

## Youth resources

*based on the Millennium Development Goals*



*Duration: 4 sessions / Age: 12+*

Young people know that they live in a global world. They have a sharp sense of justice and want to make a difference. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a key initiative in poverty reduction and are fundamental in our understanding of the current global fight against poverty.

2007 is the halfway point to achieving the MDGs. In 7 years' time they will have reached the end of their course. The young people of today have a voice to influence world leaders and hold them to account for their promises.

### **CONTENT**

- Introduction to the MDGs (combine with session 1)
- Session 1: HIV and AIDS
- Session 2: Slums
- Session 3: Gender Equality
- Session 4: Water
- Conclusion to series with suggestions for further activity (combined with session 4)

### **FORMAT**

The four topics have been chosen out of the many available as the most engaging for young people in the UK.

The sessions have been written as a toolkit. You can mix and match according to your group's needs and the time available. They can be used as a series of four or certain issues can be selected and used on their own.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE MDGs

*Use in Session 1 or as background information for leaders*

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

How old will you be in 7 years' time?

What do you hope to be doing?

What do you want to do before then?

## EXPLANATION

2007 marks the halfway point set by world leaders to achieve the MDGs. There are only seven years left to make good the promises which were set a number of years ago.

The Goals came into being in the year 2000 as a result of leaders from every country agreeing that poverty must be reduced. The eight Goals were created to form an international framework for development, with targets to be achieved by 2015.

By that time thousands more young people should have stepped out of chronic poverty, able to dream of a future like you can dream.

But there's a long way to go before these goals are reached. You can make sure they get there.

## BACKGROUND: PROFESSIONAL OPINION

Taken from an article by Dave Toycen, President of World Vision Canada.

'Back in 2000, I watched enthusiastically as 289 world leaders gathered at the United Nations and agreed to an enormous goal: to cut global poverty in half by the year 2015.

The leaders broke down that big, overarching goal into eight smaller points – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They include reducing extreme poverty and hunger, decreasing the number of children who die of preventable causes, and giving all children a primary school education.

As we approach the halfway point to the target year, 2015, it's clear the world has made some progress. In African countries alone, 17 million more children are now in school since their governments abolished school fees. Financial aid from countries like Canada is providing new teachers and classrooms. But in other areas, the world is falling behind. For instance, only 9% of HIV-positive pregnant women have access to services and drugs that reduce the risk of passing the virus on to their infants. That means hundreds of thousands of children are being born with a death sentence.

I'm deeply troubled by global priorities. I see worldwide spending on the military and arms trade ringing in at \$950 billion a year, yet the world is hard pressed to find the \$9 billion that's needed to tackle HIV and AIDS this year, the \$13 billion that would give every person basic health care and nutrition, or the \$6 billion that's needed to give every child a primary education. Clearly the world does have the resources to cut poverty in half by 2015. What we're lacking is the will'.

## LOOKING DEEPER

Use: Micah Challenge Toolkit No. 7 [www.micahchallenge.org.uk/resource/Micah\\_07.pdf](http://www.micahchallenge.org.uk/resource/Micah_07.pdf)

Watch: Micah Challenge Video, It's Your Choice, available to download from <http://www.micahchallenge.org.uk/resources/videoaudio.htm> or request a copy by emailing [enquiries@micahchallenge.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@micahchallenge.org.uk)

# SESSION 1: HIV and AIDS

**Goal 6: Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases**

**Target 7: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV and AIDS by 2015**

## BACKGROUND FOR LEADING

AIDS is now the leading cause of premature death in sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth largest killer worldwide. In the European countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and some parts of Asia, HIV and AIDS are spreading rapidly. More than 40 million people live with HIV and AIDS. 14 million children have been orphaned as a result of the disease – 95% of these in developing countries. However, effective programmes in countries like Thailand and Uganda have shown that it is possible to reverse infection rates.

If you would like a 10-minute guide on this issue see:

[www.worldvision.org.uk/upload/pdf/10\\_min\\_HIV\\_AIDS.pdf](http://www.worldvision.org.uk/upload/pdf/10_min_HIV_AIDS.pdf)

## IMAGINE

If a plane with 420 people onboard crashed and everyone was killed, it would make the news, wouldn't it?

Now imagine that 12 more planes each carrying 420 people crashed on the same day – 13 planes in total. It would be the headline on every newspaper, wouldn't it?

Now imagine that the next day you woke up and the same thing had happened – 13 planes, with 420 people on each, had crashed killing all their passengers.

And this happened every day for the rest of the year.

Pretty shocking, right?

Well this is the number of people who died from AIDS in Africa in 2006.

(Leave a moment's pause)

In some small towns the cemetery is lined with people selling their goods because it has become the most visited place in town. There can be 70 burials on a normal day.

## QUIZ

Print out the HIV and AIDS quiz from Avert.org using the link below. Ask the group to complete the quiz in pairs then run through the correct answers. [www.avert.org/media/pdfs/hiv\\_aids\\_quiz.pdf](http://www.avert.org/media/pdfs/hiv_aids_quiz.pdf)

## WATCH

If you have the equipment, watch one or both of the following clips:

**Ester:** A mum living with HIV in Malawi (4 mins). Order it (and watch a small version) at:

[www.tearfund.org/Miracle/More+about+the+Miracle+appeal/short+film.htm](http://www.tearfund.org/Miracle/More+about+the+Miracle+appeal/short+film.htm)

**Take2:** Communities finding solutions to cope with the AIDS pandemic (15 mins). Order at:

[www.worldvision.org.uk/take2](http://www.worldvision.org.uk/take2)

## **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

It's difficult to imagine the stigma and prejudice people living with HIV and AIDS suffer everyday. It's even harder to imagine how we would respond if we were living in a community where HIV was on our doorstep. Look at how Jesus talks to the leper, an illness with a similar stigma in His day.

### **READ LUKE 5:12-15**

What do you think the life of the leper would have been like prior to his meeting Jesus?

Why were Jesus' actions outrageous?

What do you think the people standing by would have said and felt?

Were people attracted by what Jesus did?

### **THINK ABOUT IT**

Would you have acted like Jesus if we were in His situation? Really?

Who is the modern day equivalent of the leper?

What aspects of his life are similar to those of some of the people living with HIV and AIDS?

Are there people around us who we can show compassion to?

## **STORY**

Print out the story below and cut the paragraphs up. Give each paragraph to a member of the group and ask them to read out Kunthata's story in sequence, according to the numbers at the beginning of the paragraph.

Story of Kunthata Chimto, 16, Grade Six, Nthondo, Malawi

- 1) My parents died of AIDS. I cannot remember how they looked, what they liked or how they would want me to live. I miss them. I don't know what it would be like to have biological parents.
  
- 2) My grandmother knew that I was HIV-positive before I did. The doctor and my grandmother thought I was too young, at 14, to know my HIV status.
  
- 3) My peers already suspected. I had lost weight, had skin rashes and frequent coughs. It was distressing because I did not know the truth. My grandmother underestimated my ability to understand. After a year of uncertainty she finally told me my status because she knew it was the only way I might get anti-retroviral drugs and counselling. I was not surprised, but it was as if my death sentence was confirmed. I was distressed for three months. I saw no reason to live. I could not go out and chat with even my closest friends and if she came to visit me I refused to talk.
  
- 4) Our community Medical Assistant counselled me on how to live positively with HIV, and from that I became a transformed person. I decided to live on with HIV. I came out and joined the community. I played with my friends.
  
- 5) About a year later, I started talking about my status openly among friends, family members and villagers. I needed to speak out so people could understand and support me, but also to let them know that HIV is real, painful and should be avoided.

- 6) It was not easy. Many of my friends did not want to be seen with me. They believed I would infect them and their parents told them to avoid me. But the church slowly understood and people started praying for me. They supported me. Toward the end of last year I became very sick, bed-ridden, and I was discharged from the hospital to die. I was taken to a private Catholic hospital where nuns provided me with loving care.
- 7) I was still struggling with skin cancer. At this time I was referred to a government institution that provides anti-retrovirals. The first two weeks were difficult, but after three weeks the drugs helped me to gain weight. I am now strong. I'm a member of a village youth group that works on HIV and AIDS, and I'm back at school.
- 8) Malawian children who cannot access anti-retrovirals are in as hopeless a situation as I was. Their future is finished. They are in pain. Many are living far away from the hospitals that can provide the drugs. They cannot walk, they cannot afford transport.
- 9) My cousin Kevin has AIDS. He was staying with an old grandmother who could not help him to get anti-retrovirals, and he died. That is an awful thing, and now that we can stop it from happening, we must. Adults often have ways to afford anti-retrovirals, but children depend on the consideration of others. Anti-retrovirals must be provided for children in their village. We need food to support the treatments. We need clothes. We need love. Government, NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) and people with power and money should not forget to share with the poor in need.

## **PRAYER**

Place a bowl or a box in the middle of the room or on a table and place tea light candles around it with a few boxes of matches next to them.

Ask each person to write their own prayer relating to the situation of HIV and AIDS, then to come up to the table, place their prayer in the bowl and to light a candle as a symbol of their prayer and thoughts for those suffering with HIV like they've seen in the video and heard in the story. Ask for this to take place in silence. You could play some music during this time too.

## **ACTION**

Wear a red ribbon to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS

Put World AIDS day – 1<sup>st</sup> December – in your diary and do something as a group on that day

Order a pocket guide to HIV and AIDS by emailing [info@worldvision.org.uk](mailto:info@worldvision.org.uk)

Log onto [www.stopaidscampaign.org.uk](http://www.stopaidscampaign.org.uk) and [www.avert.org](http://www.avert.org) to find out more information about this issue

# SESSION 2: SLUMS

## Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure Environmental sustainability

**Target 11: by 2020 achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers**

### BACKGROUND FOR LEADING

A definition of a slum: 'Slums are overcrowded, poor suburbs and settlements with limited access to water, sanitation, sewerage, electricity and services such as clinics, schools, police and fire stations' ([www.slum survivor.org](http://www.slum survivor.org)).

- 1 billion people (or 1/6th of humanity) currently live in slums and the UN estimates that by 2030, 2 billion people will live in slums
- Between 2000 and 2002, 6.7 million people were evicted from their homes (UN-Habitat)
- In 2007 for the first time in history the majority of people will live in urban areas. This urban growth has resulted in a larger number of people living in slums

### ACTIVITY

Bring a collection of large cardboard boxes (you may be able to get these from your local supermarket), bubble wrap, brown tape, plastic bags and any other material you can find easily.

Divide the group into 2 teams. Give them 10-15 minutes to build the best full size shelter that they can out of the material you have given them. Award a prize to the best one at the end.

### READ OUT

The definition of a slum and the facts included in the background section above. Also read out the target of the Millennium Development Goals that relates to slums (under title to this session).

### POEM: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Print out the poem below and cut the paragraphs up. Give each paragraph to a member of the group and ask them to read it out in sequence, according to the numbers at the beginning of the paragraph. Explain that it is written by Gabriela Tôrres Barbosa who lives in one of Rio de Janeiro's many *favelas* (Portuguese word for slums) that stretches up one of the steep hillsides that surrounds the 'official' city.

The full version of this poem is highly recommended and could be used instead. It can be found at [www.newint.org/features/2006/01/01/brazil](http://www.newint.org/features/2006/01/01/brazil)

- 1) 'I am really not feeling too well these days. My brain doesn't stop thinking. It seems like I am going crazy. I live in several Brazils at the same time.  
I wake up, drink English tea and sit down to study for a degree that I could never pay for if it weren't for the scholarship. Today I study English, Philosophy and Sociology: all these beautifully strange subjects invading my simple home – a home I love the way it is, but would like to see finished one day...

- 2) ... I wish to advise everyone that I like living in the favela. The only thing I would like to change is that its inhabitants one day have more options to choose from and can walk around freely without other people getting scared when they hear the magic word: 'favela'. Sometimes when I talk to people and tell them where I am from they are stunned and say: 'Wow. You speak so eloquently. Write beautiful things and are nicely dressed. How is it possible?'...
  
- 3) ... To live in the favela is *só alegria*, all joy. When I come back to the *comunidade* it is like a tribe – everybody knows me, and people talk to each other and kiss and hug and genuinely take care of one another. In the favela I feel safe and recognized; I have the freedom to be who I am without having to meet other people's prejudices of how people like me are supposed to be. To live in a *comunidade* means an extension of one's home. No-one will ever go hungry because there will always be an open door and a gesture of solidarity...
  
- 4) ... The other day in a middle-class apartment building I noticed that people do not greet one another in the elevator. Many do not even know their neighbours. If one day they needed help, it would be quite difficult to find it next door...
  
- 5) ... I never stopped dreaming.  
I know that the poor don't study:  
The rich and powerful have told me many times.  
But I also know that  
if I really want to do it,  
they cannot stop me...'
  
- 6) I leave home a bit earlier and walk to university in order not to spend money on public transport. For so many years I tried to get into university and now that I am finally 'allowed' to study, long walks or lack of money will not discourage me. If there is one thing the favela teaches you from early on, it's to improvise; to re-invent yourself every day. I sit down comfortably in the university's modern computer lab and take advantage of the technology available to enter the digital world. The digital world! It is amazing how we keep creating things that could benefit humanity but that actually just widen the gap between haves and have-nots.

Abstracts of a poem by Gabriela Torres Barbosa, NI Jan 2006, issue 386. Translated from Portuguese by Hjalmar-Jorge Joffre-Eichhorn.

## DISCUSSION

What are the things that strike you in this poem?

What surprises you?

If they are not picked out by the group highlight the fact that the close family and community ties are very positive, as well as the resourcefulness and creativity in the middle of poverty. Highlight the difference between this image and stereotypes some people have of slums – that people are lazy, dirty and the areas are only dangerous and full of drugs.

## EXPLANATION

You may want to pass the following photos of a slum in India around while you are explaining the following:

Most people living in slums live in fear that they will be evicted from their homes and that they will be demolished. This is because most slums are built on illegal land because people can't afford to rent houses in other areas of the city. Most slums have inadequate sanitary and water services and they may be built on land that is not environmentally safe (for example prone to flooding or landslides) because this is the land no one else wants to live on.

Some governments see the solution as simply as getting rid of slums by destroying all the houses. However this doesn't work because then lots of people have nowhere to live and they will just build houses somewhere else. Other governments (like Brazil) have started land tenure projects. This means that people are given the right to stay where they are. This allows people to live without being scared of being thrown out and it also means that they will be motivated to invest in and improve their houses and area. For example, they can save money little by little to buy a better roof, or they can work with their neighbours to build a road.

## PHOTOS

Merlin CD165-8-425.jpg Slum in Hyderabad, India



Merlin CD165-8-463.jpg Slum in Hyderabad, India



## **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Ask a member of the youth group to read out Micah 6.8 in the Message Bible:

'But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in men and women. It's quite simple. Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously – take God seriously'. Micah 6.8, the Message

## **THINK ABOUT IT**

What strikes you?

How does that work out in today's world?

How does it link to the issues we've been discussing?

## **PRAYER**

We pray that you might bless the projects that exist in slums around the world to improve the lives of people living in them. We thank you for the resourcefulness and creativity that people in slums often have to improve the area where they live. We pray that you might protect them from the pain of seeing their house and possessions destroyed and of becoming homeless. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## **ACTION**

**Find out more from:**

[www.newint.org/issues/2006/01/01/](http://www.newint.org/issues/2006/01/01/)

[www.slum survivor.org/slum-facts/](http://www.slum survivor.org/slum-facts/)

## SESSION 3: GENDER EQUALITY

**Millennium Development Goal 7: Promote gender equality and empower women**

**Target 4: to enable girls to attend all levels of schooling in equal numbers to boys, preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015**

### BACKGROUND FOR LEADING

Around the world, women hold only 16% of seats in national parliaments. 80% of all refugees are women and their dependent children, and 60% of children not in primary schools are girls. While women perform two-thirds of the world's work, they receive only 10% of the world's income.

Long-standing inequalities between women and men continue to limit life choices for women.

Educated girls have more choices in life about marriage, childbirth and work. A few years of basic education can empower women to make changes: to send their own children to school, to have smaller and healthier families, and to enjoy a higher standard of living. They are also less likely to be affected by HIV and AIDS.

### GAME

If you have access to a hall or can be outside:

Divide the group into teams of 2 and teams of 3. Bring some pairs of old tights (or anything else that can be used to tie). Tie the teams of 2 together for a traditional 3-legged race. Tie the teams of 3 together in the same way so that the middle person will have both their legs tied. Set a distance they have to race and give a prize to the winning team. If you want to make it really interesting try it with teams of 4 tied together too!

This is supposed to be a deliberately unfair game.

OR

Play The Chocolate Game (see below for instructions) but make different rules for boys and girls. Girls have to put on even more than the usual hat, scarf etc – maybe 2 hats, 2 scarves – whilst the boys only have to put on a baseball cap and do not have to use gloves.

You need: 1 large bar of chocolate (still in the wrapper and on a plate), a woolly hat, a scarf, a pair of gloves, a knife and fork and a die

Method: The group sit round in a circle and take turns to try to throw a six. When a six is thrown that person has until the next person throws a six to put on the hat, scarf and gloves and eat as much of the chocolate as they can -but only by using the knife and fork. Meanwhile the die continues to go round the circle as all the others frantically try to get a six. When the next six is thrown the first person stops, takes off the hat etc and passes them quickly to the person who has just rolled the next six.

### COMMENT

These games are obviously unfair but for girls in some parts of the world, life is a whole string of unfair events. This is shown most clearly in the fact that in lots of countries many more boys go to school than girls.

At this point you could reread the first paragraph from the background information above with statistics showing inequality of women.

### QUESTIONS

What do you like and don't like about school? Why do you go? Why does the government make it compulsory for you to go?

## EXPLANATION

Education isn't just having knowledge of different subjects – whether you know French grammar or know how to do algebra. It is entirely essential because it gives us the ability to think, to make choices, and to be able to say yes and no. The term used is that it empowers us. We gain a sense of our rights which makes us less likely to be abused or excluded in society.

## FACTS

Print out the facts below. Share them round the group to be read out loud.

- Children of mothers who have been to school are healthier, better nourished and more likely to attend and succeed in school than children of mothers who have never gone to school
- In the Philippines, maternal primary education reduces the risk of child mortality by half and secondary education by a factor of three
- Education helps to prevent the labour, trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, and their use as soldiers
- Education is one of the most effective weapons against HIV and AIDS and other diseases - HIV and AIDS spreads twice as fast amongst uneducated girls than amongst those with some schooling
- Life expectancy rises by as much as 2 years for every 1 per cent increase in literacy.
- An adult with primary education earns twice as much as an adult without any schooling
- Education is the foundation for acquiring knowledge and skills necessary to participate in and benefit from globalisation and technological change
- Education makes it possible for people to be responsible and informed citizens, and to have a voice in politics and society which is essential for sustaining democracy.
- "Illiteracy is a bane. It cripples your life, limits your choices, ruins your present, and leaves little or no hope for the future." — Anupreet, India

## ACTIVITY

Divide the group into 2 teams. Print out one copy of each set of instructions – one team's instructions will be in English and the other team's will be in foreign languages. Fold the instructions in half so that no one knows that the teams have different sheets. Tell the teams that when you say 'go' they are to open up the sheet and follow the instructions to complete the task as quickly as possible – the winning team will get a prize. They must not look at the other group's sheet but if they are confused or don't know what to do they can listen out to what the other team is doing and try to follow them.

### Group One

Collect together the following items and hand them to your group leader as quickly as possible:

A watch	Something red	A sock	A key ring	Photo of a boyfriend or girlfriend
Something that makes a noise	A business card	Something sweet	Something from another country	A tie

## Group Two

Collect together the following items and hand them to your group leader as quickly as possible:

Un reloj	Quelque chose de rouge	Une chaussette	Ein Schlüsselring	Una foto de un novio o de una novia
Something that makes a noise	Une carte de visite	Что-то сладостное	Algo dum outro país	Un legame

## Imagine

Imagine if you couldn't read (like the team with the foreign instructions couldn't)

- road signs would be meaningless
- you wouldn't be able to read a magazine
- or send text messages
- or fill in forms like job applications
- or read a menu at a restaurant
- you would have to remember a doctor's prescription by memory
- voting when you were older would be almost impossible  
<http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/education/literacy/index.php>

## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

### READ GALATIANS 3:26-29

What does it mean to be a son or daughter of God?

What does this passage show us about how God thinks of us?

### THINK ABOUT IT

With regards to the way we treat people in our everyday lives, does this passage have a bearing on how we should act?

## PRAYER

Ask the team to pray in pairs (or individually in silence) about their thoughts following this session.

## ACTION

Tell someone else about this issue today.

## FIND OUT MORE

[www.womankind.org.uk](http://www.womankind.org.uk)

[www.care.org/getinvolved/index.asp](http://www.care.org/getinvolved/index.asp)

[youthink.worldbank.org/issues/education/literacy/index.php](http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/education/literacy/index.php)

# CONCLUSION TO THE SERIES ON THE MDGs

## SPOTLIGHT ON THAILAND: HOPE FOR CHANGE

*Thailand's success story – the United Nations has set an ambitious goal: to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by 2015. Thailand has proven that it can be done.*

Poverty forces people to do desperate things. For Thai villager Kumdee Si-aran, 35, and her 42-year-old husband, Jampa, it meant leaving their rice farm and their family for months at a time to find work during the dry season. Toiling 13 hours a day and earning a mere 15 cents for every kilogram of peppers they collected, the couple would scrape together just enough to send back to Grandma Kotmaaw, who was looking after their oldest son. Sitting on the floor of their simple concrete and wooden home in the northeastern province of Udon Thani, Kumdee recalls what life was like for her family more than 10 years ago. "If we had no money, we'd eat rice and chilli paste" the mother of two explains. "We had to go hungry to send money to our sons".

30 years ago hunger and poverty were rife in rural Thailand. Thousands of refugees ravaged by war were flooding into the country to escape conflicts in Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. Often parents had to leave their families to seek out work, earning meagre wages in gruelling jobs. Some poor parents even sold their children into the sex industry.

But much has changed. While poverty remains still exists, Thailand's economy has grown rapidly, tourism has increased and agricultural exports are booming. Today, Thailand is the world's leading rice exporter and is one of only a few countries in its region to meet the first of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger by reducing by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. At the beginning of the 1990's, 12.5% of the population lived on less than a dollar a day. By 2000, it was 5.2%. (By James East, World Vision Canada)

## SUMMARY

Summarise the topics you've covered and emphasise that young people now are living at a key time in the fight against poverty. They really can make a difference to young people like them living in developing countries.

You could also give each person a Micah Challenge card which is a wallet-sized reminder of the Micah verse and its motivation.

## WHAT NEXT?

- Get involved in the *Blow the Whistle* campaign: 2007 is half-time, the halfway point to achieving the MDGs by 2015 and an ideal time to put the spotlight on governments and their performance to date. To do this, Micah Challenge is running a global *Blow the Whistle* campaign to encourage national, G8 and global leaders to honour the promises they made to the world's poorest.
- *Blow the Whistle* Sunday is 20<sup>th</sup> May – make sure your church blows the whistle!
- Join the *Blow The Whistle* worship service and rally in London on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June
- Visit [www.micahchallenge.org.uk](http://www.micahchallenge.org.uk) to find out more about the campaign
- For more information on the MDGS see the Youth Action Guide at [www.millenniumcampaign.org](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org)
- Learn more from Micah Challenge's supporting agencies. Connect with them at: [youth.tearfund.org](http://youth.tearfund.org) [www.worldvision.org.uk/server.php?show=nav.599](http://www.worldvision.org.uk/server.php?show=nav.599) [www.bmsworldmission.org/product\\_subsection.asp?id=14948](http://www.bmsworldmission.org/product_subsection.asp?id=14948)