

Take Action

When world leaders meet in September 2005 in New York they need to know they are accountable to you and millions of others to keep the Millennium Development Goals and Declaration promises. The world will benefit if they each agree to keep those promises before they meet. You can help make that happen.

You may be already involved in work in support of the eight MDGs. You may wish to do more. You might be new to global affairs, the Millennium promises, development issues, or activism.

Here you will find a list of key meetings and events in preparation for the September 2005 leaders' summit in New York. You will also find a summary of recent activities around the world.

There are some suggestions about how you can help and what you might do in partnership with people all over the world. Following these suggestions you will find a list of key organizations and what they do, and a resource index so you can contact others and/or learn more.

Taking it Global

The United Nations Millennium Campaign

The United Nations has initiated a broad Campaign for the Millennium to engage the public, and supported a far-reaching research and assessment Project to analyze what must be done to meet the MDGs and how that might be accomplished.

The United Nations Millennium Campaign was launched in October 2002 to encourage citizens around the world to hold governments to account for the promises they made at the September 2000 Millennium Summit. The Campaign is a focal point for networks, civil society groups, national organizations, and movements. It works at both the national and international levels, with the goal of creating and sustaining a global movement to achieve the MDGs. Hundreds of groups have launched national and local campaigns all across the world that promote the MDGs. They are linked to the global campaign through regional contacts.

For more information on the different national and regional campaigns and ways to get involved, visit <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>.

Taking it to the Streets: The Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP): The White Band Campaign

Launched in Porto Alegre, Brazil on January 27, 2005, GCAP is an alliance of non-profit organizations in the North and South, dedicated to eliminating poverty and achieving the MDGs.

Spearheaded by several well-established organizations including Oxfam International, Social Watch, DAWN (<http://www.dawn.org.fj>), the Micah Challenge (<http://www.micahchallenge.org/home/intro.asp>), MWENGO (<http://www.mwengo.org>), World Vision (<http://www.wvi.org>) and the UN Millennium Campaign, the GCAP alliance also includes a growing number of diverse groups working at international, regional, national, and local levels.

Both the GCAP alliance and the Millennium Campaign emphasize the fundamental importance of national-based efforts to achieve the MDGs.

Nearly 60% of our survey respondents are aware of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty and three-quarters endorse it. A number of groups are undertaking intensive awareness-raising initiatives, community programs, and development projects to support GCAP. The alliance's primary strategy is to unite people worldwide in joint action at key times during 2005. All GCAP actions will be linked symbolically by wearing a white band. (See "What you can do" section on page 87.)

CONNECTING PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT: THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR THE PREVENTION OF ARMED CONFLICT

In response to the UN Secretary-General's *Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict* (June 2001, available online at <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/reports/2001/sgrep01.htm>), the European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP) (<http://www.euconflict.org>) and its partners in various countries formed the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (<http://www.gppac.net>). The Global Partnership seeks to build alliances both within civil society, and between civil society and like-minded governments. Its objective is to "create a fundamental shift in how the world responds to conflict by developing a common platform for effective action in conflict prevention from the community to global level."

There will be a Global Conference on Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict and Peacebuilding at UN headquarters in New York July 19-21, 2005.

Taking it National

National and regional campaigns

Civil society groups around the world organize campaigns and workshops at the national level. Through news briefings, radio programs, web projects, published reports, newsletters, and other material about the MDGs, they build community awareness and educate the public. They also host public events, seminars, and debates, network and information share. They lobby parliaments, organize letter writing campaigns, public contests, documentaries and exhibitions, press releases, training workshops, and roundtables.

Asia

In March 2004 a regional consultation in Bangkok, Thailand brought together CSOs and regional networks to reflect on a distinct Asian agenda, identify specific regional and national challenges and priorities, and share experiences of campaigning at the national level. In November that same year, 300 participants from more than 30 countries gathered, also in Bangkok, for the second Asia Civil Society Forum to discuss the theme,

A major global policy breakthrough is needed in 2005 to get the world's poorest countries on track to meeting the goals. The Millennium Project's Report presents a framework for this policy shift detailing a series of recommendations for rich and poor countries alike and has also produced an accompanying *Handbook of Best Practices to Meet the MDGs*. For more information, visit the site of the Millennium Project at <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org>

"Thang's Journey," a comic book created by the UN Vietnam office which tells of a boy's journey from Hanoi to the countryside, includes current information on development in the country, and provides suggestions for how Vietnamese can support the MDGs.

“Building UN/NGOs Partnerships for Democratic Governance through MDGs.” The meeting’s declaration calls on civil society organizations to use the MDGs as “one of the tools that enable the advancement of human rights and sustainable development within the context of people’s ongoing struggle for their basic right to live and sustainable livelihoods.” (For more information, please go to <http://www.acsf.info>).

Current efforts in Asia include:

- Efforts led by Social Watch and Samarthan in **India** to link the country’s Five-year Plan to the MDGs and to engage members of parliament and local authorities. Social Watch is also working on awareness-raising initiatives in the **Philippines**.
- Work in **Nepal** by the NGO Federation (<http://www.ngofederation.org>) to educate politicians and the general public on the MDGs through workshops, public events, and the dissemination of best practice examples, with a particular focus on peacebuilding strategies.
- Consultations in **Pakistan** among civil society groups, media professionals, and artists to prepare for rallies, demonstrations, signature drives, and street theatre to building awareness on human rights issues and the Millennium Goals. Coordinated by the Insan Foundation Pakistan (<http://www.insanpk.org>).

Africa

The African Union (AU) Summit in July 2004 saw a marked increase in the participation of civil society representatives. Support for the MDGs to motivate political commitment and stimulate sustainable peace and development is gaining momentum at the national level. Here are several examples:

- In August 2004 in **Zambia**, 50 CSOs, including church groups, gender, human rights, health, and education groups, met to plan and launch their MDGs campaign.
- In **Ethiopia**, the Poverty Action Network of Civil Society in Ethiopia (PAN/E), a coalition of more than 40 NGOs, is working to link Ethiopia’s Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (SDPRS) with the MDGs.
- In **Uganda** efforts are being made to link the MDGs to the Ugandan Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and to increase awareness within government and civil society.

Latin America and the Caribbean

A regional consultation for Latin America and the Caribbean on the MDGs was held in Quito, Ecuador in July 2004. It was convened by the Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción (ALOP) (<http://www.alop.or.cr>), Plataforma Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, Democracia y Desarrollo (PIDHDD) (http://www.pidhdd.org/index_principal.htm), Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women’s Rights (CLADEM) <http://www.cladem.org/english>, Habitat International Coalition-Latin America and the Caribbean (HIC-AL) (<http://www.hic-al.org>), and the FUNDAR Center for Analysis and Research (<http://www.fundar.org.mx>). At the national level, members of civil society groups are promoting the MDGs to stimulate dialogue, raise awareness, and promote action.

- In **Brazil**, the MDG campaign spreads its message on shopping bags, bank statements, energy bills, and at Rio's Carnival parade. An annual National Citizenship and Solidarity week, with representatives from government, civil society, and the private sector, is planned for every year until 2015. Brazil was also home for the second time to the World Social Forum in January 2005.
- The Citizens' Campaign "No Excuses for Poverty in **Costa Rica**," was launched in November 2004 to promote dialogue and to generate a consensus on the MDGs commitments to eradicate extreme poverty and eliminate gender inequality. In **Paraguay** there has been a remarkable coalescence of more than 18 CSOs around the MDG campaign.
- In **Mexico**, FUNDAR will be working with Equipo Pueblo (<http://www.equipopueblo.org.mx>) to apply the MDGs to budget analysis, putting together a series of budget indicators that can be used in all countries evaluating the MDGs from a budget perspective.

Europe

Europe is bustling with MDG campaign activity, much of it focused on getting commitments from governments to increase their support for international development, and to hold leaders accountable to these commitments. To raise awareness, the Millennium Gates project, a partnership among eight children in rich countries and eight children in poor countries, has been touring the continent. In addition, there are active country campaigns. Among them:

- In **Ireland**, the "Keep Our Word" campaign is putting pressure on the Irish government to honour its commitments to increase aid. One tool of the campaign, spearheaded by the Catholic Church and Ireland's international development agency Trócaire, is the showing of innovative MDG ads in cinemas.
- The NGO umbrella organization Venro (<http://www.venro.org>) is leading the **German** MDG campaign, encouraging its diverse membership of over 2,000 organizations to get involved. Groups in **Poland** have entitled their campaign to raise awareness, "The Millennium Development Goals: Time to Help Others."
- In the **Nordic** countries, the Swedish MDGs Campaign was launched in 2002 under the slogan "The chance of a lifetime!" They were soon followed by the Danish who in 2003 announced "We can do it!" And in 2004 the Norwegians proclaimed their motto, "It is actually possible." In Finland, the MDGs Campaign has announced 2005 as "MDG Year." These campaigns consist of coalitions of civil society groups, government bodies, and UN organizations, focusing on monitoring follow-through on donor commitments, and raising public support in communal spaces such as schools, sporting events, and the media.
- In the **United Kingdom**, civil society is planning a mass mobilization in 2005. The campaign, entitled "Make Poverty History," emphasizes the need for urgent change in trade, debt, and aid in order to combat world poverty. A focal point for the 2005 mobilization will be the G-8 summit in July hosted by the UK, where Prime Minister Tony Blair is

expected to call for greater support from developed nations for international development. The “Make Poverty History” campaign (<http://www.makepovertyhistory.org>) has produced a number of television and print advertisements to mobilize the public.

- In **France**, groups including trade unions and faith-based communities have launched the “2005: plus d’excuses!” campaign. The campaign will organize events throughout the year focused on demanding that world leaders demonstrate their commitment to end poverty. Each month of 2005 will feature a different theme, with emphasis placed on mass mobilization for the “white band days” in July and September. The “No Excuse 2015” campaign in **Italy** hosted the Millennium Gates. A banner displayed along the biennial peace march route from Perugia to Assisi was seen by 100,000 people.

North America

In North America, some of the largest CSOs are joining together to boost public awareness, promote action on international development issues, and demand government support for greater global prosperity and equality.

- Early in 2005, a pan-**Canadian** campaign (<http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca>) was launched combining labour, Indigenous, religious, development, and a variety of other sectors. To the three emphases of the GCAP campaign, domestic poverty in Canada has been added. The Micah Challenge, a Canadian coalition of the Evangelical Fellowships (<http://www.evangelicalfellowship.ca>), the Canadian Council of Christian Charities Relief and Development Group (<http://www.cccc.org/contents?area=a&id=3000>), and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (<http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca>), is campaigning on the MDGs.
- In the **United States**, a number of the largest organizations dedicated to international development have joined to form the ONE Campaign (<http://www.theonecampaign.org>) to motivate Americans to join the fight against poverty and HIV. They are also demanding that the US government allocate an additional 1% of its budget to development assistance. The wide variety of participants in the ONE Campaign include Oxfam and the National Basketball Association.

Australia and Oceania

- The **Australian** Council for International Development (<http://www.acfid.asn.au>), an independent coalition of more than 80 Australian civil society organizations, has launched the Fair Share Campaign (<http://www.acfid.asn.au/fairshare.htm>). The campaign will seek to ensure that the Australian government and people do their “fair share” in efforts to achieve the MDGs. The *Financing for Development Colloquium and Media Seminar* in August 2004 gave groups from the Pacific region a chance to discuss practical ways to fund the MDGs.
- A national workshop was held in May 2004 in the **Marshall Islands** to discuss practical means to achieve progress on the MDGs. Similar workshops aimed at tailoring the MDGs into national frameworks are planned for 2005 in **Vanuatu** and **Tuvalu**.

Keeping Account

Monitoring, assessing, and evaluating

Many national groups are preparing “shadow reports,” evaluations of their own government’s response to the Declaration and the MDGs. Several international non-governmental alliances are undertaking detailed assessments.

Join with others — in civil society, think tanks and educational institutions — to become a national “MDG watchdog.” Encourage people to share their experiences, assessments, and evaluations. Produce regular reports and request prompt feedback from authorities who have been given responsibility for projects and programs designed to achieve the MDGs.

Alliance2015 (<http://www.alliance2015.org>) is a partnership of six European development-oriented NGOs. The purpose of the Alliance is to fight poverty more effectively through better cooperation, by working together in developing countries, and by coordinating campaigns to influence public and political opinion in Europe. It plays an active advocacy role in support of the MDGs. It is contributing to the assessment of MDG progress. In 2004, Alliance2015 produced a report on the contribution of the European Union to the MDGs, with a special focus on HIV/AIDS. The report concluded that there is a big gap between policy and implementation. It shows that the EU’s development policy is inadequately geared toward the MDGs. To fulfill commitments, a stronger focus on priorities and regular evaluation of policies and programs are necessary (the report can be viewed at http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/_WHHDE/download/positionen/2015_watch_eu.pdf).

The Reality of Aid Project is a major North-South international non-governmental initiative. It is focused on analysis and lobbying for poverty eradication. It brings together more than 40 civil society networks in the field of international cooperation from 22 donor countries. It provides an independent review of poverty reduction and development assistance policies of developed countries. (To read the annual reports of the donor countries’ performance on aid and cooperation, visit <http://www.realityofaid.org/roa2002/OECD.htm>).

The Centre for Global Development (CGD), in cooperation with *Foreign Policy* magazine, measures the contributions of 21 developed countries to the MDGs. It publishes a “Ranking the Rich Index” to assess national policies and efforts in several areas. It does not examine several important areas including intellectual property and contributions to peacebuilding. The 2004 Index can be found at <http://www.cgdev.org/rankingtherich/home.html>)

Another monitor of donor country contributions is **CONCORD** (<http://www.concordeurope.org>), the European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development. Its 18 international networks and 19 national associations from European Union member states and candidate countries represent more than 1,500 European NGOs. Its main objective is to improve the influence of European development NGOs in European institutions. These NGOs work toward accountability and effectiveness of the European Union’s development programs and ODA. CONCORD actively monitors both the European Commission and the EU member states in their development activities, regularly publishing views and position papers.

The North South Institute publishes the annual *Canadian Development Report*. The 2004 report “Investing in poor countries: Who benefits?” looks at the impact of private foreign investment in developing countries. It includes up-to-date statistics and analysis about the Canadian government’s trade-related involvement with developing countries (the full report is available at <http://www.nsi-ins.ca/ensi/publications/cdr/2004/index.html>). The *Canadian Development Report 2005* will contribute to the global assessment of the MDGs by examining Canada’s contributions.

Social Watch is an international network pressuring governments to fulfill their international commitments to achieve the MDGs. Through the annual *Social Watch Report*, national civil society groups report on progress toward the goals. Social Watch country files also include indicators on progress toward the MDGs, compiled from up-to-date authoritative statistical sources. Based on an initiative by the Philippines Social Watch, a “Quality of Life Index” has been developed for use by grassroots organizations. (For more information on the work of Social Watch, visit <http://www.socialwatch.org/en/portada.htm>).

The Commonwealth civil society network, connecting groups in more than 50 countries South and North, is preparing a **Commonwealth Peoples MDG Report** (<http://www.commonwealthfoundation.com>), in which national and community level groups will be evaluating the performance of their governments.

OFFICIAL REFERENCE POINTS

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) coordinates global and national efforts to reach the MDGs. It assists developing countries in preparing MDG reports that chart progress toward the goals. Dozens of national MDG reports have been issued, and more are in preparation. Donor countries are now compiling national reports on their efforts to achieve Goal 8, which is the only goal where the responsibilities of the rich nations are clearly set out. So far, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have published reports on their efforts. Luxembourg has produced a report that examines its contributions to all the MDGs, focusing on Goal 8.

The UNDP also collaborates with other UN agencies, governments, and regional commissions to create regional MDG reports. Regional reports so far cover Africa, the Arab world, Asia/Pacific, and Latin America/the Caribbean. A sub-regional report for central European countries has also been released. (For all reports, visit <http://www.undp.org/mdg>).

The UN Secretary-General issues a yearly report on progress toward the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. The report is based on a variety of sources, often drawing on national and civil society reports. (See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>).

What You Can Do

Campaign

Support the **Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)** by joining in mass actions to end poverty. White Band Days are a chance to make the campaign visible. Wear a white arm band or head band, or decorate a building with one:

- July 1 (just before the G-8 meeting in Britain)
- September 10 (just before the UN leaders' summit in New York)
- December 10 (just before the WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong)

Show your solidarity with global efforts to end poverty (<http://www.whiteband.org>)

Get involved with the Global Week of Action on Trade (April 10-16) and action around the WTO Trade Ministers Meeting in Hong Kong (December 13-18) and draw attention to fair trade issues.

- Join national and global campaigns for trade reform, debt relief, new mechanisms for development financing, and improvements in international development aid with a particular focus on Millennium Declaration implementation (places to start: <http://www.debtlinks.org>, <http://www.onecampaign.org>, <http://www.data.org>, <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org>, <http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca>).
- Join other campaigns for greater equity, health, and sustainability and the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Places to start: The UN Millennium Campaign website (<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org>), the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (<http://www.un-ngls.org>), CIVICUS (<http://www.civicus.org>), World AIDS Campaign (<http://www.unaids.org>), and the World March Against Child Labor (<http://www.globalmarch.org>).
- Initiate a community-based advocacy campaign to demand that your Head of Government support bold action to end poverty and hunger throughout the world at the September leaders' summit.

Volunteer

Whether you are a recent graduate or recently retired, volunteer your services to help achieve the MDGs. Travel to a different country to lend a hand while simultaneously building new relationships and a greater understanding of our global cultural diversity (find out more at <http://www.unvolunteers.org>). Identify the vulnerable in your community — the ill, the elderly, refugees, the disabled, orphans and those charged with their care — find out what you can do to ease their situations.

Promote participatory decision-making

- Join or help organize local and national MDG hearings with parliamentarians, media representatives, business leaders, and civil society activists — in your decision-making processes ensure the inclusion of women and people living in poverty.

Campaigners in Nigeria, Sweden, and Cambodia are sending letters to G-7 countries' embassies urging debt cancellation. In Ghana and Norway, campaigners are planning to visit Canadian, German, and French embassies. In Zambia and Germany, protests are planned in front of embassies and ministries. End-Debt campaigners in Scotland are planning to publicly "wipe off" debt from a giant board, while in the United Kingdom a public mock funeral will be held to demand "bury the debt, not more dead."

- Join your national United Nations Association (UNA). Many UNAs conduct nation-wide essay competitions and Model UN Conferences on themes related to the MDGs. Others do even more. (See <http://www.wfuna.org>).
- Inform your local and national media. Write letters to the editor and media releases drawing attention to the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs, and the leaders' September summit. Invite the media to local actions, projects, and events.

Promote inclusive democratic global governance

- Join the global empowerment campaigns such as the WEDO 50/50 Campaign for a balanced representation of women in government (<http://www.wedo.org/index.aspx>); the Indigenous Peoples' Network for Change (<http://www.international-alliance.org>); the Taking ITGlobal/GYAN global online community of youth (<http://www.takingitglobal.org>), and the YES campaign 2002-2012 Empowering Youth to create sustainable livelihoods (<http://www.yesweb.org/index.htm>).

Implement and adapt: Add a "+" to the MDGs

- Hold community meetings to identify local needs and resources, and to strategize about appropriate solutions. Use the MDGs as a motivator and leverage to engage the public and political leaders. (For an example of a best practice approach, see the Green Belt Movement's community development strategy (<http://www.greenbeltmovement.org>).
- Approach education institutions about introducing the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs into the classroom. Help develop a curriculum that highlights local aspects of the MDGs.
- Propose to donor agencies, development organizations, and government departments new budget priorities and action plans to achieve the MDGs in ways most appropriate to your country.

Raise funds

Hold fund-raising events to contribute to local initiatives in your community. Or raise funds for global needs like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (<http://www.theglobalfund.org>). Donate funds to the major civil society organizations dedicated to poverty alleviation, or use the Internet to contribute directly to community initiatives and smaller organizations (see <http://www.globalgiving.com> or <http://www.viacampesina.org>).

Be creative

Hold local gatherings, cultural events, art exhibitions, community gardening projects, theatre events, poetry performances, and clean-up initiatives. Highlight local talent, resources, and possibilities. Link these activities to the development goals and the leaders' September summit.

Use your imagination to help realize the visions of peace, equality, sustainability, and prosperity of the Millennium Declaration. Make puppets. Hold competitions. Design posters. Host debates. Throw a party.

Join the MDG Campaign civil society website to share ideas, best practices and strategies for successful planning, reporting and analysis around the MDGs (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/mdgcampaign>).

Important Dates and Places

Many CSOs are officially recognized by the United Nations. They have “consultative status” and are often allowed to attend official meetings. These organizations also organize their own NGO meetings at the same time and place as many official United Nations meetings. There will certainly be an NGO/citizens meeting at the same time as the leaders’ summit in New York in September.

UNITED NATIONS MEETINGS WORTH NOTING:

Feb. 9-18	Commission on Social Development (Copenhagen+10), New York
Feb. 21-25	Global Ministerial Environment Meeting, Nairobi
Feb. 28-March 11	Commission on Status of Women, Beijing + 10, New York
March 14-April 22	Human Rights Commission, Geneva
March 14-April 1	Commission on Sustainable Development, New York
April 18	ECOSOC Special High Level Meeting with the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO, New York
May 2-27	Nuclear Weapons Review Conference, New York
June 23-24	UN General Assembly Hearings with civil society to prepare for the Leaders Summit, New York
June 26	60th Anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter, multiple sites
June 27-28	Financing for Development High-Level Dialogue, New York
June 29-July 1	ECOSOC High-Level Segment, New York
September 7-9	UN Department of Public Information-NGO Conference, New York
September 14-16	The Millennium Review Summit , New York

MEETING OF THE LEADERS OF THE G-8 INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES:

July 6-8 Meeting of the G-8 leaders of industrialized countries, Gleneagles, Scotland

MAJOR CIVIL SOCIETY EVENTS:

March 1 Launch of Social Watch Benchmarks for Millennium Review Summit
<http://www.socialwatch.org>

March 2-7 "UN at 60: Time for Renewal": WFUNA conference with the UNA-USA National Convention in New York
<http://www.wfuna.org>

April 25-May 1 Global Campaign for Education: Education Action Week
<http://www.campaignforeducation.org>

May 29-June 1 Global Democracy: Civil Society Visions and Strategies Forum International Montreal
<http://www.fimcivilsociety.org>

July 1 Global Call To Action Against Poverty — First White Band Day
<http://www.whiteband.org>

July 19-21 Conference on the Role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict, New York
<http://www.conflict-prevention.net>

September Launch of the Social Watch *Report 2005*.

September 10 Second White Band Day

December 10 Third White Band Day, Human Rights Day

OTHER IMPORTANT MEETINGS:

September 7-9 Helsinki Process Conference, Helsinki

September 26-27 World Bank and IMF Meeting, Washington, DC

December 13-18 World Trade Organization Ministers Meeting, Hong Kong