

Stories from around the world



Stories that describe the impact of poverty and injustice on the lives of individuals can bring to life the importance of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Below is a selection of real-life stories from Bolivia. There are similar stories within the 'Youth resources' and 'Children's resources' that form part of the 'Blow the Whistle Sunday Toolkit'. You may wish to include one or more of these stories in your church services and activities on 'Blow the Whistle Sunday'.

STORIES FROM BOLIVIA

Severa is 55-years old and lives in a neighbourhood called Catavi, in Potosí, a mining region. She says, "I lost one of my children at birth and two before they reached the age of five." Severa still has four grownup children but remembers the pain of losing the others. "Many women are in the same situation," recounts Severa, "they have lost at least one child at birth or before reaching five. They can't get to the medical centre because they live too far away or it's normal to give birth at home, they have fallen ill with diarrhoea or their lungs can't bear the intense cold."

Gracia Violeta is a young woman who contracted HIV. She is a Christian and asks herself, "Why did this happen to me?" However, with the support of her family she has fought to come out on top. Despite her illness she raises awareness about HIV in the media and has gotten many organisations to do work in this area. In Bolivia HIV isn't spoken about openly and the church is also one of the places where the subject is never brought up. Nonetheless, Violeta is raising her voice, asking for the church to listen to her experiences.

Isaac is an 8 year-old boy in Bolivia who has lost his mother and lives with his father, a builder. He goes to Valle Hermoso primary school in a dangerous part of Cochabamba. His teacher, Rosalía says, "He is always missing classes because he goes to wash cars for 32p a day." She also says, "Many children leave their studies to work because their mother is a single parent and does not have sufficient means to provide for them. This means that they go out to work selling sweets, washing cars, shining shoes or begging. Most children going to work do not finish primary level education."
