



“The MDG's are global development goals agreed to in September 2000 by the world's largest ever gathering of world leaders on the eve of the dawning of this new millennium to help halve worldwide poverty by 2015”

What are the MDG's?

Introducing the 8 Millennium Development Goals (see left)

Global Development Group is committed to helping achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The MDGs are not intended as a cute little phrase to impress friends as it's quoted at parties and family gatherings. Rather, they are useful as a means of focussing and gathering global support to make a truly tremendous and earth-changing impact on the lives of most of the world's population - the poorest of the poor in the developing world.

Even now, with all the progress that has been made, still 26% (over 1/4) of the world's adult population (and 49% - almost half - in the least developed countries) (<http://www.sil.org/literacy/lifacts.htm>) are incapable of actually reading this webpage in any language. Even more would be the number of people, especially in the developing world, without reliable and affordable access to technology to read it on a computer “1 to every 250 in Africa, 1 to 35 worldwide” (“Conference Looks at Africa's IT,” *Agence France Presse*, May 29, 2002) - let alone their own computer! Most of our world's population are simply not so fortunate - or blessed - as those of us in the developed world, in countries like Australia and the USA.

As if that's not bad enough, any of those less fortunate than us are simply dying, when there's really no good reason why they should be. And many of them are children, just like your own children, or your neighbour's children, or your friends (if you're a child reading this).

We hold the key - the power - because we hold the influence and the wealth to make a difference to their fate.

The MDG's are one way we can together galvanise our resolve to make a difference. They are a means to measure the magnitude of our task to impact their fate across a number of key areas, and to measure our success in actually

At the risk of sounding like he's recommending a film, one of GDG's fulltime staff, Greg Cadman, had the following to say:

“...after all the facts and numbers and statistics, there's just something powerful about movies as a medium that can bring home a message to today's modern audience in a way that can reach out and connect with them on an engaging, emotional level and somehow leave the viewer challenged and changed.”

“So, as an almost-family-friendly [one suggestive scene not suitable for young kids] and contemporary introduction to the importance of the Millennium Development Goals, I recommend the 2005 movie “The Girl in the Café”. This ‘romantic comedy with a message’ stars Bill Nighy and Kelly Macdonald and produced by BBC Wales, with the screenplay written by Richard Curtis and directed by David Yates. It starts off a little slow and it's certainly not an action movie, but stick with it and perhaps you'll agree with me in saying that ‘Love actually can change the world, by changing me and changing you!’ ... okay, so I did recommend a film - watch it & see if you agree with me”

changing the fate of millions whose lives are impacted by those issues.

So what are the MDGs, you ask? How did they come about?

The MDG's are global development goals agreed to in September 2000 by the world's largest ever gathering of world leaders on the eve of the dawning of this new millennium to help halve worldwide poverty.

Most (if not all) of our approved aid & development projects are constructed with reference to helping achieve one or more of these eight crucial development goals (see top left).

The goals provide a helpful summary of the crucial needs of development and also of the commitment required to make a significant difference in achieving them by 2015.

The need is great but the human cost of doing nothing or little is much higher than the investment required to tackle these global problems. By standing and working together with those less fortunate we can all make a difference for all and not just for the few.

The eight MDGs were developed from the eight chapters of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, signed by 189 countries, including 147 Heads of State, in September 2000 at the largest-ever gathering of world leaders. These eight goals have 21 targets in total, with measurable indicators for the progress and achievement of each target by 2015.

These targets are ambitious and embody commitments by all signatory countries to reduce world-wide poverty and hunger, and to tackle poor health, gender inequality, lack of education, lack of access to clean water, environmental degradation, and foster development effectiveness through cooperation.

Join us in supporting Global Development Group projects so that together we can help fulfil the MDG's and alleviate world poverty.

Together we can make a difference.

This article is the first of our education series exploring the MDG's. Our next issue will explore MDG #1 Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.

**For more information visit:
www.globaldevelopment.org.au/issue-2010-02**



**from The Girl in the Cafe, Dir. David Yates. Perfs. Bill Nighy, Kelly Macdonald. BBC Wales, 2005. DVD available throughout Australia wherever BBC products are sold.*