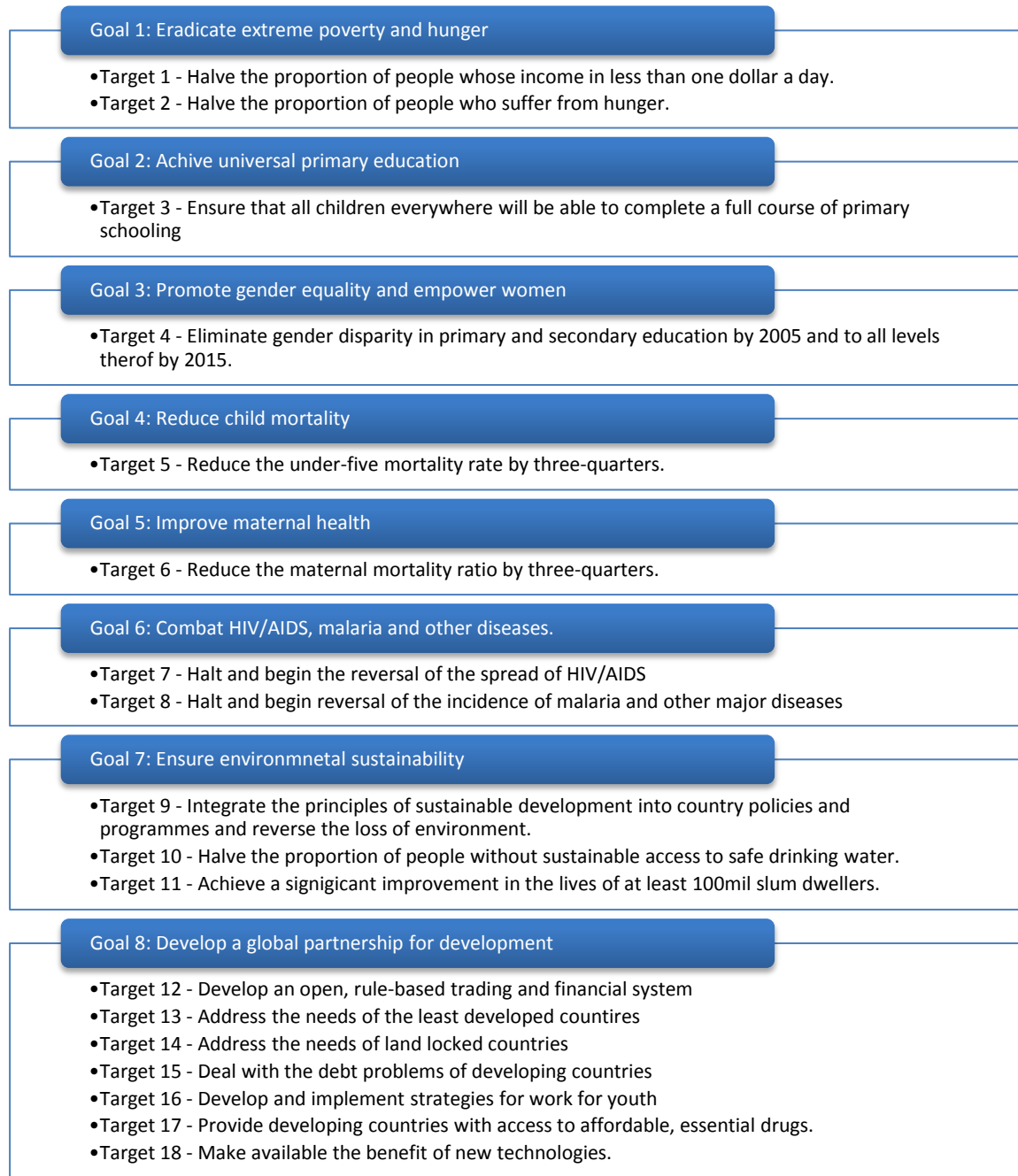
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of Property Rights over Land and Water</li> <li>Local Laws for the Global Commons: National Laws for Sustainable Development</li> <li>Sustainable Development, Phosphate Mines and the Law in Sri Lanka</li> </ul>		
<b>Planning instruments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennium Development Goals with accompanying targets and indicators</li> <li>Agenda 21</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Spatial Development Framework</li> <li>National Integrated Development Plan</li> <li>National Integrated Transportation Plan</li> <li>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spatial Development Framework (SDF)</li> <li>Integrated Development Plan (IDP)</li> <li>Environmental Management Framework (EMF)</li> <li>Integrated waste Management Plan</li> <li>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</li> </ul>

Source: Own construction from UNECE (2012), South Africa (1998), Segger (2006:15), Gilder (2007) and North West Province (2009)

## 2.4 Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development

### 2.4.1 Background on the Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000 a world summit was held for World leaders to adopt the Millennium Declaration. This declaration committed nations to a global partnership to reduce extreme poverty. The declaration also set out a series of targets that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). These goals are all time-bound with a deadline of 2015 (unless otherwise stated). Each goal has underlying targets and indicators to measure their successes. A graphic summary of these goals is given in **Figure 2.6**.



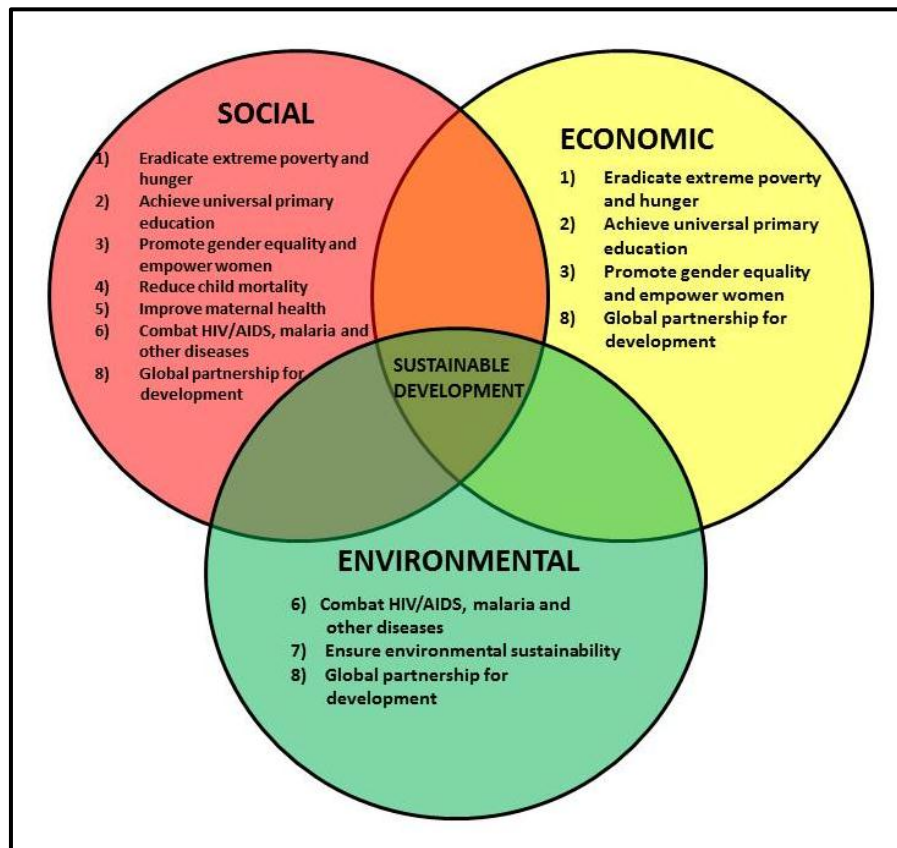
**Figure 2.6: The Millennium Development Goals and Target**

Source: Own construction from United Nations (2012b: 6-65)

The eight MDGs form measurable indicators that all the countries and leading development institutions in the world agree upon. To date the MDGs have galvanised record efforts to meet the need of the world's poor.

## 2.4.2 Correlation between the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development

As previously discussed sustainable development aims to address the needs of the present world population without impeding future populations. If sustainable development is the goal, then the Millennium Development Goals are the instrument with which to achieve this goal. According to the World Bank (2012b) a number of the targets of the MDGs relate to sustainable development, as can be seen in **Figure 2.7**. All the goals aim at achieving better living conditions for all, especially the poor. This will in turn carry over to assist the effort of sustainable development.



**Figure 2.7: The Correlation between the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development**

Source: Own construction

As **Figure 2.7** above demonstrates that there is a direct correlation between the MDGs and sustainable development. All the goals align with the crucial elements of sustainable development as identified by the Brundtland Commission (Brundtland, 1994:15). This means that if countries choose to strive towards achieving the MDGs that they will also be aiding their effort to achieve sustainability.

UN-HABITAT (2006:46) states categorically that “the struggle to achieve the Millennium Development Goals will be won or lost in cities”. They believe that the global fight against poverty, which encapsulates the Millennium Development Goals, is dependent on how well cities perform. Further, they list the positive and negative correlations between cities and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. These correlations are summarized in **Table 2.2**.

**Table 2.2: Correlation between cities and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals**

Millennium Development Goal	Positive Correlation	Negative Correlation
<p><b>Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities act as catalysts for poverty reduction by generating wealth and economic opportunities.</li> <li>• Levels of urbanization are narrowly related to the performance of social indicators.</li> <li>• Cities are the first step out of rural poverty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities are becoming the locus of poverty. Most of the growth in the world’s poorest regions will occur in cities.</li> <li>• Because hunger in cities is directly related to income the urban poor are more vulnerable to income-dependant hunger.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities act as nodes of education and learning. Urbanization has been linked with a rise of literacy and education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While education in cities is more accessible other services are more expensive, resulting in many families not being able to afford schooling.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities offer social mobility to women.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slums often force women to engage in sexually risky behaviour, making them more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.</li> <li>• Pitiable access to water and sanitation afflicts women with labour and health burdens.</li> </ul>

<b>Millennium Development Goal</b>	<b>Positive Correlation</b>	<b>Negative Correlation</b>
<b><i>Goal 4: Reduce under-five mortality</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities offer better health facilities.</li> <li>• Interventions in housing, water and sanitation lower the mortality rate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slum conditions result in the mortality rate being higher in slum areas than in non-slum areas.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Goal 5: Improve maternal health</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities offer more health care facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many women can't afford health services.</li> <li>• Sexworkers expose themselves to diseases that negatively influence maternal health.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Goal 6: Combat diseases including HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities offer better access to information and health services.</li> <li>• Voluntary testing and counselling associated with slum upgrading have helped to reduce HIV prevalence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The occurrence of HIV is higher in cities.</li> <li>• Slum conditions encourage resident to engage in risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• Slum conditions can lead to the rise in tuberculosis cases.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound and sustainable environmental policies have aided in reducing soil erosion, air pollution and protecting biodiversity.</li> <li>• The concentration of population and production reduces costs of installing and providing services.</li> <li>• Slums provide a target for intervention aimed at achieving the MDGs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urbanization increases use of resources.</li> <li>• Air pollution is focused in cities.</li> <li>• The growth rate of slums exceeds the improvement rate.</li> <li>• Slums are more prone to natural hazards.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City-to-city cooperation has increased.</li> <li>• Investment in urban areas as part of development assistance programmes has increased.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban poverty has not been recognized by all governments as a priority.</li> <li>• Many investments are often not targeted at slums.</li> </ul>

Source: Own construction from UN-HABITAT (2006:52-55)

It can be reasoned that cities can act as the catalyst of change in achieving the MDGs due to the positive correlation that exists between them. Rural areas will also have a role to play, but in a lesser degree than cities because cities are where the change will be seen first if cities can mobilise themselves towards the targets set by the MDGs.

## **2.5 Sustainability and sustainable development in South African context.**

Many global impacts led to the paradigm shift in development thinking but the most significant were:

- The dramatic increase in population.
- The increasing disparity gap between rich and poor.
- Resource depletion and the rise in energy consumption rates.
- The amplification of environmental problems due to urban expansion and deforestation.
- The World economic crisis.

This paradigm shift has led to the application of sustainability in both environmental and spatial planning.

South Africa has been left with the legacy of fragmented, distorted and unsustainable spatial patterns of development left by the previous government. It is thus one of the main objectives of the new government in South Africa to develop a new system of fair and sustainable growth and development. South Africa has been actively participating in global sustainability initiatives since 1992. During the same year the government published a national report describing the state of the environment, highlighting the challenges to sustainable development and providing an action plan for its implementation in the country. Subsequent reports have been submitted in 1997, 1998 and 1999 describing the progress made to date. (Schwabe, 2002: 14)

Since 1994 the concepts of both sustainability and sustainable development have been adequately reflected in policies and legislation. National, provincial and local government, as well as groups within civil society and economic actors, have all made declaratory and practical commitments to the goal of sustainable development. Schwabe (2002:16) argues that “although South Africa does not have a sustainable development strategy per se it has committed itself to the implementation of sustainable development principles in all its policies and legislation”.

The Bill of Human Rights in the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) states in Section 24(a) that “everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through

reasonable legislative and other measures.” (Constitution, 1996:1251) The Constitution (1996:1255-1256) further states that citizens have the right to adequate housing, health care, food and water, basic education, etc. These are all aspects pertaining to sustainable development.

On national, provincial and local levels policies and guidelines for sustainability and sustainable development have been drawn up. These can be seen in **Table 2.1**. There is an international belief that sustainability should be implemented at local level, and South Africa is keeping up with this trend by establishing these three inter-related spheres of government.

Even though the South African government has adopted the idealistic idea of sustainability and sustainable development there are certain social and political obstacles that they, and the rest of the developing world, must face in implementing these ideals. (Baker, 2006:166) **Table 2.3** shows a summary of the most important problems impacting on the application of sustainable development in South Africa.

**Table 2.3: A summary of the problems influencing the application of sustainable development in South Africa.**

<b>Obstacle</b>	<b>Description</b>
Political corruption	Funds for sustainability projects are misappropriated, tenders are awarded on a nepotistic basis and corners are cut in order to save money. All which result in project failures.
Population growth	Since the 1970's the world population has more than doubled and this causes a rise in resource consumption which is especially visible in our country. South Africa has experienced rampant population growth which resulted in unchecked urban growth. This has intensified existing problems and causes new problems to emerge.
Disease, especially Aids	The epidemic of Aids has left South Africa with a population of which the majority is under the age of 18. This causes many problems in the planning and implementation of sustainable development projects. HIV-AIDS is a serious disease that erodes the productive capacity of a nation.
Racial and ethnic tensions.	Even though we as a country have democratized there still exists a degree of development inequality.

Obstacle	Description
Extreme poverty	Even though we live in prosperous time extreme poverty still affects one out of every five persons in the developing world. The largest part of these poor and the fastest growth in poverty is in sub-Saharan Africa. The social ills that are associated with poverty are on the rise in South Africa and cause a definitive obstacle in the effort to achieve sustainability.
Urban problems	Continued urbanization and industrialization combines with a lack of resources, expertise and weak governance to increase the severity of social and environmental problems. These problems reinforce each other in densely populated areas. South Africa also has the effect that Apartheid had on urbanization and urban form to contend with. Due to the laws of the time people settled in areas that are not conducive to sustainable development.
Backlogs	Extreme service, housing and transport backlogs have in a way hindered South Africa's progress toward sustainability. Lack of basic services and housing has kept many people trapped in poverty which severely impedes on sustainability.

Source: Own construction from Baker (2006:165-166) and Dalal-Clayton & Bass (2002:8-10)

Problems in the implementation of sustainable development, such as those mentioned in **Table 2.3**, necessitate the application of new ways to manage such difficulties. One such way is by strengthening the process of delivering sustainable communities which will be discussed in the following chapters.

Dixon and Pretorius (2001:14-15) state that by the year 2000 the South African government's contribution to sustainable development had been the following:

- Creating more than one million housing opportunities,
- Providing more than five million people with secure tenure,
- A significant reduction of unemployment, poverty and inequality due to the role played by the Department of Labour, and
- The promotion of life-long learning for all South Africans by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.

## 2.5.1 South Africa’s progress towards the Millennium Development Goals

South Africa produced their first national report on the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2005. At that time the government had made considerable progress towards achieving national development targets applying specifically to economic growth, poverty reduction, gender equality, primary education and maternal health. (Statistics South Africa, 2010:13) Worrying trends in HIV/AIDS still prevailed while unemployment remained high. In 2008 The Government of South Africa published their second report providing a mid-term review of the achievements and challenges that remained.

The Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) is the policy instrument currently being used by the Government to improve living conditions for South Africans. The MTSF guides planning and resource allocation of all spheres of government and departments develop their five-year strategic plans to align with these imperatives. (Statistics South Africa, 2010:16) The ten strategic priorities of the MTSF align with the eight Millennium Goals as can be deduced from **Table 2.4**.

**Table 2.4: Alignment of strategic priorities of the MTSF and the MDGs**

		Millennium Development Goals							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Strategic Priorities	Speed up growth, transform the economy, create decent work and sustainable livelihoods	■	■	■					■
	Programme to build economic and social infrastructure	■	■	■					■
	Rural development strategy for land and agricultural reform and food security	■	■	■				■	
	Strengthen skills and human resource base	■	■	■					
	Improve the health profile of all	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Fight crime and corruption	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Build cohesive, caring and sustainable communities	■	■	■				■	
	Advance Africa, enhance international cooperation	■	■	■					■
	Sustainable resource management	■	■	■				■	
	Create a developmental state, improve public services, strengthen democratic institutions	■	■	■					■

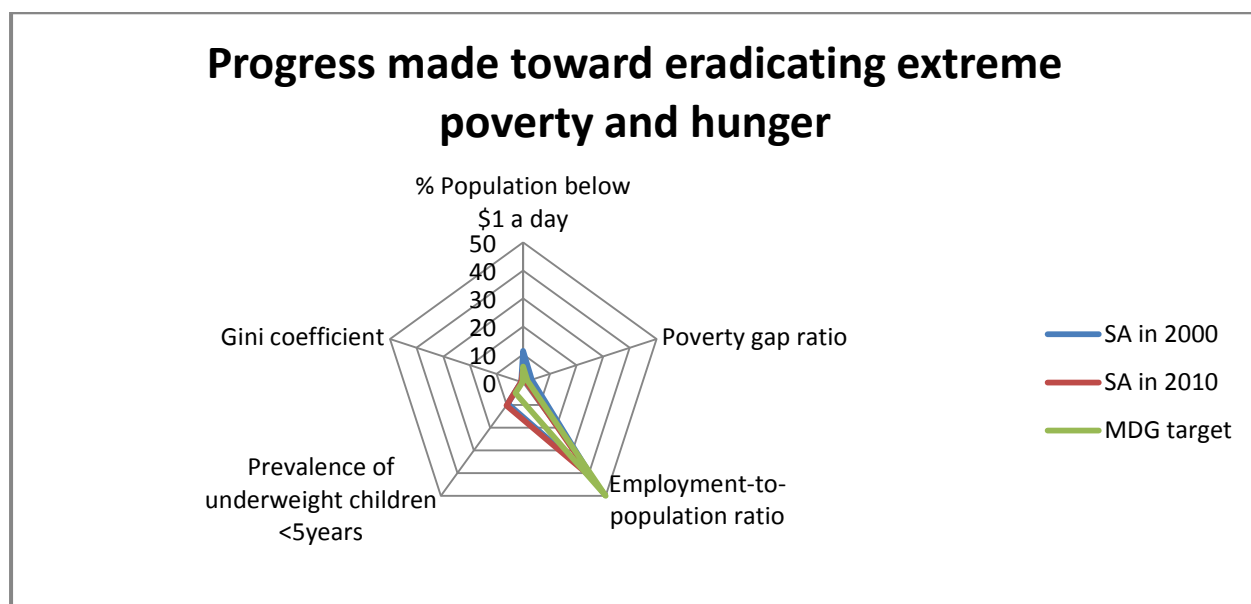
Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:17)

In the National report Statistics South Africa discussed the progress that has been made toward achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals and identified the recommendations to further this progress.

### Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

According to Statistics South Africa (2010:23) the Government adopted a comprehensive approach to achieve this goal that combines cash transfers with social wage packages. This includes clinic-based free primary health care, compulsory education and provision of subsidised housing, water, sanitation, transport and electricity.

**Figure 2.8** below is a representation of the facts and figures associated with the progress made towards MDG 1.



**Figure 2.8: Progress made toward eradicating extreme poverty and hunger**

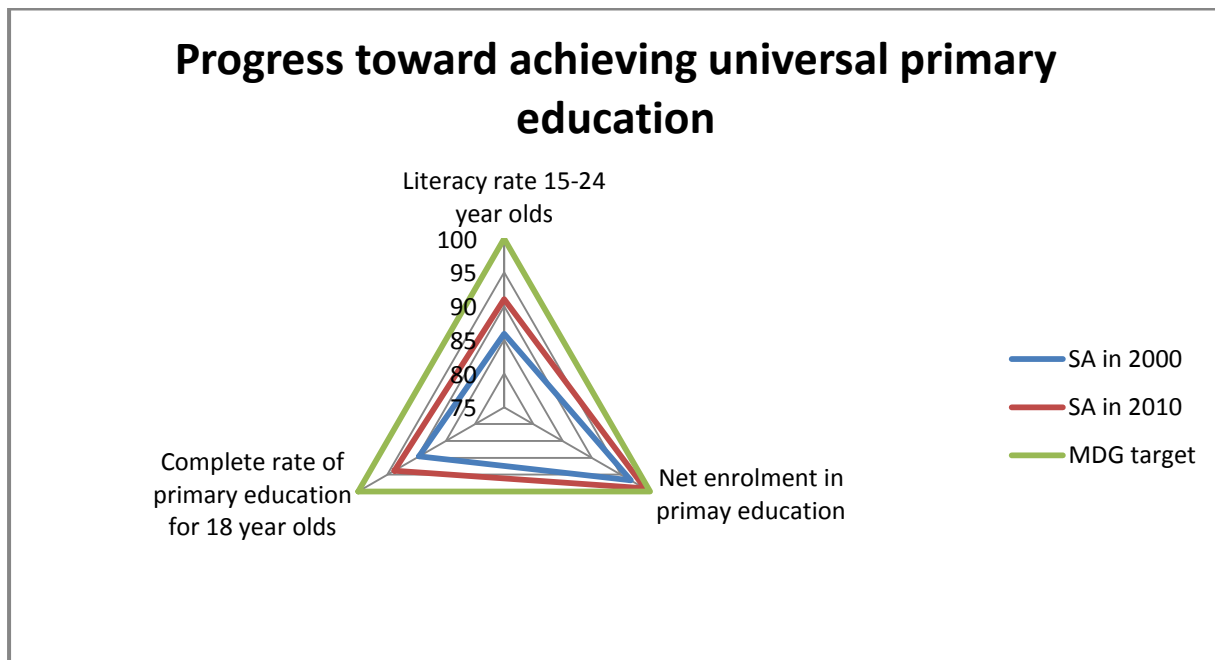
Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010: 24-26)

From **Figure 2.8** it can be deduced that progress has been made toward eradicating absolute poverty. Overall economic growth and reallocation of government priorities contributed to this success (Statistics South Africa, 2010:38). Despite this poverty remains one of South Africa’s most severe developmental challenges. Statistics South Africa (2010:39) list many recommendations to

aid this goal, one of which is that Municipalities should focus on Local Economic Development initiatives to create skills and employment.

## Millennium Development Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

Education is needed to meet most of the other MDGs. Educated people are in a better position to find employment, improve their standard of living and contribute to a knowledge-based society. Statistics South Africa (2010:41) state that “since 1994, the government has worked to reverse the detrimental impact that apartheid education policies and practices have had on the majority of South Africa’s population”.



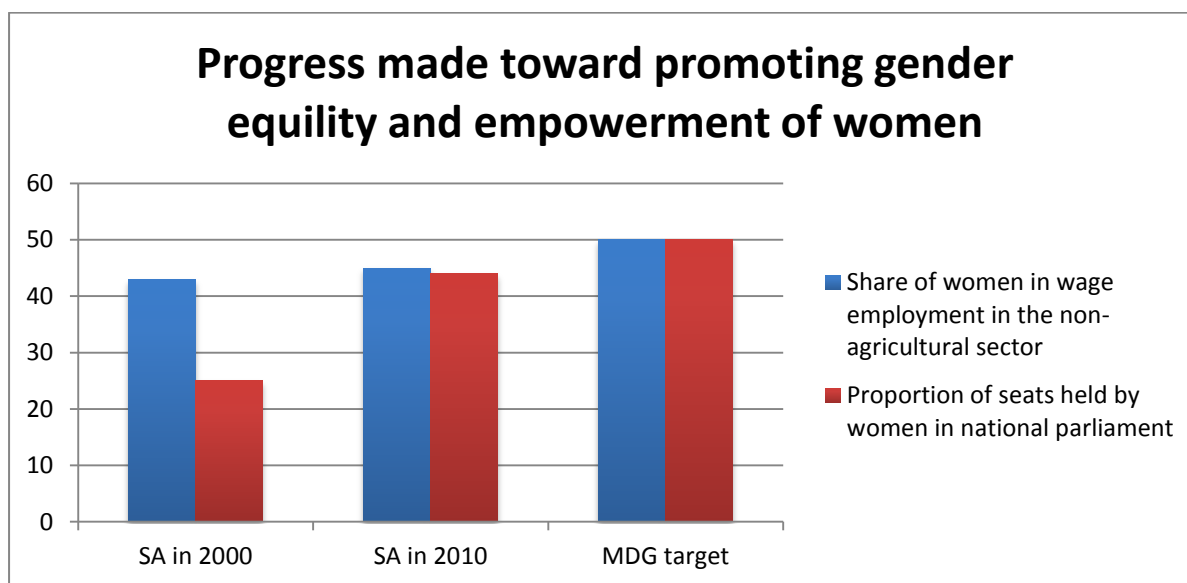
**Figure 2.9: Progress made toward achieving universal primary education**

Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:43)

In **Figure 2.9** the statistics regarding the progress that has been made toward MDG2 is illustrated. It can be seen that much progress has been made since 2000, but that intervention will be needed if we are to achieve the goals set forth for the 2015 deadline. Statistics South Africa (2010:47) argues that since South Africa has met its goal for universal primary education before 2015, it must now focus on improving the quality and functionality of education.

### **Millennium Development Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women**

In the National Report (Statistics South Africa, 2010:51) it states that gender equality is currently a constitutional (Constitution, 1996:8) imperative in South Africa. In **Figure 2.10** below it can be seen that substantial progress has been made toward realising this goal. The MDG target aim for a 50/50 level of equality between men and women and South Africa is not far off the mark.



**Figure 2.10: Progress made toward promoting gender equality and empowerment of women**

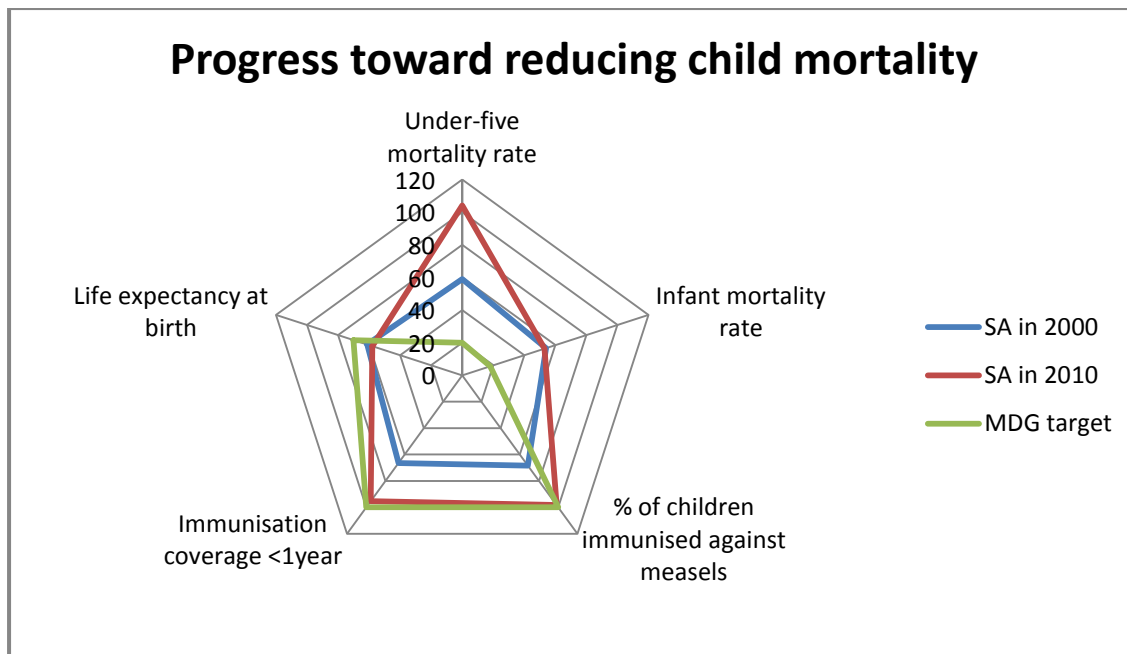
Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:52)

Although progress has been made in achieving equality more progress has to be made toward eliminating violence against women and empowering women. Statistics South Africa (2010:56) maintains that “eliminating violence against women is a prerequisite for gender equality and empowerment of women”. In the National Report (Statistics South Africa, 2010:56) it is stated that the data in **Figure 2.10** illustrates that South Africa has generally performed well against the international indicators for this MDG.

### **Millennium Development Goals 4: Reduce child mortality**

For a society to be considered healthy and equitable, children should be able to grow into healthy, secure and productive adults. Internationally progress has been made towards this MDG; however Sub-Saharan Africa remains an exception. In this area child mortality is on the rise, mostly

because of the impact of HIV/AIDS. This can be seen in **Figure 2.11** below; where the under-five mortality rate has nearly doubled since 2000 despite the fact that immunisation has gone up.



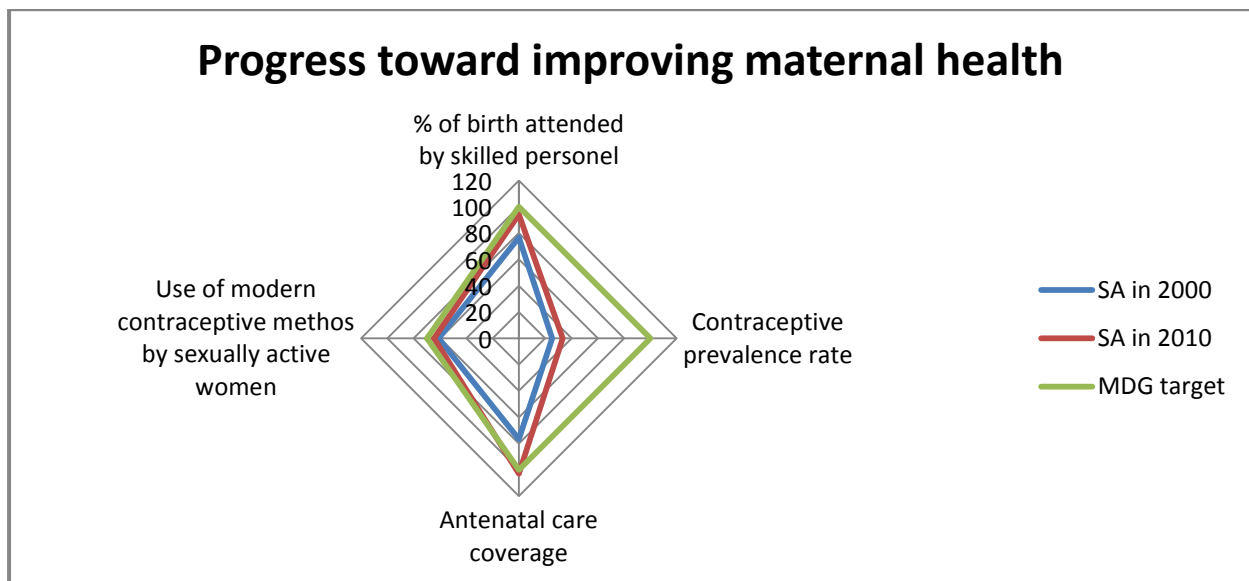
**Figure 2.11: Progress made toward reducing child mortality**

Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:60)

The Government has implemented the needed policies and strategies to reduce under-five mortality, but despite this they are not sufficient to reduce these rates. Statistics South Africa (2010:65) recommends that the Government improve access, outreach and awareness on nutrition, food security and immunization.

### Millennium Development Goal 5: Improve maternal health

In 2005 developing countries accounted for more than 99% of the 536 000 maternal deaths in the world. Nearly 50% of the deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa. (Statistics South Africa, 2010:66) Despite South Africa’s progressive and comprehensive health policies it is unlikely that the MDG target of 38 per 100 000 will be reached. In 2010 South Africa experienced a maternal mortality ration of 625 per 100 000 which is 16 times higher than the target as set by the MDG.



**Figure 2.12: Progress made towards maternal health**

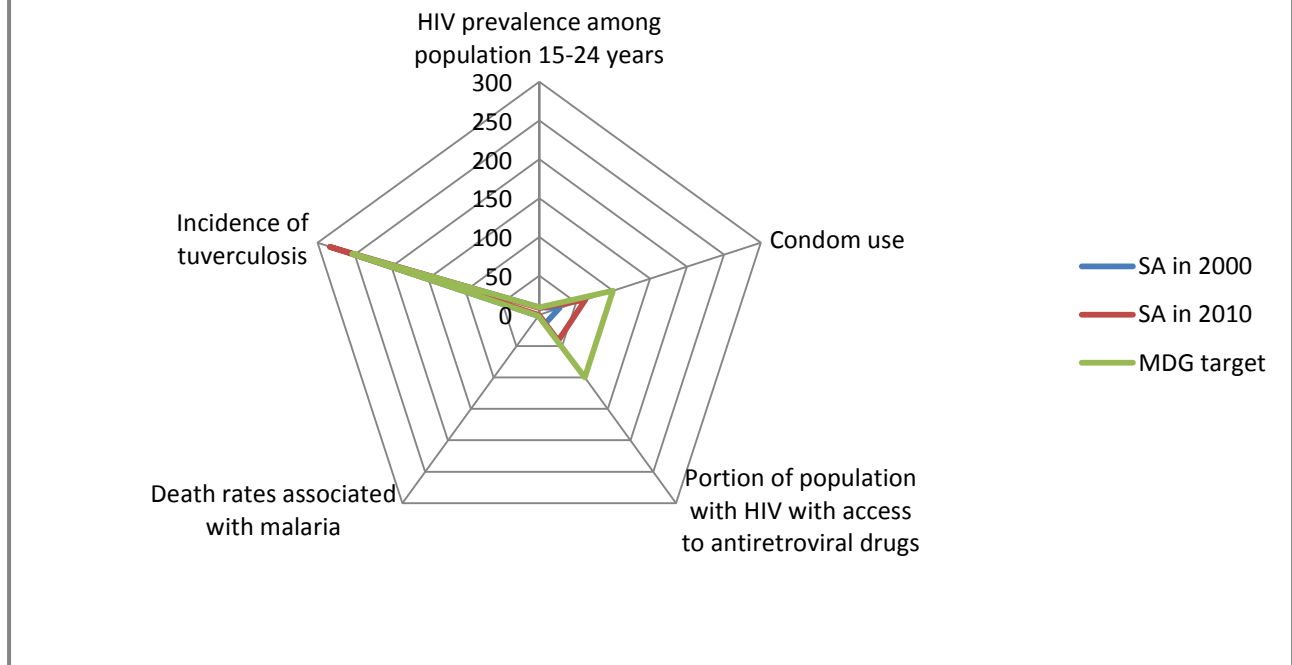
Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:67)

In **Figure 2.12** the progress that has been made toward improving maternal health can be seen. The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel has risen by 23% since 2000 while incidence of contraceptive use has increased by 32%. (Statistics South Africa, 2010:67) According to Statistics South Africa (2011:67) “this indicates a significant improvement in the extent of services provided at health care facilities”.

### **Millennium Development Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases.**

The prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in adults for sub-Saharan Africa in 2008 was seven times higher than the global total prevalence of 0.8% (Statistics South Africa, 2010: 74). HIV peaked in the 1990s and early 2000s in South Africa but seems to be stabilising, as can be inferred from **Figure 2.13**. The MDG target of less than 9.3 appears to be achievable if proper intervention methods, such as the improvement of access to basic health, are implemented.

## Progress toward combatting HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

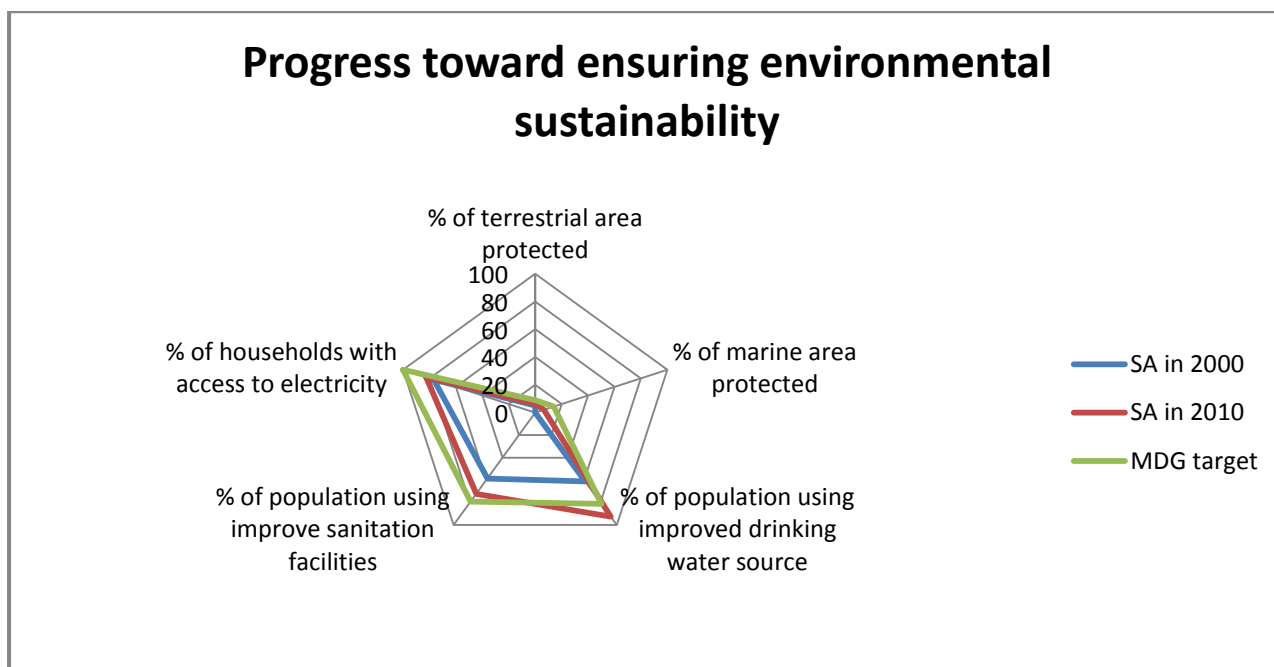


**Figure 2.13: Progress made toward combatting HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases**

Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010: 75-76)

### Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Many positive changes have occurred in the South African political context regarding this MDG, such as the inclusion of environmental rights into the Constitution, as well as the development of new environmental management policies. It is due to this that most of the goals and indicators involved with this MDG are likely and possible to achieve, or have already been achieved (Statistics South Africa, 2010:85-86). This can also be seen in the graphic representation of the progress made towards this goal in **Figure 2.14** below.



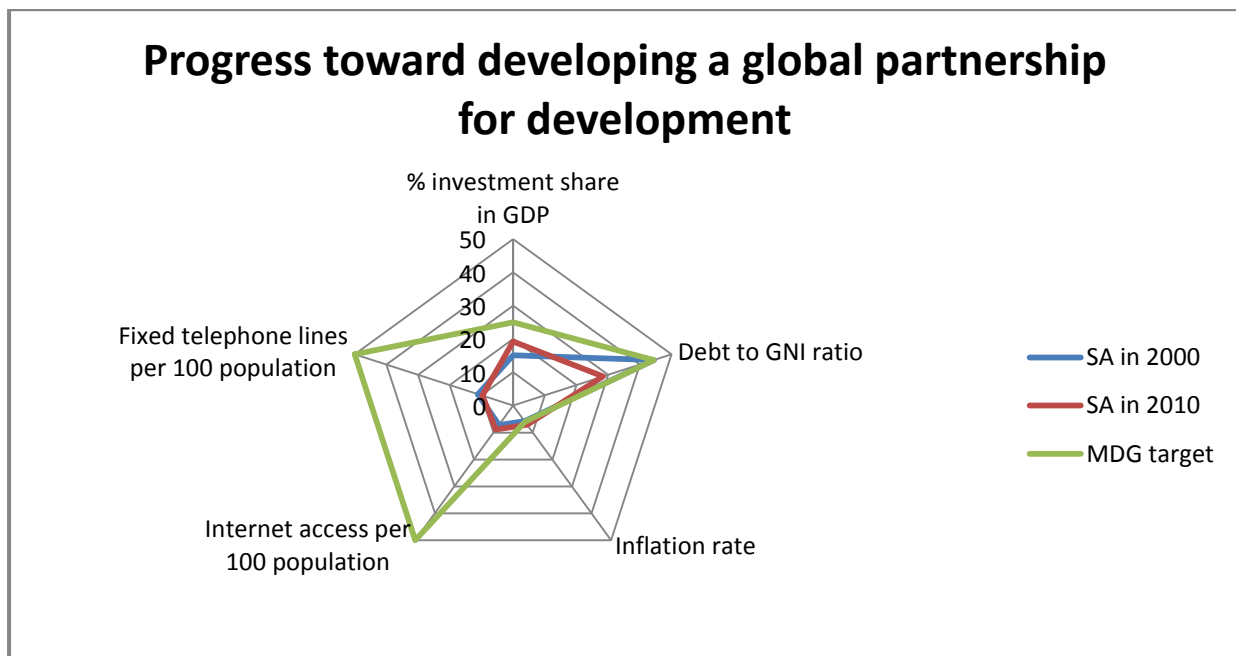
**Figure 2.14: Progress made toward ensuring environmental sustainability**

Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:85-86)

On most indicators for this target South Africa’s progress has been encouraging, but Statistics South Africa (2010:88) states that there is still cause for concern in a number of areas. The report (Statistics South Africa, 2010:99) gives a number of recommendations as to how these indicators can be enhanced.

### **Millennium Development Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development**

With regards to this goal South Africa has chosen to modify its targets to better track the country’s performance against a range of variables (Statistics South Africa, 2010:100). The report (Statistics South Africa, 2010:100) goes on to say that because of this many of these indicators may not be regarded as obvious MDG targets, but do provide an economic context to the report and help to explain the country’s performance on the previous seven goals. These self-appointed targets and their advancement are illustrated in **Figure 2.15**.



**Figure 2.15: Progress made towards a global partnership for development**

Source: Own construction from Statistics South Africa (2010:101-102)

According to UN-HABITAT (2006:47) “countries that have attempted to address inequality by investing in the health, housing and education of their most vulnerable populations tend to perform better on all human development indicators”. They go on to say that countries such as South Africa, Brazil and Tunisia have performed comparatively well in many indicators of human development due to political commitment.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Sustainability is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses all the spheres the urban planner is active in: Social, Economic, Environmental and Spatial. Sustainability and sustainable development has been around in one form or another for a long time, but special focus has been placed on it since 1987. South Africa has also taken up the challenge for sustainability as can be seen in the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Yet there are certain obstacles that we face, along with many other African nations, which negatively impact on the achievement of sustainability. It is important to identify these challenges in order to formulate informed strategies to achieve sustainable development. The progress made by South

Africa in the MDGs indicate that we are headed in the right direction with regards to sustainability, but that action is still needed in certain areas.