



Tying GYSD to the Millennium Development Goals

“The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.”¹

In September 2000, 147 heads of State and Government, and 189 nations in total, created the United Nations Millennium Declaration that established the eight MDGs.²

- **Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty**
All types of poverty must be addressed to ensure the dignity of people around the world, but the kind of poverty addressed in Goal 1 is *extreme* poverty.
- **Goal 2: Provide Universal Primary Education**
Providing children a basic education is the best investment the world can make in its future. Education reduces poverty by providing everyone with choices and opportunities to create a better life for themselves.
- **Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality & Empower Women**
Promoting gender equality means ensuring that women have the same chances as men to improve their lives and the lives of their families.
- **Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality**
One of the most horrifying characteristics of poverty is that it preys on the vulnerable and defenseless. In low-income countries, about one out of every 5 children dies before the age of five. In wealthier nations, this number is about one out of 350.
- **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health**
Pregnancy is a normal, life-affirming state. Women should not die giving birth. Their deaths are preventable, even in the poorest countries.
- **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases**
This generation can live to see the end of AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis worldwide.
- **Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**
If an environmental plan is not "sustainable," it means that it cannot be long-lasting or effective over a period of time. It will also have some really adverse effects in the short-term on the world's poorest communities.
- **Goal 8: Build Sustainable Local Economies**
Nearly everyone — regardless of background — wants to support themselves and create a secure future to their family.³

Continue reading for examples of what countries have done to help achieve the MDGs through Global Youth Service Day!

¹ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

² http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mi/mi_highlights.asp

³ <http://www.yeworldwide.org/>

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Millennium Development Goals, cont.

What can you do to help accomplish these eight goals by 2015? Do some research on what each goal is trying to accomplish. Talk to young people and adults about what you can do to help. Make a plan, work toward your own goals, and then take time to reflect on what you have achieved.

Brazil: In 2005 Brazil began integrating the Millennium Development Goals with its GYSD activities. President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva helped kick off the celebration involving over 30,000 volunteers in 145 cities and 25 states across the country, coordinated by Natal Voluntarios. Initiatives to achieve the MDGs included peer education, environmental projects, sexual and reproductive health workshops, cultural and sport activities, food and clothing drives, and the construction of community centers.

Kenya: Kenya also supported the MDGs in 2005 by coordinating their youth service around issues like the environment (tree planting), food distribution, and workshops on nutrition, female genital mutilation, and disease (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria). Led by the Kenya Youth Foundation, over 13,200 volunteers participated in these GYSD activities.

Russia: Led by the Russian Volunteer Development Center of IAVE and Sozidanie, 587,000 volunteers participated in GYSD in Russia in 2005. GYSD was included as part of the framework of Spring Volunteer Week and Russia's "Volunteer Sector for the MDGs" Initiative. Projects included charitable concerts, performances, sports events, awards ceremonies, press conferences, and competitions to exhibitions, volunteer fairs, round tables, seminars, street outreach, medicine, clothes, food and toy drives, and blood donation drives.

For more information on these projects, please get in touch with the appropriate GYSD contacts:

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For more information on young people and the MDGs please visit the following sites:
<http://mdg.takingitglobal.org>
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/mdgs.htm>
<http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/mdgs/>.

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