



Faith in Action: Working Toward the Millennium Development Goals



AN ACTION
TOOLKIT FOR
RELIGIOUS
LEADERS AND
COMMUNITIES



Religions for Peace



Introduction

The eight Millennium Development Goals

are a set of simple but powerful objectives which, together, make up the world's agreed blueprint for building a better world. They have been embraced by donors, developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike.

Enlightened religious leaders and scholars of all faiths also have a key role to play. Their advocacy can influence political leaders and ordinary citizens alike. Their teaching and guidance can inspire people to new levels of responsibility, commitment and public service. And by their example, they can promote interfaith dialogue and bridge the chasms of ignorance and misunderstanding. The decisions taken at the 2005 World Summit, and the mobilization of civil society groups throughout the world, offer encouraging signs of gathering political will to reach the Goals.

I encourage religious leaders and scholars to do their part in defeating poverty and hunger, and in delivering the world's poorest and most marginalized people from despair.

KOFI ANNAN
SECRETARY-GENERAL
OF THE UNITED NATIONS



Kofi Annan
Secretary-General, United Nations



Dr. William F. Vendley
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A Message from Dr. William F. Vendley

SECRETARY GENERAL, WORLD CONFERENCE OF *RELIGIONS FOR PEACE*

Poverty kills. It kills 30,000 children every day. It shortens, injures and thwarts the lives of more than one billion people struggling to survive on less than US\$1 a day.¹ This poverty cruelly prevents access to the most basic of human needs: food, shelter and health care. It also denies the education so essential to break the cycle of poverty. This need not be so. This poverty is not inevitable. It can be changed.

Moral responsibility for a problem—it can be argued—grows in parallel with the human capacity to solve it. Today, the ways to combat most poverty lie within our collective hands. We have the capacity to end structural poverty and to change those large forces that hold people back from developing themselves. Our capacity to end structural poverty is the measure of our responsibility to do so. To be faithful to our most elementary moral teachings, we must act to end poverty.

The Millennium Development Goals, a compact among nations, lay out an achievable plan to combat global poverty. The Goals can be met, but only if all stakeholders work together.

Religious communities hold a vital key to

the achievement of the Goals. Together, they can serve as moral advocates for needed changes and powerful agents of action.

Through the power of multi-religious cooperation, *Religions for Peace* helps religious leaders and faith communities unleash their enormous potential to advocate for sustainable development and to deliver cost-effective services by equipping local congregations with needed tools.

This toolkit is designed to advance critically needed multi-religious action to end poverty. It provides practical training materials designed to mobilize and educate religious communities to be partners in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It outlines steps for action.

To remain silent while poverty kills, injures and thwarts the lives of so many violates the fundamental teachings overwhelmingly shared by the world's religions. By taking action together, the world's religious leaders can help stop the brutal, unnecessary and unconscionable devastation of poverty. Cooperation among the world's religions is an irreplaceable key.

About the Organization

Religions for Peace builds, equips and networks inter-religious councils to harness the untapped power of religious communities to transform conflict, promote peace and advance sustainable development. Founded in 1970 as an international, nonsectarian

organization, *Religions for Peace* is now the largest coalition of the world's religious communities, with affiliated inter-religious councils in four regions and more than 60 countries.

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Purpose of the Toolkit

This manual was created by *Religions for Peace* with feedback and collaboration from religious leaders from countries around the world. It was created to equip religious leaders and inter-religious councils to carry out advocacy and action campaigns that support achievement of the MDGs.

After introducing the MDGs, the manual will assist religious leaders to actively engage their faith communities in support of the MDG process. It is designed to provide religious leaders with the information they need to:

- Raise awareness about the MDGs and empower their faith communities to take action.
- Build networks and coalitions with like-minded communities around the world.
- Hold policy makers accountable to the commitments their countries made in signing the Millennium Declaration in 2000.
- Engage both local and national media to promote the MDGs.

The Time to Act is Now

In the year 2000, 189 United Nations member nations voted for a compact among nations to end extreme poverty. In doing so, they pledged, for the first time, to unite behind a set of eight development goals to be reached by 2015. These Millennium Development Goals, or MDGs, set out specific, achievable targets on issues ranging from world hunger to HIV/AIDS to child mortality rates.

The Goals, however, are about much more than governments and world leaders. They are about improving the lives of individuals and communities who suffer daily from the effects of extreme poverty. The goals address issues that are all too real for many in the human family — malnutrition and disease, inadequate access to education and health care, and growing socio-economic inequity.

These crises threaten the very integrity of life of the people they afflict.

And yet, much of the world is experiencing unprecedented levels of prosperity. Today's tremendous wealth and scientific advances mean that, for the first time in history, the global community has the ability to eradicate extreme poverty.

Our faith traditions and our values call us to be outraged at the ongoing tragedy of poverty at a time when we can do so much more. The time has come for religious communities worldwide to bring the full weight of their moral authority to bear on behalf of the poor and the voiceless. One of the ways people of faith can act together in support of justice is to build the spiritual and political will necessary to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

This Toolkit is for You

Are you a religious leader, a member of an inter-religious council, a member of a religious women's organization or youth organization? If you are, this **action toolkit** is for you. It is designed for members of all of these groups at the community, national or international level. *Religions for Peace* created this toolkit in collaboration with religious leaders from countries around the world. Its purpose is to equip religious leaders and inter-religious councils to carry out advocacy and action campaigns — at the community, national, regional and global levels — to support achievement of the MDGs.

After introducing the MDGs, the toolkit will assist religious leaders in actively engaging their faith communities in support of the MDG process. *Religions for Peace* designed it to provide religious leaders with the information they need to:

- Raise awareness about the MDGs and empower their faith communities to take action.
- Build networks and coalitions with like-minded communities around the world.
- Advocate that policy makers honor the commitments they made when they signed the Millennium Declaration in 2000.
- Engage both local and national media to promote the MDGs.

How to Use the Toolkit

Religious leaders and their communities have the moral authority to raise awareness about the MDGs, engage in advocacy efforts and put pressure on their governments to fulfill their responsibilities. In the years since world leaders adopted the MDGs, local, national and global civil society coalitions have formed and taken action to raise awareness and pressure their governments to keep their promises. A number of governments of developing countries have developed concrete national plans for the attainment of the MDGs.

Some of these countries are making real progress on at least some of the goals. Other countries have not yet organized concerted efforts to attain the MDGs and have made less progress.

Developing countries are not expected to achieve the eight MDGs on their own. With specific targets to increase foreign aid, grant debt relief and develop fair trade policies, the MDGs call on rich countries to assist poorer nations in combating the global crisis of extreme poverty.

What You Can Do

Section 1 can be used to raise awareness and understanding of the goals themselves. It provides a general overview of the MDGs and describes how they came to be, who promised to fulfill them and why they are so important. The pages list the goals, statistics describing the problem addressed by the goals and reflections on how the goals relate to the world's religious traditions.

Section 2 offers steps religious leaders can take to support the MDGs. It explains the role of religious communities in the MDG process, introduces the importance of multi-religious collaboration and gives specific tips for actions in the following areas:

- **Engaging Religious Communities**
- **Advocating with and Monitoring the Government**
- **Linking to Civil Society**
- **Making Use of the Media**

Section 2 also includes **general tips** for advocacy campaigns and ideas on **how to raise funds** for your actions.

Section 3 provides trainers using this toolkit with tips and a training agenda.

Section 4 provides four tools to use in preparing educational outreach and creating handouts and posters for events, as well as a list of resources that can be used to find out more about the MDGs where you live, get more tips for action and to link to civil society campaigns for the MDGs locally and internationally.

1. A list of the **eight MDGs** and their **eighteen targets**.
2. **Quotes from faith traditions from around the world** that support the MDGs.
3. **Description of citizens' roles** in achieving the MDGs.
4. **An adaptable statement** for reading or printing for religious services and multi-religious events.
5. Information on how to **report back** to *Religions for Peace* and the Millennium Campaign about your events and actions.

Each of these pages can be photocopied or adapted to use as a handout for events and actions.

Millennium Development Goals

What are the MDGs?

In the year 2000, leaders from 189 member states of the United Nations signed the Millennium Declaration pledging to eradicate extreme poverty and to fulfill eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The MDGs correspond to issues that religious leaders and faith communities have

been actively supporting for decades and speak to a central concern of all faith traditions: the intrinsic value of each individual human life. The MDGs exemplify the synthesis of existing religious and civil society agendas into practical global policy.

What Makes the MDGs so Important?

For the first time in history:

- Political leaders at the highest levels have stated their commitment to achieve the key development targets and to end extreme poverty.
- The global community has sufficient financial resources to put an end to extreme global poverty.
- We have the technical capacity to accomplish the MDGs.

The MDGs are not new development targets. Religious leaders, in particular, already have a lot of experience working on these issues in their own communities. The goals are unique because they represent a contract between the world's major economic players. In this time of great hope and potential, religious leaders have a profound opportunity and responsibility to ensure that world leaders follow through in achieving the goals.

What Role Can Religious Leaders Play?

Religious leaders, often the most respected figures in their communities, are uniquely equipped to join and lead activism to support the MDGs by:

- Raising awareness, influencing public opinion and shaping social values.
- Promoting public policy that respects the dignity of all persons and defends the sanctity of life.
- Supporting effective policies and laws.

- Promoting advocacy from the grassroots to national and international levels.

Religious leaders and communities of faith have the power to advance the MDG process. Advocating for the eradication of extreme poverty also has the power to renew our faiths by enhancing our appreciation for the moral implications of our traditions and challenging us to collaborate with others as we put our religious beliefs and moral convictions into action.

Millennium Development Goals

MDG 1

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

To cut in half the number of people who suffer from hunger and the devastating effects of extreme poverty by 2015.

- 50,000 people die each day as a result of poverty-related causes.²
- Every three seconds a child dies from hunger and preventable diseases.³

Faith in Action

Religious communities have long recognized and responded to the need to nourish people spiritually and physically. Now is the time to speak out on behalf of the hungry and most vulnerable. It is important to seize this opportunity to honor and serve the sanctity of all human life by uniting behind a common concern for the hungry and a deep faith in the ability of the world community to eradicate extreme global poverty.

From the Muslim tradition:

“Have you ever seen a human being who contradicts the essence of the religion? That is the person who pushes the orphan aside and does not promote feeding the needy.”
(Qur’an 107)

MDG 2

Achieve universal primary education

To guarantee that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to attend and complete primary school by 2015.

- Over 100 million school-aged children are not enrolled in school — 58 million of them are girls.⁴
- In developing countries, one girl in every four never makes it past fifth grade.⁵
- Children born to uneducated mothers are nearly twice as likely to die before age five as those born to mothers who completed primary school.⁶

Faith in Action

Religious traditions celebrate the preciousness and promise of children. Children, **boys and girls**, need to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to rise out of extreme poverty and to develop greater inter-religious and multi-cultural understanding. It is vital to honor the sacred lives of all children. Their education is the greatest hope for achieving long-lasting global peace and social justice.

Guinean Proverb:

“Knowledge is like a garden: If it is not cultivated, it cannot be harvested.”

Millennium Development Goals

MDG 3

Promote gender equality and empower women

To eliminate gender disparity in education at all levels by 2015 so that an equal number of boys and girls will participate in all levels of schooling.

- 64 percent of the world's estimated 876 million illiterate adults are women.⁷
- 70 percent of the people who live on less than US \$1 per day are women and their children.⁸

Faith in Action

The world's religious traditions share a common respect and reverence for the gifts of all members of the human family. Religious traditions value all life on earth. They share a vision of a world in which neither women nor men suffer from poverty in its many forms and in which all women and men are able to achieve fulfilling lives.

Equal access to education must be provided at all levels so that women and men everywhere will have the necessary resources to contribute their gifts to the growth of their families and communities. It is important to seize this opportunity to build the capacity of women, uniting behind shared appreciation for their critical role in individual faith communities and in the global human family.

From the Baha'i tradition:

"Only as women are welcomed into full partnership in all fields of human endeavor will the moral and psychological climate be created in which international peace can emerge."
(Universal House of Justice, 1985)

MDG 4

Reduce child mortality

To reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate of children under the age of five.

- Over 11 million children under the age of five die each year, most from preventable or treatable diseases.⁹

Faith in Action

The beauty, sanctity and ultimate value of children are emphasized in every religious tradition. Now is the time for religious leaders and faith communities to speak out on behalf of the 30,000 children who die each day from the effects of extreme poverty and unnecessary illness. It is crucial to seize this opportunity to protect the most vulnerable citizens of our world, uniting behind a shared sense of outrage at the unnecessary loss of young lives.

From the Jewish tradition:

"By the breath of children, God sustains the world." (Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 119b)

Millennium Development Goals

MDG 5

Improve maternal health

To reduce the maternal mortality rate by 75 percent by 2015.

- More than 500,000 women die of complications from pregnancy and childbirth every year.¹⁰
- Trained health personnel in the least-developed countries attend only 28 in 100 women giving birth.¹¹

Faith in Action

Mothers appear in the sacred texts and oral traditions of religions all over the world. Their role in giving birth to all children and their contribution to the well-being of their communities are recognized and celebrated. Women's health and well-being are vital. Therefore, action must be taken to ensure that women everywhere have access to affordable and adequate maternal health care to honor and serve the mothers of this world, uniting behind common respect and gratitude for the life and care they bring to the human family.

From the Sikh tradition:

“We are born of women, we are conceived in the womb of women, we are engaged and married to women. We make friendship with women and the lineage continues because of women.” (Guru Nanak Dev, Var Asa)

MDG 6

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

To stop and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and to stop and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

- Approximately 40 million people are now living with HIV/AIDS; 20 million people have already died from it.¹²
- Malaria causes more than 300 million acute illnesses (90 percent in sub-Saharan Africa) and at least one million deaths annually.¹³

Faith in Action

Religious leaders and faith communities share a tradition of responding to the needs of those affected by disease and sickness. The MDGs offer an important opportunity for religious leaders to continue the global struggle against HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other life-threatening diseases by putting pressure on their governments to do more. Now is the time to serve those who are suffering.

From the Buddhist tradition:

“May all beings everywhere plagued with sufferings of body and mind quickly be freed from their illnesses.” (The Bodhicaryavatara of Shantideva)

Millennium Development Goals

MDG 7

Ensure environmental sustainability

To integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs, to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and to achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

- 2.5 billion people do not have access to improved sanitation.¹⁴
- 1.2 billion people do not have access to an improved source of drinking water.¹⁵

Faith in Action

Many religious traditions celebrate the Earth as the sacred, hospitable home for human beings and all other creatures. It has become clear that the Earth and its natural resources are fragile and precious and that action must be taken to ensure access to the basic life-sustaining resources: food, clean water and shelter. It is important to seize this opportunity to honor this sacred planet so that the Earth can be a healthy, sustainable home for generations to come.

From the Hindu tradition: “May there be peace on earth, peace in the atmosphere and in the heavens. Peaceful be the waters, the herbs and plants. May the Divine bring us peace.” (Atharva-Veda XIX-9)

MDG 8

Develop a global partnership for development

To increase effective aid and sustainable debt relief, establish fairer trade rules and ensure that countries receiving aid set and keep good policies for the use of aid.

- In 1970, 22 of the world’s richest countries pledged to spend 0.7 percent of their national income on aid. Only 5 countries have kept that promise.¹⁶
- Every year sub-Saharan Africa, the poorest region of the world, spends \$14.5 billion repaying debts to the world’s rich countries and international institutions.¹⁷

Faith in Action

Religious communities have extensive experience establishing and working through partnerships that cross political borders. Citizens across the globe are more interdependent than ever and now is the time to link existing religious and multi-religious networks to the global civil society campaign against extreme poverty. The MDGs offer an important opportunity to work with members from diverse faith traditions on issues of common humanity and of responsibility to care for one another.

From the Christian tradition: “Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you...” (The Bible, Matthew 5:42)

Millennium Development Goals

How are we doing?

The Millennium Development Goals in Sub-Saharan Africa

MDG 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger			
Population living below US\$1 per day (%)		1990 44.6	2001 46.4
Population undernourished (%)		1990-92 36	2000-02 33
MDG 2 Achieve universal primary education			
Enrollment in final grades of primary school (%)	girls:	1998-99 44.4	2000-02 48.6
	boys:	54.4	57
MDG 3 Promote gender equality and empower women			
Ratio of female-to-male youth literacy rates		1990 0.80	2000-04 0.88
Women in non-agricultural employment (%)		1990 31.5	2003 35.8
MDG 4 Reduce child mortality			
Mortality rate of children under 5 (deaths/1,000 births)		1990 185	2003 172
MDG 5 Improve maternal health			
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)		1990 40	2003 41
MDG 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases			
Estimated adult (15-49) HIV prevalence (%)	1990 2.7	2001 7.3	2004 7.2
New tuberculosis cases per 1,000,000 people (#)	2001 253	2002 263	2003 274
MDG 7 Ensure environmental sustainability			
Land area covered by forest (%)		1990 29.3	2000 27.1
Population with access to improved water source (%)		1990 49	2002 58
MDG 8 Develop a global partnership for development			
Donor countries' gross national income given as official development assistance to developing countries (%)		2001 .22	2003 .25

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, Millennium Indicators Database, World and Regional Trends. Statistics for Goals 1-7 are for sub-Saharan Africa.

Take Action

What Religious Leaders Can Do

It is the role of civil society leaders of all backgrounds to raise awareness of the MDGs in their communities and with their governments. Religious leaders are called to bring their moral and spiritual leadership to advocacy and action around the MDGs.

- Collaborate with other religious leaders and communities.
- Engage your religious community.
- Advocate with and monitor your government.
- Link to civil society actions and campaigns.
- Use the media.

Value of Multi-religious Collaboration

The world's religious communities have enormous potential to improve conditions for billions of people worldwide. Multi-religious cooperation unleashes the hidden assets of religious communities and is more powerful, both substantively and symbolically, than the efforts of individual faith communities acting alone. Religious communities possess spiritual, moral and social assets that can be brought to bear utilizing the full range of existing structures—leadership, local congregations, women's groups, youth groups and specialized agencies. When religious communities recognize their shared values, mobilize their collective assets and work together, they can have a decisive impact where it is most needed.

Religious leaders are uniquely equipped to help get world leaders back on track to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Religious communities all over the world have a long-standing tradition of addressing issues of extreme poverty and social injustice in creative and effective ways. The fundamental sanctity of each human life, a central moral tenet shared by the world's major faith traditions, motivates individuals and faith communities to serve the poor in a myriad of ways. In addition to religious traditions' moral assets, the sheer scale of religious

infrastructures in many countries is of tremendous value in mobilizing large numbers of persons to act. Existing religious communities are the necessary building blocks for worldwide civil society action in support of the MDGs.

Religious leaders and faith communities are the largest and best-organized civil institutions in the world today, claiming the allegiance of billions of believers and bridging the divides of race, class and nationality. More than any other civil society representatives, religious leaders have the experience of establishing and working with international partnerships, and their expertise is greatly needed in the multi-national, inter-religious task of achieving the MDGs by 2015.

Advocating for the achievement of the MDGs is an act that mobilizes and connects faith communities throughout the world. In a time when religion is too often manipulated as a source of division and a false motivation for violent conflict, multi-religious collaboration for the MDGs offers an opportunity for diverse faith communities to work together on issues that remind us of our common humanity. Religious leaders and faith communities have the power to ensure that world leaders work to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Take Action

I. Engaging Religious Communities

Collaborate with other religious leaders and communities

Bring the power of multi-religious collaboration to the MDG campaign by organizing events through inter-religious councils in your country and networking with leaders of other faith groups in the community.

Engage all the members of your community

Religious leaders, women's organizations, youth organizations, schools and other faith-based groups can take an active role in raising awareness of the MDGs and in enabling community members to become effective advocates for them.

Actions to take:

- Hold special religious services.
- Link the MDGs to actions your community is already taking.
- Engage women leaders and religious women's organizations.
- Work with youth.
- Work with schools to incorporate the MDGs into religious education.

Hold special religious services

Incorporating the MDGs into religious services is a simple but very powerful way to raise awareness about the Goals within your community.

- **Encourage involvement:** Get lay leaders, women, men and youth involved in planning and holding the event.
- **Pick a theme:** Focus on all of the MDGs together or highlight each goal individually at separate services or events.
- **Select a day:** Link the MDGs to special observances or holidays throughout the year. Incorporate the MDGs into an existing worship service or hold a special MDG-related event.

- **Select material:** Choose prayers, songs, meditations, messages and other elements of worship that support the goals of ending poverty and advocating for socio-economic justice. If the event is multi-religious, ensure that material is drawn from the whole range of traditions that will be participating.
- **Spread the word:** Invite all of the members of your community, local political leaders and representatives of civil society organizations.
- **Educate:** Include educational handouts on the MDGs in service handouts or on posters and tables at community events.

Use copies or adaptations of the tools at the back of this toolkit:

For all events: "The 8 MDGs" on page 25 and "A Citizen's Role" on page 27.

For inter-religious events and education: "The Millennium Development Goals: Grounded in the Faith Traditions of the World" on page 25.

Link the MDGs to actions your community is already taking

Does your community feed the hungry, work with people affected by HIV/AIDS or work to improve the lives of the poor?

- Use the work your community does for the common good as a tool for education about the MDGs. For example, if you raise awareness about MDG 1 ("Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger") as part of local efforts to feed the hungry, you will make the MDGs more meaningful to your community.

Take Action

- Have information available on the MDGs whenever you take action on an MDG-related issue. Make copies of the tools on pages 22-24 or create your own materials using this manual and the resources listed on pages 30-31.
- Document unmet needs in your community and the work you do to address them. Use this information when you advocate for the MDGs or speak with the media.

Engage women leaders and religious women's organizations

Women of faith are often on the frontlines of caring for the sick and the neediest in their communities. They are also active agents for positive change in their societies. At the same time, women are often among the most vulnerable to the effects of poverty. Many of the MDGs, including: Goal 2 (Achieve universal primary education), Goal 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women), and Goal 5 (Improve maternal health), address issues that specifically effect women. Women's perspectives and concerns are essential to achieving all of the MDGs.

The leaders of religious women's organizations and inter-religious women of faith networks can engage women of faith in supporting the MDGs by holding workshops and special events and by linking the MDGs to actions in which women are already involved. Given their intimate knowledge of the needs of their communities, women of faith can be effective advocates and agents for change.

Actions to take:

- Engage women of faith in the planning, organizing and facilitating of events and actions around the MDGs.
- Ensure that the presence, the perspective and the concerns of women of faith are included in local and national dialogues around the MDGs and civil society.
- Hold educational workshops with women

of faith groups to raise their awareness of the MDGs and to facilitate the sharing of their experiences and perspectives.

Work with youth

All of the MDGs effect youth and the world they will inherit from their parents. Today's children will grow into the leaders of the future, the leaders who will carry on our work for development and socio-economic justice. Young people also bring creativity and energy to advocacy work and campaigns for positive change.

Actions to take:

- Hold educational events for youth on the MDGs.
- Link youth of different faiths through inter-religious council events or partnerships between local religious communities.
- Engage youth organizations in your advocacy campaigns.

Incorporate the MDGs into religious education

Working with religious schools to integrate the MDGs into religious education curriculums can be a great way to make traditions and teachings come alive to the younger members of your faith community. Include information on the MDGs, the problems they address and the role of citizens in advocating for them in school curriculums and in school events.

Groups to engage:

- Youth networks in inter-religious councils.
- Religious educational institutions (schools, religious education programs, camps, universities).
- Religious youth groups and organizations.

Take Action

Engaging Inter-religious and Religious Communities in Zambia Around the MDGs

Inter-religious Action to Promote the MDGs

On August 5, 2005, *Religions for Peace* affiliate ZINGO (Zambia Interfaith Networking Group) and 30 faith-based organizations joined the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) to help advocate for the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. In collaboration with the National Civil Society MDG Campaign-Zambia, ZINGO joined other faith-based organizations in challenging their government and other nations to stay committed to eradicating extreme poverty within Zambia and around the world.

(Source: Millennium Campaign, <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>)

Prayer and Advocacy for the MDGs

Three days before 189 of the world's leaders met in New York for the United Nations World Summit (Millennium + 5), more than 100 people in Ndola, Zambia, gathered together at Mapalo Bread of Life to pray for progress in the global fight against poverty. Church leaders and members from local congregations joined Rev. Lawrence Temfwe and Mrs. Prisca Kambole of the Jubilee Centre in an energetic action to raise awareness about the World Summit and the MDGs, and to ask God to move world leaders to re-commit to their responsibilities for halving poverty by 2015.

The service combined music, dance and worship with additional drama, poetry and testimony presented by youth within the community. Rev. Temfwe emphasized that the issues represented by the MDGs are not new to the Mapalo Bread of Life community and urged them to link their existing prayers and actions to the global MDG framework in order to have greater effect on global policies.

(Source: Micah Challenge, <http://www.micahchallenge.org>)

Take Action

II. Advocating with and Monitoring the Government

To achieve the MDGs in each country, governments are ultimately responsible for:

- Translating the goals and targets into clear national development goals.
- Developing and beginning to implement a national plan — with benchmarks and timetables — to achieve the goals.
- Making a commitment to routinely reporting on progress.

Thus, one of the primary responsibilities for religious communities is to monitor their governments' progress in each of these areas and advocate for better practices.

Actions to take:

- **Policy:** Make yourself aware of changes in law and social policy, with a particular focus on health, education and social welfare policies.
- **Budgets:** Raise awareness of your government's budget process and advocate for responsible and effective distribution of funds.
- **Practice:** Develop a community monitoring system to ensure that funds reach the targeted beneficiaries and are spent in the most efficient and effective way. Check to see, for example, if funds from the national government reach the intended schools and hospitals in your community and that they are spent appropriately at each of these facilities.

Advocacy and lobbying are essential to ensuring that government officials have the political will to integrate the Millennium Development Goals into public policy at the local, national, and global levels so that the MDGs can be achieved by 2015.

Tips:

- **Write letters:** Send a letter to a local, regional or national leader expressing interest and concern regarding your country's

progress on the MDGs.

- **Request meetings:** Identify local, regional or national leaders who you can access and request a meeting to discuss policies related to the MDGs.
- **Educate yourself:** Know who the appropriate government officials are for your issue and what public policy areas you want to influence or change.
- **Collaborate:** Identify other religious and/or civil society organizations that have engaged in advocacy and lobbying and talk to them about their insights, best practices and the possibility of working together.
- **Stay in touch:** Maintain a relationship with decision-makers by sending them more information about the MDGs, offering to help gather public support, thanking them when they support an issue and inviting them to events.

Multi-religious Action: Promoting Good Governance by Monitoring Elections

The Inter-religious Council of Liberia (IRCL), linking national religious leaders from all of the religious traditions in Liberia, has taken an active role in monitoring and observing elections in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ghana. In preparation for national elections in Liberia, the IRCL collaborated with other local partners to observe the electoral process in five local areas, and held Training of Trainers (TOT) exercises for other local observers in civic education and sensitization. Promoting best practices in governance and elections is crucial to achieving the MDGs in each country.

Source: *Religions for Peace*, <http://www.religionsforpeace.org>. The IRCL is an inter-religious council affiliated with *Religions for Peace*.

Take Action

III. Linking to Civil Society

Of the world's six billion citizens, five billion identify themselves as members of religious communities. With one of the largest civil society constituencies, religious leaders are in a unique position to lead and engage with the world community in mobilizing individuals for the advancement of the MDGs at local, national and international levels.



Religious communities meet in Kenya to plan advocacy and action around the justice and reconciliation in Africa.

Local and National Actions

Many countries already have a civil society coalition in place to advocate for the MDGs. Religious leaders can enhance the effectiveness of existing coalitions by contributing their moral authority and extensive net-

works to campaigns within and beyond their own communities.

- **Collaborate:** Invite civil society organizations and key civil society actors to your religious community's MDG-related events.
- **Educate:** Keep your religious community informed about other campaigns for the MDGs in your country and encourage them to take part in civil society actions.

Global Actions

International MDG campaigns offer an important opportunity for religious leaders and communities to contribute their strong moral voices to the global fight against extreme poverty. The governments of wealthy nations need to be held accountable to their promises for more effective aid, fair trade and less debt. Linking the work of your religious community to international campaigns will strengthen advocacy for the MDGs worldwide.

To Find Out More:

To find out more about national and international civil society campaigns for the MDGs, visit: www.millenniumcampaign.com and see the resources section on pages 30-31.

• Connect:

- **Use your voice:** Use international networks within your own religious community to get the word out about the MDGs. Ask to make a presentation or organize a panel on the MDGs at the next local, national or global assembly of your faith community.
- **Link up:** Join the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP), a worldwide alliance established in 2005 to hold world leaders accountable for combating

Day of the African Child: Coming Together for Action

In partnership with GCAP-Africa and the Millennium Campaign, the Senegalese Campaign, a civil society network in Senegal around the MDGs, organized a huge event to raise awareness and advocate for the achievement of the MDGs on June 16, 2005, the Day of the African Child. Over 500 children participated in the call for greater action against global poverty and several children joined in a lobby meeting with Senegal's President, Mr. Abdoulaye Wade. This is an example of how the voices of every person, large and small, can make a difference.

Source: The Millennium Campaign, <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>

Take Action

global poverty. GCAP consists of a broad range of civil society organizations, including existing coalitions, community groups, trade unions, individuals and religious communities.

- **White Bands:** The international symbol of GCAP and the fight against poverty is a simple white band. It can be made out of cloth, paper, rubber or any other material. To show your solidarity with millions of people from diverse faith traditions and regions of the world who are committed to achieving the MDGs, wear a white band, headband or bracelet. You can also wrap buildings, fences or trees with white bands at your events.



A Whiteband Day event in Namibia. The white band is the simple symbol used all over the world to unite in the fight against poverty and support of the MDGs.

Take Action

IV. Making Use of the Media

“Development objectives such as the MDGs are all very well but unless they are publicized, explained and discussed, their impact will be small.” - UNECA

Dancers from the Wolomei Group perform at the Standing Tall Against Poverty concert in Ghana, Africa.



Keeping the media informed is a vital component of any successful advocacy and public education campaign. Media coverage will expand the impact of your actions because it will increase public awareness of the MDGs and will ensure that the broader public is aware of your views on these issues.

Using the media can also be a way of campaigning on its own. Newspapers, television, magazines and radio all play a strong role in shaping opinions of voters, politicians and other important decision makers. Building public support for the

MDGs and influencing policy makers requires creative and diverse efforts to get the message out. The more people who know about the MDGs and the plans to achieve them, the more likely it is that governments will be motivated to keep their promises to work toward the goals.

Actions to take

• Publicize events:

- Invite the media to cover inter-religious events or special worship services.
- Inform the media that you are meeting with government officials.
- Circulate a press release when you join civil society campaigns.
- Announce upcoming events or campaigns and report on events after they happen.

• Call attention to government actions:

Write editorials and letters to the editor or give interviews to call attention to government actions and decisions. Any

Strong Voices Attract the Media: An MDG Event in Ghana Reaches Across the Continent

One week before 189 of the world's leaders met in New York for the 2005 United Nations World Summit (Millennium + 5), “Standing Tall Against Poverty,” an unprecedented 15-hour concert featuring some of Africa's biggest musicians, took place in Ghana. Incorporating passionate voices from Mali, South Africa, Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya, the event attracted the attention of over 30 African tel-

evision stations who collectively waived nearly US\$ 600,000 in advertising and programming fees for the cause. Organized by the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP), the event was a huge success, raising awareness about the MDGs with an audience of over 40 million people in 11 different African countries.

(Source: The Millennium Campaign, <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>)

Take Action

Inter-religious collaboration and the media

When leaders cross traditional boundaries of faith or community to unite behind a common goal like the MDGs, people take notice. Religious leaders can work through inter-religious councils or form partnerships with local leaders of other faiths to issue joint state-

ments to the press, give joint interviews and demonstrate their shared commitment to advocate for the MDGs. Such action by trusted moral leaders can encourage similar action throughout the community, leading to a unified voice for positive change.

government action that affects issues of budget, disbursement of aid, health, education or development, affects the country's progress towards the MDGs. Encourage involvement in the political process.

Things to keep in mind

- **Religious media:** Many religious communities have their own newsletters or other media. They can be effective means of outreach in addition to public or secular media.
- **Engage your community:** Members of your religious community may have experience working with the media. Draw on their expertise when you plan your media outreach.
- **Deadlines and regulations:** Pay attention to set times and dates for the submission of news stories and letters and to rules about content and length.
- **Audience:** Readers, viewers and listeners are the media's primary concern. Keep in mind the various audiences that different media institutions attract when approaching a newspaper, television or radio editor with your story.

Ways of engaging the media

- Letters to the editor of local and national newspapers or magazines.
- Radio or television interviews with religious leaders or other advocates in your faith community.
- Press releases about events or campaigns.
- Press conferences.
- Invitations to reporters to cover your events or to report on the specific concerns of your community.

Not all methods are suitable for all events or situations, so it is a good idea to take some time to discern which actions work best for your aims.

For more resources to help with these actions, see the links to the "Campaigning Toolkit" from CIVICUS and the Millennium Campaign in the Resources section on page 30.

Take Action

General Tips for Action

Record and Publicize What You Do

- Let local and national media know what you are doing.
- Take pictures and get feedback from participants.
- Write a report: include what worked best and what did not work so well (See the “Report Back” tool on page 29).

Identify and Involve Key Stakeholders and Send an Invitation

Stakeholders include people affected by the problem and the proposed solution, and others who are involved in similar efforts.

- Community members.
- Religious leaders of all levels.
- Local and international civil society organizations.
- Government officials.
- Political representatives.

Mobilize Volunteers

This is an effort that can use everyone’s talents and energy. Find out who in your community wants to get involved.

Identify Your Primary Audience

- **Religious leaders and communities** have great interest in the moral and religious significance of the MDGs.

Leaders gather in South Africa for inter-religious cooperation and peace-building.



- **Government officials** are often influenced by data and understanding the consequences and benefits of change.
- **Political representatives** like to know who will be affected by policy changes and how their contribution will help make a difference.
- **The media** want messages that are simple, direct and captivating.

Carefully Develop and Then Stick With Your Message

- A message should answer the questions: What do you want? Why is it important? and How can it be achieved?
- Create a message that is short, concise and inspiring, and then be sure to stick with your message throughout your event or campaign.

Promote Your Event

- Make colorful posters.
- Distribute flyers.
- Talk to people.
- Use SMS messages.

Make It Personal

- Share stories.
- Tie the MDGs to issues that face your community.

Incorporate Music, Dance, Theater and Art

- Invite musicians, dancers and other artists to perform at your events.
- Draw on the music and art of your faith and other traditions to express your ideas.

Take Action

Fundraising & Resource Mobilization

Convening workshops, producing educational materials, holding events and traveling for advocacy all require time, energy, funding and other resources. This section contains some information on fundraising and resource mobilization that may be helpful in supporting your efforts for advocacy and action around the MDGs. Depending on the size and scope of your event, your fundraising needs will differ but identifying your project goals and needs and communicating them effectively to potential supporters will remain essential. The following are important steps for fundraising.

Identify your project goals and needs:

Begin with clear plans and measurable goals for your project. What is the need in your community? Who will this project benefit and how will they be helped? What short-term changes are expected? What long-term results are anticipated? Your analysis of fundraising needs and opportunities will form the basis of your “case for support.” Your case for support will be an important part of any proposal for funding that you prepare. Proposals may also include: background information on your group and other groups involved, a clear budget, expected outcomes and measures of evaluation.

Identify potential donors: Sources of possible financial support for projects and administrative costs include: a) religious communities, organizations and groups; b) donors; c) local companies and foundations; d) social, health, educational and humanitarian units of local and national governments; e) public and private international funding organizations; and f) international multilateral funding organizations and initiatives. Conduct research on prospective

donors’ interests, current funding activities and guidelines to determine if there is a strong match of interests. Collaborate with participating religious and secular communities in seeking local support and identifying potential partnerships with national and international funding sources.

Your program can be greatly strengthened through collaboration with other organizations conducting similar advocacy efforts. Consider exploring joint ventures with other movements, umbrella organizations and religious and secular organizations that could be supported by local, national and international funding sources.

Prepare requests to donors: Follow the donors’ guidelines in preparing written proposals and requests for support. Provide needed accompanying materials (brochures, reports, news articles and publicity, lists of participating leaders and descriptions of past and current activities) that illustrate the benefit for the donor as well as the target population.

Communicate your successes: It is important that you share the outcomes of your program with donors by complying with all reporting requirements. Communicate your successes to the wider community through the media in order to increase your visibility and your credibility for future funding from new donors.

Be sure your organization complies with local laws and regulations regarding fundraising activities and the expenditure of donated funds, services and materials. Exchange information on best practices and sources of support with other religious and secular groups working on similar issues in your area.

Training Guide

Training Guide

This section includes a guide for a one-day workshop on the MDGs for religious leaders and other activists and leaders. A more in-depth training guide is available from *Religions for Peace* that covers a three-day “training of trainers” (TOT) event and more in-depth training advice. Contact info@religionsforpeace.org for more information.

If you would like to carry out a training using this toolkit, here are some things to remember:

- **Diversity:** The training can be for religious leaders, the leaders of religious women’s organizations or youth groups and/or community leaders at the local or national level. Thus, workshop participants are not likely to be a homogeneous group. One workshop might have participants with different levels of education, holding different positions and status within the religious community, of different genders and of different religions. It is, therefore, imperative that training materials and activities be accessible for people with different levels of education and be sensitive to other important differences.
- **Familiarity:** Training participants may not know each other or know each other well. Hence, the workshops should use introductions and small group activities to introduce participants to each other, build rapport among them and give the most reserved participants an opportunity to participate.
- **Cost-effective and appropriate:** Although some funding may be available from your community or organization for these workshops, it is likely to be a relatively modest amount. In some places, workshop hosts may also have modest facilities and resources. Therefore, these workshops should not require rental of expensive equipment or facilities.

One-Day Training for Religious Leaders and Activists around the MDGs

Learning Objectives

At the end of the one-day training, participants will have:

- Increased their knowledge of the MDGs and MDG-related activities in their country.
- Identified how and with whom to engage in advocacy in support of the MDGs locally, nationally and globally.
- Taken the first steps toward planning MDG-related activities in their community and country.

Ten facts facilitators should know about participants when planning a training:

1. Number of participants.
2. Age of participants.
3. Gender of participants.
4. Professional positions of participants.
5. Religion of participants.
6. Level of education completed.
7. How they came to participate.
8. Participants’ expectations.
9. Any previous exposure to the subject to be discussed.
10. Depth of knowledge about the subject to be discussed.

Training Facilities

The workshop should take place in a well-lit room that is large enough to comfortably accommodate all participants all day. Participants should be seated at a large square- or u-shaped table or at enough round tables to accommodate all participants. Because many workshop activities will require working in small groups, you will also need enough indoor or outdoor locations to accommodate all small groups.

Training Guide

Materials for all sessions

For all workshop sessions, you will need:

1. Name tags.
2. Flip charts or large sheets of paper.
3. Easels (or wall space and tape) in the main room and for each small group.
4. Markers, pens, pencils, paper clips and writing paper or pads.
5. Folders for each participant.

Generic One-Day Workshop Agenda

Although this workshop has six sessions, the time needed for a given session will actually depend upon the number of participants, the complexity of the topic and participants' general level of knowledge of the subject.

Session	Purpose and Content
1: Opening and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put participants at ease. • Set an open and inclusive tone for the workshop. • Build participants' interest in promoting the MDGs.
2: The MDGs – Origin, purpose, context and content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce participants to the background, context, purpose and content of the MDGs. • Enable them to put a “human face” to the statistics. • Raise their awareness of existing actions.
3: Advocacy for the MDGs – Who, why and how	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce participants to their government's stated positions on the MDGs. • Raise their awareness of the importance and methods of monitoring of government compliance with its positions. • Raise their awareness of groups, networks and coalitions engaged in action to promote the MDGs.
4: Interfaith community support for the MDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage participants in a process of discussion and decision-making regarding the religious community's engagement in promoting the MDGs.
5: MDG Support – Planning for action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable participants to develop action plans for the activities in which they are most interested.
6: Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable participants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provide feedback on the workshop. This can be done through an anonymous written evaluation or an informal discussion. -Thank each other. -Make commitments to ongoing action.

Training Guide

Things for a facilitator to remember:

- **All workshop participants will have knowledge to contribute.**
- The **role of the trainer** is to stimulate the sharing of ideas and discussion within the structure of a workshop's agenda.
- **Keep a record** of the events of the training: a list of participants, a record of future plans, copies and summaries of participant evaluations. Use these materials to report back to your community or organization.
- **At the Beginning of the Session**
 - o Use icebreakers to raise the level of motivation, arouse interest, clarify objectives, share her/his expectations and clarify participants' expectations.
 - o Emphasize the importance of listening, thinking, questioning and responding. Remind participants that all questions are welcomed.
- **During the Session**
 - o Call on participants by name.
 - o Listen to the body language as well as spoken language of participants.
 - o Avoid lengthy exchanges with only one participant.
 - o Use questions and comments to draw others into the discussion.
 - o Encourage the use of stories or personal anecdotes to make concepts clearer.
 - o Invite participants to give their feedback on how the workshop is going.
- **At the End of the Session**
 - o Ask participants to write an evaluation of the workshop.
 - o Invite participants to share their thoughts on the workshop with each other.
 - o Thank participants for their feedback.
- **After the Session**
 - o Stay after the session to talk to participants and answer questions or direct them to appropriate resources.
 - o Incorporate lessons learned from the workshop and participants' feedback in planning the next workshop.

The Millennium Development Goals

In the year 2000, leaders from 189 member states of the United Nations signed the Millennium Declaration pledging to eradicate extreme poverty and to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. But the MDGs are not about the United Nations. They are about the lives of women, men and children in your community and all over the world. The eight goals identify issues that religious leaders and faith communities have been actively addressing for decades, issues which speak to the heart of all faith traditions: the value of each individual human life.

The eight MDGs have been broken down into measurable targets:

GOAL	TARGET
1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day and those who suffer from hunger.
2 Achieve universal primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all boys and girls complete primary school.
3 Promote gender equality and empower women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015.
4 Reduce child mortality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by two-thirds the mortality rate among children under five.
5 Improve maternal health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce by three-quarters the ratio of women dying in childbirth.
6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.
7 Ensure environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources. By 2015, reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water. By 2020 achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers.
8 Develop a global partnership for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop open trading and financial systems that include a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – nationally and internationally. • Address the least-developed countries' special needs and the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states. • Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems. Develop decent and productive work for youth. • In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries. • In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies – especially information and communications technologies.

Source: Adapted from the campaign toolkit available at www.millenniumcampaign.org

The Millennium Development Goals:
Grounded in the

Faith Traditions of the World

Support for the MDGs can be found in all of the religious traditions of the world. They are not a new idea, but rather a new way to respond to the call of caring for each other that has been sounded by religious leaders, prophets and scriptures throughout the ages. In each tradition there is a call to treat other people as we would like to be treated.

Baha'i Faith

Lay not on any soul a load that you would not wish to be laid upon you, and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.

– BAHÁ'U'LLAH, GLEANINGS

Buddhism

Treat not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.

– THE BUDDHA, UDANA-VARGA 5.18

Christianity

In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

– JESUS, MATTHEW 7:12 (NRSV)

Confucianism

One word which sums up the basis of all good conduct....loving-kindness. Do not do to others what you do not want done to yourself.

– CONFUCIUS, ANALECTS 15.23

Hinduism

This is the sum of duty: do not do to others what would cause pain if done to you.

– MAHABHARATA 5:1517

Islam

Not one of you truly believes until you wish for others what you wish for yourself.

– The Prophet Muhammad, Hadith

Jainism

One should treat all creatures in the world as one would like to be treated

– MAHAVIRA, SUTRAKRITANGA 1.11.33

Judaism

What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour. This is the whole Torah; all the rest is commentary. Go and learn it.

– HILLEL, TALMUD, SHABBATH 31A

Sikhism

I am a stranger to no one; and no one is a stranger to me. Indeed, I am a friend to all.

– GURU GRANTH SAHIB, P.1299

Taoism

Regard your neighbor's gain as your own gain and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.

– LAO TZU, T'AI SHANG KAN YING P'IEN, 213-218

Unitarianism

We affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

– UNITARIAN PRINCIPLE

Yoruban Indigenous Tradition

One going to take a pointed stick to pinch a baby bird should first try it on himself to feel how it hurts.

– YORUBAN PROVERB

Zoroastrianism

Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.

– SHAYAST-NA-SHAYAST 13.29

A Citizen's Role

*Get Involved with the MDGs!
The MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) are a set of eight goals agreed on by countries all over the world to combat extreme poverty. Though governments are ultimately responsible for establishing the policies needed to achieve the MDGs, it is the role of citizens to take action by advocating for the MDGs and putting pressure on their leaders to fulfill their responsibilities to end extreme poverty and its effects.*

Here are some ways that you can help your government achieve the MDGs in your country by 2015:

Stay involved

If you are already involved with actions addressing poverty, education, HIV/AIDS, gender equality, environmental sustainability or other key development issues, keep up these important efforts. Your work in these areas helps to raise awareness and further the process of achieving the MDGs.

Raise awareness about the MDGs

Help spread the word among your family, friends and colleagues about what the MDGs are and why they are so important.

Participate

Join in actions and MDG-related events organized by your religious community, inter-religious councils and community groups.

Join national and international civil society campaigns for the MDGs

If your country has an ongoing campaign, join it. If not, work with others to form one.

Wear a white band

The white band is the international symbol to show your support for an end to global poverty. Wear a white band to show that you have joined with millions of people worldwide to demand that world leaders take action now.

Stay informed

Find out what your government has been doing to help achieve the MDGs and what still needs to be done. Speak with or write letters to local and national leaders to tell them that you support government actions that reduce extreme poverty, support education for all, improve health and protect the environment.

Adaptable Statement for Religious Leaders

You can read this statement at religious services, inter-religious events or other actions. Adapt it with references to your own community or faith tradition. Add to it appropriate prayers or scriptures.

Our faith celebrates life. It calls us to confront the devastation wrought by poverty. In our community and in our world, we have seen the human face of poverty. Today, over one billion people struggle to survive on less than US\$1 a day. Every three seconds, somewhere a child dies of preventable causes. Almost 30,000 children are lost each day to the effects of poverty. The health of our communities is threatened by HIV/AIDS, malaria and maternal and child mortality. The future of our community depends on access to good education for all of our children. The time has come for us to bring the full weight of our moral convictions to bear on behalf of the poor and the voiceless. The needless suffering of one billion of our brothers and sisters – at a time when others are enjoying the benefits of unprecedented levels of prosperity – is an affront to our core beliefs.

And so today, we commit ourselves to join with thousands of people around the world as part of a global movement to advocate for an end to the crises of poverty through achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

We know all too well that the problems the MDGs seek to address are not new. Indeed, many of us have been working for decades to free our brothers and sisters from the effects of these problems. But the MDGs are much more than a rallying cry. They are extremely important and there are several reasons why we must seize this opportunity. The MDGs are the first and only compact among nations to end world poverty. People of good will all over the world are engaged in campaigning to support them. But most importantly, they are, in fact, achievable in a world that has the economic, social and technical resources to finally end extreme poverty.

And so, we are here to answer this call to put our faith into action again. We will pray, reflect and act in collaboration with other faith communities in our country and around the globe.

We will remember and draw lessons from our community's long tradition of not just comforting the poor and the afflicted, but also working to end the causes of their deprivation and suffering.

[This would be a good place to use examples of past or ongoing activism in your community.]

We recognize that in signing the Millennium Declaration in the year 2000, 189 world leaders have taken a major step forward; and we believe that we must walk beside them to ensure that they have the political and spiritual will to take the steps now needed to attain the MDGs.

It is our role as a community to first learn about the eight goals and accompanying targets for 2015, then to build awareness of them among our fellow citizens, to raise our voices for, and with, the poor and vulnerable who live among us, and to hold our government accountable for keeping their promises.

Tools and Resources

Report Back!

The sharing of experiences, lessons learned and best practices is a crucial part of making the MDGs a successful global effort. It also can inspire others to act and lets the world know how religious communities are involved. Let the world know what you are doing! Send the information below by mail or e-mail to *Religions for Peace*.

- Description of the action
 - You may want to include:
 - Name of the action
 - Dates
 - Location
 - Goals of the action
 - Lessons learned
 - Results

Other important information

- Partners: What other groups or organizations were involved?
- Media presence: If you had an event, did the media report on it?
- About how many people participated?
- Who was there? What types of groups were represented? Were community leaders present?
- Future plans.

- Does *Religions for Peace* have permission to share information about your event or action with its network and the Millennium Campaign?
- Any other information you would like to share about your group's efforts.
- Your contact information:
 - Organization or community group name
 - Contact person(s)
 - E-mail (if applicable)
 - Address and telephone

If possible, please include: Copies of any press coverage, pictures, promotional materials, hand-outs from events or other materials.

Send this information to:

E-mail: news@wcrp.org

If you don't have access to e-mail, you can mail your information to the address below:

Action on the MDGs
Religions for Peace
 777 United Nations Plaza
 New York, NY 10017
 USA

Ugandan religious leaders come together for inter-religious collaboration advocating for justice and peace.



Tools and Resources

Resources

Religions for Peace

website: <http://www.religionsforpeace.org> e-mail: info@wcrp.org

Mailing address: 777 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017 USA

About the Millennium Development Goals**The UN Millennium Campaign**

Tips and tools for advocacy on the MDGs and stories of local, national and global campaigns. The site includes separate sections for each country as well as an events calendar for each continent.

website: <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>

Mailing address: 304 East 45th St., FF-610
New York, NY 10017 USA

The United Nations website on the MDGs: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals>

The MDGs in Africa: Progress and Challenges

A report of the UN Economic Commission for Africa

Download the report from: http://www.uneca.org/mdgs/MDGs_in_Africa.pdf

Français: http://www.uneca.org/mdgs/MDGs%20in%20Africa_FR.pdf

Country-specific Reports

Find out how your country is doing from the United Nations Development Programme website:

<http://www.undp.org/mdg/countryreports.html>

Get Connected**Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP)**

Campaign contacts for individual countries; information on white band days, national campaigns and other resources.

Website: English: <http://www.whiteband.org>

Français: http://www.whiteband.org/index_html/switchLanguage?set_language=fr

GCAP Mailing Address in Africa: The Africa Network Campaign on Education for All

Christophe Zoungrana – Program Manager

Zone B Bâtiments

Villa n° 24 A - Rue 111,

BP: 3007,

Dakar Yoff

Dakar –SENEGAL

Tel: +221.824.22.44

Fax: +221.824.13 63

e-mail: christophe@ancefa.org

OMD en Afrique/MDGs in Africa: Web magazine put out by the UNECA

A good resource for tracking the progress of the MDGs in Africa and staying informed about new efforts and developments, from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

website: Français: <http://www.uneca.org/omd/> English: <http://www.uneca.org/mdgs/>

Tools and Resources

Resources

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

UNECA is mandated to support the economic and social development of its 53 member states, foster regional integration and promote international cooperation for Africa's development.

website: <http://www.uneca.org> Français: <http://www.uneca.org/fr/>

e-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org Tel: 251-11-551 7200 Cable: ECA ADDIS ABABA Fax: 251-11-551 4416

(Addis Ababa)

Mailing Address: Menelik II Ave.

P.O. Box 3001

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

MDG-net

An e-mail discussion group facilitated by the United Nations Development Group including examples and experiences of localizing the MDGs: Sign up through the website: <http://www.undg.org> (Click on the "MDG-net" link under "Quick Links for UNCTs".)

Tools for Action**African Monitor: Promoting Africa's Perspective**

An initiative launched by Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane of Cape Town for an independent body to monitor and promote effective implementation of the MDGs in Africa; a great resource for government advocacy in Africa.

website: <http://www.africanmonitor.org> e-mail: info@africanmonitor.org

Campaigning Toolkit

An in-depth guide to planning, carrying-out and following up on actions around the MDGs. Includes tips for writing letters, giving interviews, and other important steps:

<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=403123>

Or: Go to www.millenniumcampaign.org and click on "Campaigning Toolkit" under "Action Center."

"We the Peoples 2005: Mobilizing for Change: Messages for Civil Society"

A survey report of civil society organizations involved in advocacy and action around the MDGs, put out by the World Federation of UN Associations and the North-South Institute. Download the report from:

<http://www.wfuna.org>

Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals

Sharing the tools needed to address the concerns and perspectives of women in relation to all of the MDGs.

From the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the OECD/DAC Network on Gender Equality and the Multilateral Development Bank Working Group on Gender.

website: <http://www.mdgender.net>

Some International Faith-based Organizations Involved with the MDGs

Find out what groups from your religious community are involved. Many local and international aid organizations are taking steps to link their work to the MDGs.

Caritas: <http://www.caritas.org>

Christian Aid: <http://www.christian-aid.org>

Justitia et Pax – Netherlands: <http://www.justitiaetpax.nl>

Micah Challenge: <http://www.micahchallenge.org>

Muslim Aid: <http://www.muslimaid.org>

Tearfund: <http://www.tearfund.org>

Tools and Resources

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Quotes for "The Millennium Development Goals: Grounded in the Faith Traditions of the World" (p. 25) collected by Scarborough Missions (except the Yoruban proverb).
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Tools and Resources

End Notes

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