



MDG #1

Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Global Development Group is committed to helping achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). You can find a brief introduction to these in our Development Issue: What are the MDG's? (February edition), and on our website: www.globaldevelopment.org.au/mdg

The first MDG is, Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.

From our Westernised, desensitised standing point in the world, it may be hard to come to terms with the fact that there is still “extreme poverty” or even “hunger” rampaging our globe. I don’t know that we fully comprehend the magnitude of those words. With them comes the harsh reality of starvation and death, not merely a missed meal or a hungry stomach.

The purpose of identifying this topic as a Millennium Development Goal is so that humanity can gather together, step out and do something about the problem, instead of being immobilised by lack of awareness or indifference. Each MDG is broad in topic, but there are sub-targets that narrow the focus. This particular MDG endeavours to achieve:

- By 2015, halve the proportion of the population earning below \$1 (PPP*) per day.
- Full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- By 2015, halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

(<http://www.mdgmonitor.org/goal1.cfm>)

Global Development Group partners with a number of projects that have programs focusing on these goals. One such project hones in on equipping specifically 60 people (male and female alike) in Phnom Penh with skills that enable them to run their own businesses, gain a sense of direction for their community as well as training others with the skills they themselves have learnt. Nominated students take part in a three year course that explores these areas. In addition, they are given a business loan (which they are required to pay back).

From previous outcomes, after two years in the program the students’ small businesses are flourishing adequately to sustain themselves and their families. This is just one of the programs Global Development Group is involved with. The course helps people to get a grasp of their own capacity if given the opportunity. This is a great way in which people can gain productive employment and self-sustainability and comes under the banner of “aid and development” not merely “welfare”- a hand-out mentality. A good way to metaphorically describe this concept is a well-known Persian parable, “If you give [welfare] a man a fish, you feed him for a day, if you teach [aid and development] him to fish you feed him for life”.

A second (but by no means secondary) project we are involved in, provides numerous employment opportunities in the horticulture sector in Ndalani, Kenya. This project tackles many aspects covered in the MDG’s, one such being “Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.” They have 60 acres of horticultural land which is used to grow vegetables such as spinach, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, aubergines, carrots, kales, French beans and maize. Also fruits: papaya, banana, etc. This project has “Community Employment Programs” where people from the community are paid to harvest the crops – either by the kilo or a fixed hourly rate. The produce is then used to either feed the children in their Children’s Homes or for export [they use Greenhouses to grow French beans for this purpose (J128, J266)].

Most projects we are involved with have an element of providing the bare necessities, such as in this case, food, as well as engaging in aid and development activities. It is hard to point out any project that focuses only on “eradicating hunger” as all the MDG’s work together within each project. For example, we have projects that provide food (MDG #1) whilst teaching primary education (MDG #2) whilst purifying water which reduces child mortality (MDG #4) and combats HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases (MDG #6).

*Purchasing Power Parity – it equalises the purchasing power of different currencies in their own countries.

■ For more information visit: www.globaldevelopment.org.au/issue-2010-03



PHOTO: J146 Childcare Kitgum Servants

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