

DOCUMENT

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Scouting and the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)



**10th WORLD SCOUT
YOUTH FORUM**

**10e FORUM DES JEUNES
DU SCOUTISME MONDIAL**

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SCOUTS
Creating a Better World

One of the focal areas for creating a better world are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were established by the United Nations in 2000 and targeted for achievement by 2015. The MDGs played a key role in the 9th World Scout Youth Forum and as a set of long-term goals, has application for you as participants of the 10th World Scout Youth Forum.

The content of Document 6 helps to describe the Scouts of the World Award and Document 5 provides further content for the Millennium Development Goals. This information can be used for your time at the World Scout Youth Forum and provide food for thought for your Scouting following your experiences in Korea.

Scouts worldwide took action for the Millennium Development Goals through the Gifts for Peace centennial initiative: over 125 projects in 110 countries. You can find out more about these projects at: <http://www.scout.org/giftsforpeace>

SCOUTING AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

It has been over eight years since 189 Heads of State and Government assembled at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 and pledged to make a better world for all by 2015. But today, there are still 1.2 billion people struggling to survive on less than one dollar a day. Tragically, young people are often the hardest hit by the effects of poverty; 133 million young people cannot read or write, and 6,000 youth are infected with HIV/AIDS every day of the year. The Millennium Development Goals are not too ambitious; the world has the resources and the know-how to achieve them. They are technically and financially within our reach, but only if governments from both rich and poor nations take concrete and urgent action.

The United Nations Campaign on MDGs recognises that young people are a central component in the global fight against poverty. Today's youth will be the world's next generation of leaders, and the success of the Millennium Development Goals will rest in their hands. 2.8 billion people are under the age of twenty-five, and in the developing world, 70% of the population comprises of youth. Young people have the motivation and commitment to make a real difference in this world.

The 37th World Scout Conference in 2005 adopted resolution 23/05 on partnership with the United Nations. The Conference:

- Reaffirms its support for the goals and work of the United Nations
- Express its full support for the objectives set in the UN Millennium Declaration and for the work of the UN Millennium Campaign
- Urges all National Scout Organizations to use the cooperation with the UN and its specialised agencies to contribute to build a better society, and to increase this cooperation particularly through the Gifts for Peace and Scouts of the World programmes
- Recommends that WOSM at all levels takes the necessary steps to maintain and strengthen its relationships with the United Nations

The World Organization of the Scout Movement has signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2005 with the United Nations with the aim of contributing actively to the UN Campaign on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

This decision is consistent with the Mission of Scouting, which is an obvious commitment *"To contribute to the education of young people through a value system, based on the Scout Promise and Law, to help build a better world, where people are self-fulfilled as individuals and play a constructive role in society."* Achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals is obviously the ultimate way to build a better world. By taking part in the UN Campaign on MDGs, Scouts can play a constructive role in society.

The World Organization of the Scout Movement has launched the Scouts of the World Award in order to contribute to the UN Millennium Campaign and help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Scouts of the World Award as an element of the Rover section of Scouting. By participating in this award, Rover Scouts will be actively working towards achieving the

Millennium Development Goals at a community-based level. (more info at www.scoutsoftheworld.net)

National Scout Organizations can help strengthen the global partnership between the United Nations Millennium Campaign and World Scouting by supporting the Scouts of the World Award as part of their youth programme for the Rover Section. National Scout Organizations, which adopt and implement the Scouts of the World Award as part of their youth programme, are therefore engaged in a global partnership with the United Nations.

Remember, we can be the first generation in the history of the world to finally put an end to this disgrace we call poverty.

The UN Millennium Development Goals

In September of 2000 the largest gathering of world leaders in human history gathered for the Millennium Summit at United Nations headquarters in New York. In that pivotal year, representatives from 189 Member States of the United Nations met to reflect on their common destiny. The nations were interconnected as never before, with increased globalization promising faster growth, higher living standards and new opportunities. Yet their citizens' lives were starkly disparate. As some States looked ahead to prosperity and global cooperation, many barely had a future, being mired in miserable, unending conditions of poverty, conflict and a degraded environment. Some 1.1 billion people were – and still are – forced to live on less than \$1 a day, and 30 per cent of these are children. Even in the world's richest countries, one in every six children still lives below the national poverty line.

A further look at humanity's challenges: Almost 11 million children, more than 29,000 a day, die before the age of five, mostly from preventable causes. Those that survive suffer other consequences: malnutrition leading to stunting and disability, a lack of access to health care and education, and an increased risk of suffering from exploitation, violence and HIV/AIDS.

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

What Scouting does and can do further?

During the World Scout Youth Forum there will be an opportunity for participants to share what actions are currently being taken in their NSOs in relation to the MDGs and share ideas of further collective action to make the MDGs a reality by 2015.

GOAL 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

By 2015 : Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than one dollar per day. Reduce by half the proportion of people that suffering from hunger.

More than 30 per cent of children in developing countries – about 600 million – live on less than US \$1 a day.

Every 3.6 seconds one person dies of starvation. Usually it is a child under the age of 5. Poverty hits children hardest. While a severe lack of goods and services hurts every human, it is most threatening to children's rights: survival, health and nutrition, education, participation, and protection from harm and exploitation. It creates an environment that is damaging to children's development in every way – mental, physical, emotional and spiritual.

More than 1 billion children are severely deprived of at least one of the essential goods and services they require to survive, grow and develop. Some regions of the world have more dire situations than others, but even within one country there can be broad disparities – between city and rural children, for example, or between boys and girls. An influx or tourism in one area may improve a country's poverty statistics overall, while the majority remains poor and disenfranchised.

Each deprivation heightens the effect of the others. So when two or more coincide, the effects on children can be catastrophic. For example, women who must walk long distances to fetch household water may not be able to fully attend to their children, which may affect their health and development. And children who themselves must walk long distances to fetch water have less time to attend school – a problem that particularly affects girls. Children who are not immunized or who are malnourished are much more susceptible to the diseases that are spread through poor sanitation. Poverty exacerbates the effects of HIV/AIDS and armed conflict. It entrenches social, economic and gender disparities and undermines protective family environments.¹

What Scouting does and can do further?

Actions that have been taken in my NSO
Ideas on what Scouting can do to contribute to achieving this MDG

¹ Extracted from UNICEF website on the MDGs. <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/index.html> (Accessed 16 June 2008)

GOAL 2: Achieve universal primary education

Target by 2005: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Target by 2015: Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. While most of the Millennium Development Goals face a deadline of 2015, the gender parity target was set to be achieved a full ten years earlier - an acknowledgement that equal access to education is the foundation for all other development goals. Yet recent statistics show that for every 100 boys out of school, there are still 117 girls in the same situation. Until equal numbers of girls and boys are in school, it will be impossible to build the knowledge necessary to eradicate poverty and hunger, combat disease and ensure environmental sustainability. And millions of children and women will continue to die needlessly, placing the rest of the development agenda at risk.

As of 2001 estimates around 115 million children of primary school age, the majority of them girls, do not attend school. Educating girls advances development for all. Meeting the Education Goal will speed progress toward every other Millennium Goal. Educating children helps reduce poverty and promote gender equality. It helps lower child mortality rates and promote concern for the environment. It is inextricably linked to Goal 3 - gender parity - as universal primary education by definition requires gender parity. Gender parity in primary education, meanwhile, is of limited worth if few children of either sex participate.

Further, education - specifically free primary school for all children - is a fundamental right to which governments committed themselves under the 1989 Convention of the Rights of the Child.¹

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¹ Extracted from UNICEF website on the MDGs. <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/index.html> (Accessed 16 June 2008)

GOAL 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Target by 2005: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Target by 2015: Eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education by 2015 and empower women.

While most of the Millennium Development Goals face a deadline of 2015, the gender parity target was set to be achieved a full ten years earlier - an acknowledgement that equal access to education is the foundation for all other development goals. Yet recent statistics show that for every 100 boys out of school, there are still 117 girls in the same situation. Until equal numbers of girls and boys are in school, it will be impossible to build the knowledge necessary to eradicate poverty and hunger, combat disease and ensure environmental sustainability. And millions of children and women will continue to die needlessly, placing the rest of the development agenda at risk.

Two-thirds of the world's 799 million illiterate adults ages 15 and over are women. Many children in developing countries start life without adequate means of nutrition, learning, and protection. Women and girls are particularly challenged.

Some 67 countries have primary school attendance and enrolment rates for girls less than 85 per cent. Globally, there are just 96 girls for every 100 boys in primary school, with disparities at the secondary level even more acute. Yet uneducated girls are more at risk than boys to become marginalized. They are more vulnerable to exploitation. They are more likely than educated girls to contract HIV/AIDS, which spreads twice as quickly among uneducated girls than among girls that have even some schooling. Nearly a third of all adults living with HIV/AIDS are under the age of 25, and almost two thirds of these people are women.

As unschooled adults, these girls will be less likely to have a say socially and politically and to be able to support themselves. Women's rights and access to land, credit and education are limited not only due to legal discrimination, but because more subtle barriers such as their work load, mobility and low bargaining position in the household and community prevent them from taking advantage of their legal rights. These problems affect their children: Women earn only one tenth of the world's income and own less than one per cent of property, so households without a male head are at special risk of impoverishment. These women will also be less likely to immunize their children and know how to help them survive.¹

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GOAL 4: reduce child mortality

Target by 2015: To reduce child mortality by two-thirds, from 93 children of every 1,000 dying before age five in 1990 to 31 of every 1,000 in 2015.

About 29,000 children under the age of five – 21 each minute – die every day, mainly from preventable causes. More than 70 per cent of almost 11 million child deaths every year are attributable to six causes: diarrhoea, malaria, neonatal infection, pneumonia, preterm delivery, or lack of oxygen at birth.

These deaths occur mainly in the developing world. An Ethiopian child is 30 times more likely to die by his or her fifth birthday than a child in Western Europe. Among deaths in children, South-central Asia has the highest number of neonatal deaths, while sub-Saharan Africa has the highest rates. Two-thirds of deaths occur in just 10 countries. And the majority are preventable. Some of the deaths occur from illnesses like measles, malaria or tetanus. Others result indirectly from marginalization, conflict and HIV/AIDS. Malnutrition and the lack of safe water and sanitation contribute to half of all these children's deaths.

But disease isn't inevitable, nor do children with these diseases need to die. Research and experience show that six million of the almost 11 million children who die each year could be saved by low-tech, evidence-based, cost-effective measures such as vaccines, antibiotics, micronutrient supplementation, insecticide-treated bed nets and improved family care and breastfeeding practices.¹

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GOAL 5: improve Maternal Health

Target by 2015: Reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters.

A woman dies from complications in childbirth every minute – about 529,000 each year -- the vast majority of them in developing countries. A woman in sub-Saharan Africa has a 1 in 16 chance of dying in pregnancy or childbirth, compared to a 1 in 4,000 risk in a developed country – the largest difference between poor and rich countries of any health indicator.

This glaring disparity is reflected in a number of global declarations and resolutions. In September 2001, 147 heads of states collectively endorsed Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5: To reduce child mortality rate by 2/3 and maternal mortality ratio by 3/4 between 1990 and 2015. Strongly linked to these is Goal 6: To halt or begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

The direct causes of maternal deaths are haemorrhage, infection, obstructed labour, hypertensive disorders in pregnancy, and complications of unsafe abortion. There are birth-related disabilities that affect many more women and go untreated like injuries to pelvic muscles, organs or the spinal cord. At least 20% of the burden of disease in children below the age of 5 is related to poor maternal health and nutrition, as well as quality of care at delivery and during the newborn period. And yearly 8 million babies die before or during delivery or in the first week of life. Further, many children are tragically left motherless each year. These children are 10 times more likely to die within two years of their mothers' death.

Another risk to expectant women is malaria. It can lead to anaemia, which increases the risk for maternal and infant mortality and developmental problems for babies. Nutritional deficiencies contribute to low birth weight and birth defects as well. *A majority of these deaths and disabilities are preventable, being mainly due to insufficient care during pregnancy and delivery. About 15 per cent of pregnancies and childbirths need emergency obstetric care because of complications that are difficult to predict.*¹

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GOAL 6: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Targets by 2015: Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

Malaria kills a child somewhere in the world every 30 seconds.

Disease is a cruelly potent child killer, especially when combined with the poverty in which much of the developing world lives. In the absence of good nutrition, sanitation and health care, HIV/AIDS, malaria, measles, polio and tuberculosis mean certain end to millions of children who would survive and flourish elsewhere.

AIDS alone has taken more than 20 million lives and may take millions more if trends continue. Roughly 500,000 children younger than 15 years died of the disease last year alone, and children accounted for 13 percent of new infections in 2004 (640,000 cases). And mothers and pregnant women are ill; as of November 2004, women accounted for nearly 50 per cent of the more than 37 million people living with HIV worldwide and for 60 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa.

The pandemic hits all sectors of society in a cycle of illness and wasted lives; ill parents are unable to work and support the family, children drop out of school to help, orphans fall prey to violence, disease and, perhaps later, HIV/AIDS; a poverty-stricken country is even less able to support its citizens.

Yet directly, malaria is proportionally an even more vicious killer of children under five, responsible for 10 per cent of child mortality in the developing world. Contracted during a pregnancy, it can seriously affect the size and development of a newborn. It keeps children from attending school and adults from working. It costs Africa some \$10 billion to 12 billion every year in lost gross domestic product.¹

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GOAL 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Target by 2015: Reduce by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

A child dies every 15 seconds from disease attributable to unsafe drinking water, deplorable sanitation and poor hygiene. As of 2002, one in six people worldwide – 1.1 billion total – had no access to clean water. About 400 million of these are children. Four of ten people worldwide don't have access to even a simple latrine. And more than 614 million children have to live in dwellings with more than five people per room or that have mud flooring. In sub-Saharan Africa in countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda, four out of five children either use surface water or have to walk more than 15 minutes to find a protected water source.

This urgent unmet need is the basis for other problems. Unclean water spreads diseases such as cholera and infant diarrhoea, which kill five million people per year, mainly children. More than half of Africans suffer from such water-related diseases. And poor health harms children's learning potential. For example, 400 million school-aged children a year are infected by intestinal worms that sap their cognitive abilities. And children – mainly girls – forced to walk long distances for safe water are in effect barred from attending school. The lack of a latrine severely affects their health and dignity in other ways. They may have to wait until night to relieve themselves for safety and modesty. And their household roles mean they can more easily transmit disease to the family if they don't have water for good hygiene. Sick, pregnant and post-partum women are most likely to suffer from lack of sanitation and to pass disease on to their children.

It's not that there isn't enough water to go around. Lacking are the commitments of governments, the technology to help ensure good water and sanitation, and the money to put water programmes into place.¹

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¹ Extracted from UNICEF website on the MDGs. <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/index.html> (Accessed 16 June 2008)

GOAL 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Targets by 2015:

- Develop further an open trading and financial system that includes 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.

Goal 8 holds the greatest potential to enfranchise the majority of today's alienated youth into the global economy, enabling them to become active partners and beneficiaries. MDG Target 16 "Develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth" is the only specific mention of "youth" in the MDGs. The trade justice and fair trade movements are vital components in creating the global trading system envisaged by Target 12. Young people in the developed world are at the forefront of these movements. Their experiences demonstrate what can be achieved through global North-South partnerships between young people in support of a development agenda.

Youth employment can serve as the dominant means of community participation, active citizenship, autonomy, and independence. Finding the means, political will and the know-how to create a billion jobs over the next ten years that not only deliver economic benefits to young people, but also maintain (and even build) the environmental and social wealth, is perhaps one of the most important targets of the MDGs. Further, fostering entrepreneurship is vital in every part of the world and should be considered as a key mechanism for development. Supporting young entrepreneurs in the developing world with education, financing, mentorship and encouragement is a critical pathway to bridging the digital divide and fostering the creation of sustainable livelihoods.

ICTs provide new opportunities for job creation, the formation of knowledge societies and even political participation. Young people are currently providing entrepreneurial leadership in ICT industries, creating jobs for themselves and for others, and forming innovative partnerships with the public and private sector. The digital divide severely affects young people, especially leaving out youth in rural areas. Youth see ICTs as opportunities for education, business training, literacy, social activism and volunteerism.¹

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¹ This text is extracted from "Youth and the Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation. Final Report of the ad Hoc Working Group for Youth and the MDGs. April 2005.