

# millennium development goals student campus toolkit

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# introduction to the MDGs



BACKGROUND

mdg student toolkit 05

## a millenary promise

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, 189 countries pledged to reduce poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. This agreement generated the **Millennium Development Goals**—eight objectives placing human well-being and development at the forefront of the global agenda. This student toolkit provides you with information on how to both raise awareness and act now to make sure that countries around the world live up to their millenary promise. But why are students essential for the victory of this movement?

Students are in a unique position: they are not only informed, but they can also rapidly and effectively organize to make the public aware of social justice issues. No one can deny the power of students—and no one has. Most of the major successful social justice movements around the world have been spearheaded by students. Particularly, college students are generally exposed to a comprehensive study of the world that enables them to approach the world through more than just one discipline.

The MDGs movement asks students to do just that: understand that the world is interconnected. To recognize this reality does not just mean to acknowledge globalization. If we recognize our common human condition and interdependence, we should also recognize our equal right to enjoy life as equal partners. The MDGs are not asking us to act or speak for others—they are asking us to empower others so that they can act and speak for themselves.

This last thought makes the connection between the MDGs and development pretty straightforward. But the goals are more than just about development: they seek global solutions for devastating pandemic and other health-related problems; they attempt to achieve gender equality and empower generations of women, so that they can decide on their own future; they educate millions that are disenfranchised from the opportunities many of us hold so dear; and finally, these goals try to solve poverty so that humans around the world can begin to stand on their own two feet.

We have to work together and to seek comprehensive solutions, if we ever are to take justice seriously. To do this, it is imperative that students get involved and take on this issue. Only those informed can afford to push for real change.

Use this toolkit as your guide to action. The Global Justice team designed it for students like you so that you realize how powerful you can be.

The Global Justice Team





### goal #1: eradicate extreme poverty & hunger

The first goal countries have agreed on is to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day, and to reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. A key first step towards global development, this goal aims at empowering individuals, groups—and thus entire nations—to lift themselves out of poverty traps and get on the development ladder. Due to the technological advances we have seen in recent years, with the proper political will, this goal can be achieved by 2015.

#### In our world today:

- 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1 per day.
- 800 million people go to bed hungry every day.
- 28,000 children die from poverty-related causes everyday.

#### Publications:

*Rich World, Poor World: Education and the Developing World, 09/01/2004*  
<http://www.cgdev.org/Publications/?PubID=144>

#### Additional Resources:

- Oxfam America  
<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/>
- Center for Global Development  
<http://www.cgdev.org/>
- Bread for the World-hunger  
<http://www.bread.org/>

### goal #2: achieve universal primary education

The second goal is to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling. This goal was proposed as a means of giving everyone a fair start, and particularly, an equal opportunity to become active members of their societies. Universal schooling has already been achieved in some less developed countries; particularly in Latin America. A concerted international effort can extend this experience to other parts of the world.

#### In our world today:

- 115 million school-aged children are not in school—56 percent of them girls and 94 percent of them in developing countries.
- 133 million young people cannot read or write.
- Only 37 of 155 developing countries have achieved universal primary school completion.

#### Publications:

*EDUCATION-AFRICA: Universal Schooling an Elusive Goal*  
<http://www.ipsnews.net/interna.asp?idnews=26548>

#### Additional Resources:

- Basic Education Coalition  
<http://www.basiced.org/>
- UNICEF  
<http://www.unicef.org/>
- UNESCO  
<http://www.unesco.org/>

### goal #3: promote gender equality & empowerment

The third goal is to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015. The inclusion of women in education—and hence, in the workplace— and development are two interrelated issues: societies where women are more equal stand a much greater chance of achieving the Millennium Goals by 2015. In Asia, Latin America, and Africa, where women have been given the chance to succeed through small business loans or increased educational opportunities, families are stronger, economies are stronger, and societies are flourishing.

- Two-thirds of the world's illiterate people are female.
- The employment rate for women is two-thirds that for men.
- Women only held 15% of seats in national parliaments in 2003.
- Women represent half of the 40 million people infected with HIV worldwide, and due to their vulnerability in many societies in Africa, this number is growing.

#### Publications:

*Making Childbirth Safer Through Promoting Evidence-Based Care*  
[http://www.globalhealth.org/view\\_top.php3?id=298](http://www.globalhealth.org/view_top.php3?id=298)

#### Additional Resources:

- World Health Organization  
<http://www.who.int/en/>
- Global Health Council  
<http://www.globalhealth.org/>

### goal #4: reduce child mortality

The MDG Target is to reduce under-five mortality rate by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015. Currently, we can prevent about 70% of neonatal deaths with available low-cost interventions. Yet further reducing under-five mortality will require increased use of key high impact interventions: Child interventions should be scaled up to 100 percent coverage, and be increasingly offered within the community. Also, child nutrition and interventions to prevent neonatal death should get increased funding.

#### In our world today:

- Over 11 million children under the age of five die each year, most from preventable diseases.
- Mortality rates for children under five dropped by 15 percent since 1990, but the rates remain high in developing countries.
- No region, except Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Europe and Central Asia are on track to achieve the target of reducing, by 2015, the under-five mortality rates by two thirds of their 1990 levels.

#### Additional Resources:

- Global Health Council  
<http://www.globalhealth.org/>
- U.S. Coalition for Child Survival  
<http://www.child-survival.org/>
- World Health Organization  
<http://www.who.int/en/>

### goal #5: improve maternal health

The fifth goal is to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio. This goal goes hand-in-hand with that of gender equality and

empowerment, and seeks to fight one of the most widespread threats to mothers in the developing world. Improvements in maternal health are also tightly linked with preventing neonatal mortality and protecting all members of the family as active members of society.

#### In our world today:

- Some 14,000 women and girls die each day from causes related to childbirth, 99 percent in the developing world
- More than 50 million women suffer from poor reproductive health and serious pregnancy-related illness and disability
- More than 500,000 women die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth every year.

#### Publications:

*Pathway to Gender Equality: CEDAW, Beijing and the MDGs*  
[http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f\\_page\\_pid=216](http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=216)

*Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the Crisis*  
[http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f\\_page\\_pid=215](http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=215)

*Gender Equality and the Millennium Development Goals*  
[http://www.mdgender.net/resources/monograph\\_detail.php?MonographID=10](http://www.mdgender.net/resources/monograph_detail.php?MonographID=10)

#### Additional Resources:

- Center for Health and Gender Equity  
<http://www.genderhealth.org/>
- UNIFEM  
<http://www.unifem.undp.org/>
- Gender Equality and the MDGs  
<http://www.mdgender.net/>

### goal #6: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

The sixth goal is to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, and to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases. The fight against these widely spread and highly lethal diseases is seen as a crucial element in the race for an equitable and developed world. The AIDS epidemic will soon be the most deadly of any disease ever to affect human beings, and much of the world's population is still vulnerable to many other infectious diseases, like tuberculosis and malaria. Goal #6 aims at extending medical coverage to those who do not enjoy it yet, and contain the expansion of the disease.

#### In our world today:

- About 8,000 people died every single day as a result of AIDS in 2003
- An estimated 4.8 million people became newly infected with HIV in 2003—that's more than 13,000 every day
- Approximately 15 million children around the world have lost one or both parents to AIDS
- Malaria causes more than 300 million acute illnesses and at least one million deaths annually
- An estimated two million deaths resulted from tuberculosis in 2002
- Someone in the world is newly infected with tuberculosis bacilli every second

#### Publications:

*Global HIV/AIDS and the Developing World*

<http://www.cgdev.org/Publications/?PubID=110>

*Women and HIV/AIDS: Confronting the Crisis*

[http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f\\_page\\_pid=215](http://www.unifem.org/index.php?f_page_pid=215)

*AIDS Epidemic Update 2004*

<http://www.unaids.org/wad2004/report.html>

#### Additional Resources:

- Health GAP  
<http://www.healthgap.org/>
- Global AIDS Alliance  
<http://www.globalaidsalliance.org/>
- Africa Action  
<http://www.africaaction.org/>
- Student Global AIDS Campaign  
<http://www.fightglobalaids.org/>
- UNAIDS  
<http://www.unaids.org/>

## goal #7: ensure environmental sustainability

The seventh goal is threefold and seeks to: i) integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs, reversing loss of environmental resources; ii) reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water; and iii) achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020. This MDG is perceived as key to ensure that development can continue to benefit generations to come.

#### In our world today:

- Forests are disappearing at unprecedented rates globally, displacing indigenous peoples from their native homes and uprooting their livelihoods.
- The collapse of fisheries around the world threatens to exacerbate hunger and poverty among poor coastal communities throughout the developing world.
- Over 2.4 billion people lack access to proper sanitation facilities and one billion lack access to drinkable water.
- Some two million children die every year—6,000 a day—from preventable infections spread by dirty water or improper sanitation facilities.

#### Publications:

*Guide to Monitoring Target 11: Improving the lives of 100 million slum dwellers*

<http://www.unhabitat.org/programmes/guo/documents/mdgtarget11.pdf>

#### Additional Resources:

- Environmental Defense  
<http://www.edf.org/>
- Sierra Club  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/>
- Global Watch  
<http://www.globalwatchonline.com/>

## goal #8: develop a partnership for development

The last MDG has multiple objectives, all converging in one global partnership for development. This last goal seeks to: i) develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory (including a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally); ii) address the least developed countries' special needs (including tariff- and quota-free access for their exports, enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries, cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction); iii) address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing states; iv) deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term; v) in cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth;

vi) in cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries; and vii) in cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies.

#### > AID

##### Publications:

*U.S. Assistance for Global Development*

<http://www.cgdev.org/Publications/?PubID=109>

##### Additional Resources:

- Center for Global Development  
<http://www.cgdev.org/>
- InterAction  
<http://www.interaction.org/>

#### > FAIR TRADE

##### Publications:

*A Raw Deal for Rice Under DR-CAFTA: How the Free Trade Agreement Threatens the Livelihoods of Central American Farmers*

[http://www.oxfamamerica.org/newsandpublications/publications/briefing\\_papers/briefing\\_paper.2004-11-16.6188568942](http://www.oxfamamerica.org/newsandpublications/publications/briefing_papers/briefing_paper.2004-11-16.6188568942)

*Rich World, Poor World: Global Trade, Jobs, and Labor Standards, 07/26/2004*

<http://www.cgdev.org/Publications/?PubID=136>

##### Additional Resources:

- Oxfam America  
<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/>
- Public Citizen  
<http://www.citizen.org/>
- AFL-CIO  
<http://www.aflcio.org/>
- Christian AID (UK)  
<http://www.christian-aid.org.uk/>

#### > DEBT RELIEF

##### Publications:

*The unbreakable link - debt relief and the millennium development goals*

[http://www.jubileeusa.org/jubilee.cgi?path=/resources/reports&page=unbreakable\\_link.html](http://www.jubileeusa.org/jubilee.cgi?path=/resources/reports&page=unbreakable_link.html)

*New World Bank Reports Confirm that the HIPC Initiative is Failing*

<http://www.jubileeplus.org/analysis/articles/hipc290402.htm>

##### Additional Resources:

- Jubilee USA Network  
<http://www.jubileeusa.org/>
- Africa Action  
<http://www.africaaction.org/>
- American Friends Service Committee  
<http://www.afsc.org/>



## getting event coverage

Journalists are always on the lookout for interesting stories that would appeal to their readership. It is your job to find a reporter who you think might be interested in writing about your work fighting the AIDS crisis and present him or her with a readymade story.

The traditional format in which you announce a story idea to journalists is through a press release. **However, a press release is really only an excuse to call the journalist about the issue.** If you send a press release and do not follow up with a phone call later that day or the next day, your press release is likely to be ignored along with the dozens (or thousands) of other press releases they get.

Here's a sample timetable for trying to get media coverage for an event. It's flexible, though. You may not even start planning an event until 2 weeks ahead of time, in which case you'll obviously not be able to follow the timetable below. Just get the information about as soon as possible and get in touch with the journalists as soon as you can. You may still be able to get coverage, even from large media outlets. Also, it probably makes sense to put together a media team, so that no one person has to be in touch with every media outlet.

### sample time-table for media coverage

2-3 months before	Contact large national media outlets (CNN, NBC, ABC, MTV, <i>New York Times</i> , the Associated Press etc.) with a press advisory (through fax or email) and phone call (ask them to put it in their day books)
3 weeks to 1 month before	Send a press advisory (fax or email) and make a phone call (ask them to put it in their day books) to all media sources that you haven't already contacted—local, regional, and national. Follow up on phone calls you made to the large national media outlets.
2 weeks before	Send a press release (fax or email to the attention of the person you talked to before) to all media outlets that expressed a potential interest in or were ambiguous about covering the event and to any media outlets you haven't yet contacted. <b>Follow up on phone calls you made to media outlets you sent press advisories to and called a couple weeks ago and find out if they plan on sending anyone to cover the event. Make initial phone calls to anyone you've contacted for the first time.</b>
1 week before	Continue to build relationships with the journalists/reporters who may cover or send someone to cover your event. Give them a quick phone call to check in and see if they have any last minute questions and make sure they still plan to have someone there (or, if they hadn't decided yet whether to cover it, if they will cover it). If you've made any significant changes to your event, send a new press release (email or fax to the attention of the person you've been in touch with).
1 or 2 days before	One more phone call: <b>get commitment from those who hadn't previously committed, remind those who had committed.</b>
Morning of	One final call— <b>check in to make sure they know where to be when.</b>
Event time	Have a media point person who gets a business card or basic information from every media person there (you want to be able to make sure you check all the right media sources after the event). If it's television or radio news, the point person should ask if they know when it will air. Also, the point person should have a media kit for each media person who shows up. This should include information about your ask (state clearly what you want from whom) and a copy of your preliminary press release.
Immediately post event	<b>Draft a new press release</b> (your old one with all the verbs changed to past tense and some specific facts or figures from the event as well as a new quote or two) and fax/email it to all the media who showed up (you should have their contact info now) as well as any media who expressed an initial interest but didn't end up showing up.
As the coverage pours in	Keep a record of where you get media coverage. Make sure to get clippings from any print media. Fax a copy of the articles to your target along with a letter. Keep a list of reporters who covered your event as they are more likely to cover a future event than a random reporter is.

## how to write a press release

Got something newsworthy going on (a conference, a speaker, a rally, a demonstration)? Then you'll want to write a press release and make phone calls to the media. For an event that depends on the media to be successful (most rallies or demonstrations), you'll want to start contacting the media well in advance of the event. You may also want to utilize a press advisory, which serves as a save the date memo for journalists. You also want to follow up the press advisory with a phone call.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

These words should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter.

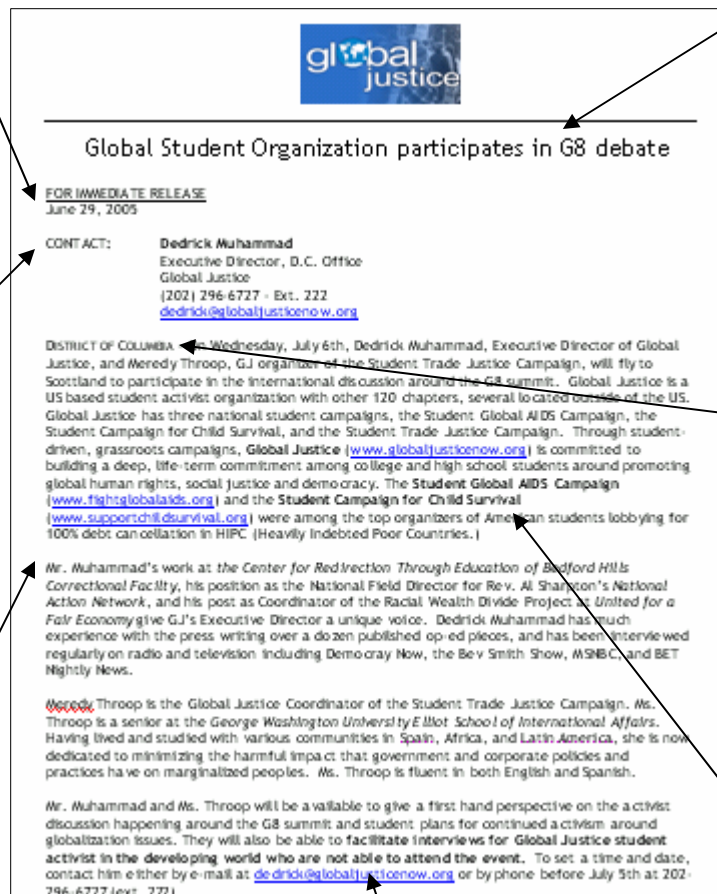
### >Contact Information:

Skip a line or two after "for immediate release" and list the name, daytime and evening telephone numbers, and e-mail address of the person who can best answer reporters' questions. It is important to give your home number since reporters often work on deadlines and may not be available until after hours.

>Text: In this portion, you write the story for the reporter. Your text should be a full news story about the event you are publicizing, including quotations from people who are involved and a more complete description of the event and its background than you could fit into the more exclusive lead paragraph. It is written as any news article would be written. Any opinion is expressed in quotes, not in the text.

**what is a press advisory?** A press advisory is essentially a short version of a press release. It has the lead paragraph but not the rest of the text. Instead, it might highlight a photo opportunity for the press. See the sample press advisory.

**how to make press calls:** An important part of making press calls is practicing ahead of time so that you actually get up the will to make them. Get together with your chapter and take turns pretending to be the person pitching the story with someone else pretending to be the reporter and give each other feedback. In some cases you might be talking to a reporter; in other cases you'll talk to the news editor. Whether they've received the press advisory/release or not, get your pitch in.



>Headline: Skip two lines after your contact information and use a boldface type. The headline should be succinct and descriptive. It should express what *action* a reporter might make into a story.

>Dateline: Open the first paragraph with the city your press release is issued from and the date you are sending out your release. You can find this format at the beginning of articles in most newspapers.

>Lead Paragraph: The first paragraph needs to grasp

the reader's attention and should contain the relevant information to your message such as the five W's (who, what, when, where, why).

>Web links: In your press release, you should include links to the website of your campaign (or even that of your chapter). In this way, you will make the reporter/news editor familiar with your activities and mission.

## letters to the editor

Politicians have staff members who spend their mornings going through the letters to the editor sections of newspapers to see what issues their constituents care about. They know that your letter not only expresses your opinion but has the potential to impact the opinions of others.

Letters to the editor are crucial to the development of a grassroots movement. As the quote above shows, they are taken seriously by legislatures. In addition, they're something that anyone can do at any time. The guidelines below will give you some help with writing letters to the editors, but the most important thing to remember is: just write them. Write lots of them. Set a goal for yourself. Perhaps you'll set a goal to write one letter a week. Maybe two. Write to many different papers: local and national. Don't worry if you're not great at first. You'll improve over time. Also, read the letters to the editor section of the newspaper to which you're writing to get a sense of what type of letter they want. Many larger newspapers will also have guidelines. Check to see if there is a word limit or if the letter has to be exclusive to that paper. (For instance, letters to the *New York Times* cannot be more than 150 words long and must be sent only to that paper.)

Letters to the editor should be used throughout an advocacy campaign to increase pressure on a target or to thank him or her for his or her action. (Do not underestimate the importance of the second half of this. Remember—we have power because we can hurt or help. We need to take advantage of both sides of this power.) Make sure that if you get a letter to the editor published you fax a copy of it to the target's office along with a letter reminding him or her of what your ask is. By doing this, you will make sure s/he sees the letter and connects it with the organized group that has been (or will be) targeting him or her.

### when writing, remember your Cs...

**Current**—Responding to a recent article in the newspaper or to a very recent event is a great way to increase your odds of being published. Refer specifically to the article by using the name of the article and date, such as, "In response to your recent article on AIDS prevention programs in South Africa..."

If you want to target a certain newspaper, you can do a search on its website for recent articles related to the topic of interest. If you don't know a newspaper's website, you can find it listed at: <http://ajr.newslink.org/statnews.html>. It's worth the trouble to "hook" your letter to a recent news item or event, even if the connection you're making is something of a stretch.

**Clear and concise**—keep your letter short and to the point. Stick to one subject and check your grammar. After you have written your letter, read it out loud and listen to it. Have you made your point clear? Can you shorten your letter and still get your point across?

Most papers will not print letters that are more than 250 words, or three to four paragraphs, in length. The shorter the letter, the better chance it will be published. What is your letter's point? Does it have one clear ask and one clear target? Your letter is part of a broader campaign—what is the goal of that campaign and who is the target? For instance, "Representative Alba must vote to appropriate \$5.4

billion for AIDS, TB, and Malaria" is much clearer and much more politically effective than "Congress has to do more to fight AIDS."

**Controversial**—feel free to question or challenge what others have said or done, and even start your letter off with a catchy first sentence. However, be sure to avoid personal attacks. An argument based on merit rather than emotion tends to sway opinion.

**Contact** information—include your address, e-mail and a daytime and evening phone number. They won't print this information, but may use it to confirm that you indeed are the author of such a beautiful letter.

**Contagious**—maximize your efforts by sending your letter to many newspapers. Depending on the subject matter, it may be appropriate to send the letter to all the newspapers in your state, or to national newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. *If you do send your letter to national publications, though, wait to send it to local publications until you're sure the giants aren't going to print it (because these papers require that letters are exclusive to them).*

[ Adapted from Results USA, [www.resultsusa.org](http://www.resultsusa.org) ]

## writing an op-ed

For your school paper or your local paper you may have the opportunity to write an op-ed, which is, essentially, an opinions essay. It is, more or less, a long letter to the editor. (Op-ed, by the way, stands for "opposite the editorial.") An op-ed can be a great way to get into more detail about an issue or a senator or representative's background on the issue than you can in a letter to the editor.

Below are a couple of helpful ways to go about writing an op-ed. Ultimately, remember the topic and your ask (what you want). Be sure to include specific call to action (e.g. "Blinkertown residents must pressure Representative Alba to vote to appropriate \$5.4 billion to fight global AIDS") and remember that the more work you do, the more likely you are to get it published. For instance, if it's a local paper, you should call the editor of the newspaper the day after you send the Op-Ed to make sure they received it, to see if you can provide any more information or clarify anything, and to ask if they plan to publish it. Effective media (like effective advocacy) doesn't happen by accident. We have to work for it.

## structure of an op-ed

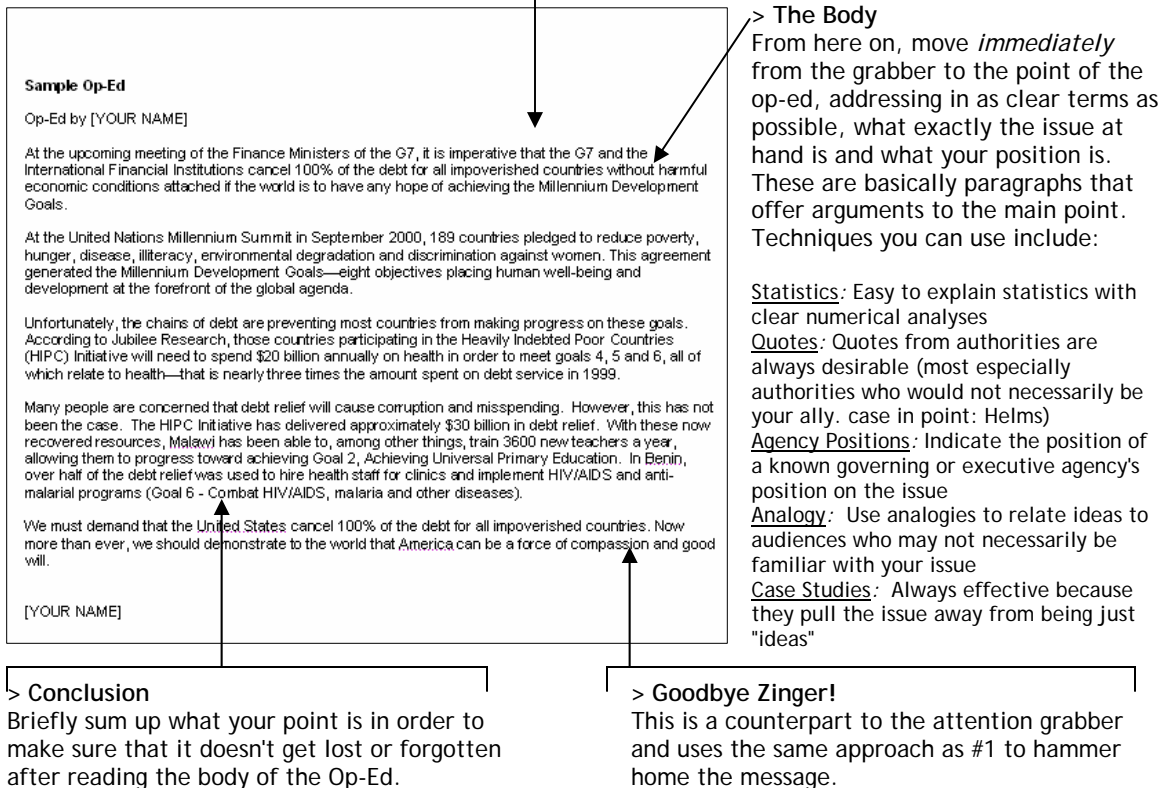
### > The Attention Grabber

An Op-Ed should always start with an effective grabber/attention getter. Three ways to achieve that are:

Humor: Using anecdotes, joke, or a funny euphemism. Remember to always relate it back to the issue you are discussing directly.

Talk About People: Personalizing or talking about a specific person helps the reader identify with the author or subject.

Keeping it current: Op-Eds are about "current" issues; highlight something specific that has happened very recently concerning the issue you are discussing.



## planning & submitting your op-ed...

### STRATEGY

1. Set the *goal* of the Op-Ed. What are you trying to achieve?
2. Define the *audience*. Are you trying to reach your neighbors, local policymakers, national opinion leaders, or all of these?
3. Identify the appropriate *newspaper*. Which local or national paper is most likely to reach your desired audience?
4. Determine the *best time for placement*. Is there a particular legislative hearing, legislative vote or home district work period that is happening that could highlight your issue? Is there a report being released that you want to draw attention to?
5. Identify an original *angle*. How can you draw attention to the issue or bring a new perspective? Your thoughts need to be original, creative, fresh and groundbreaking.

### CONTENT

1. Op-Eds are limited to 700-750 words (shorter is better) and should be typewritten and double-spaced.
2. Get straight to the subject. Make your position clear from the beginning. Begin with one or two sentences on the issue and how it affects the local community or specific individuals.
3. Keep your sentences short and don't try to address too many points in one article.
4. Avoid jargon or technical phrases.
5. Be sure that all names are correct and all quotations are accurate.
6. End your article with forceful conclusions or a "call to action."

### SUBMISSION

1. Submit your op-ed via email to larger newspapers or via fax to smaller papers. Call first to ask which they prefer.
2. Follow-up with a phone call to ensure receipt of the Op-Ed and to provide additional information that may be requested by the editor or newspaper policy.
3. Be sure to include your school (newspapers like Op-Eds from college students), a day/evening phone number, and your email address.



## letter-writing

Letters can show your representatives not only that you are informed about the issue you are lobbying for, but that there is an important constituency that cares and is eager to see politicians take on this issue. By organizing massive letter-writing campaigns at your school, you will both show the interest of your particular community in a certain issue, and prompt a certain problem to the forefront of public debate. Below, you can find sample letters written to different departments/representatives. Remember that your voice matters, and that it is your responsibility to let your representatives know you care about an issue enough to make your representatives take a stand on it.

### some tips for letter-writing...

**Sample Letter to US Treasury**

Treasury Secretary John Snow  
Undersecretary for International Affairs John Taylor  
U.S. Treasury Department  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220  
[VIA FACSIMILE 202-622-6415]

Dear Secretary Snow and Undersecretary Taylor,

I am writing to you today because I am concerned about the impact of international debt on countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and its affect on their abilities to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. I understand that you are considering calling on the international financial institutions including the IMF, World Bank, and regional development banks, to provide 100% debt cancellation for impoverished nations. I am writing because I am supportive of this plan, and I want to encourage US Treasury to commit to 100% cancellation at the upcoming G-7 Finance Ministers on February (INSERT DATE)!

I am concerned about the facts on debt. The facts are:

- ✓ In the midst of the AIDS pandemic, African countries are paying more on debt service than on health care for their people, even with limited and conditional debt relief. The average spending per person on debt service is \$14 per person while the average spending on health is less than \$5 per person.
- ✓ Debt service unduly burdens impoverished countries' economies. Debt service to creditors including the IMF and World Bank accounts for almost half of the Philippines' annual budget, double the amount the government spends on social services.
- ✓ Debt relief works. Uganda, the first country to receive debt relief used \$1.3 million of its debt savings specifically for their national HIV/AIDS plan, allowing them to come closer to achieving Goal 6 of the MDGs. This investment played a key role in the government's success in reducing HIV infection rates by 40%. Imagine what 100% cancellation would achieve!

I support 100% cancellation of multilateral debt (IMF, World Bank, regional development banks) for all impoverished nations (not just those countries in the current HIPC Initiative), without harmful economic policy conditions attached, and from the institutions' existing resources. I also support moving away from loans to grants for impoverished nations.

I urge you to take bold action to address the crises of poverty and AIDS by supporting 100% debt cancellation.

Sincerely,  
Your Name  
Your Address

> **Make sure your letters get to those who can take action on the problem:** when deciding who to write to, the easiest way to do it is to write to everyone. A second, more practical way of going about it is to make sure who has the power to make important decisions on the issue and write to them.

> **Show you are concerned and propose specific policies:** be clear and concise, and propose specific policies. Write a clear, introductory paragraph that explains what you want your representatives to do about the issue.

> **Show you are informed:** list key facts from reliable sources and show how your government's policies have either had an undesirable effect or have ignored an important issue, and should thus be modified.

> **Reinforcement of key ideas:** one last paragraph or two could serve to, again, summarize your message.

## call-in day

Having one day when many people call a representative or senator's office is a great way to get his or her attention. The people who answer the phone's in a senator or representative's office take notes on every call they get. If you get 15, 20, or 30 calls to the office in one day, it will be noticed.

### tips for organizing your very own call-in day

- You have a few options when doing a call-in day, but as a general rule of thumb, -you should have some call-center somewhere set-up. This could be a table in your student union building or on the quad. It could be at a bake sale where you try to sell giant brownies and cookies for \$1 billion and let people "buy" regular-sized cookies by making a call to the representative or senator's office. The most important thing is that you not simply rely on people to make calls from their room phones because very few will. (You still want to encourage folks to do this if they can't make it to your table, but you shouldn't rely on it.)
- If you go to a school where there is cell phone access, you will want to see if people will donate 15 minutes (or some other amount) of their cell phone minutes and have those phones available for people who stop by the table. People are also welcome to use their own phone as long as they make the call while they're standing there in front of you.
- You'll want to have a short, basic script with the phone number on it that you will give to people who are making the calls. (A sample script is in the appendix section). You should also have large posters and visuals and your table to get attention. You and the others at the table with you will want to be standing (rather than sitting) and holding the phones out to people as they walk by, asking them to call the target. If you've done enough advertising about it, people will have a basic idea of what you're asking them to do, but that doesn't mean they'll just stop at the table. You'll have to get their attention and ask them to make a call. If you know their name, use it.
- If you go to a school where there is not cell phone reception or if no one at your school has phones, you'll have to come up with other options. These can include: using calling cards on public, campus phones; setting up in a public, easily accessible office (maybe the chaplain's office will let you); and going door to door in dorms to ask people to call.
- If you're in high school and can't ask people to make phone calls during the day, you'll most likely want to do the call-in day immediately after school ends or, if you're on the West Coast, right before school in the morning. Maybe you can set up a table in front of the school to get people as they come and go.
- When you call in, call the DC office. Most of the people who call in should just leave a message with the person who answers the phone. However, the person who has been in touch with the target's staff in the past and one or two other people who feel comfortable doing so, should call in and ask specifically to talk to the staff member who works on HIV/AIDS so that you can go more in-depth with him/her about the demands and make sure s/he gets all of the messages that have been left with the receptionist.

## congressional lobbying

Lobbying is no doubt a powerful way to communicate your level of commitment to a certain issue, and particularly unique opportunity to talk to your representatives about what you want your government to do about a certain problem -more specifically, about *how* you want it done.

Below, you will find some tips on how to plan ahead for a district meeting. We have also included a sample letter you can use when you lobby your member of Congress on debt cancellation and fighting global AIDS.

### tips for planning a district meeting...

- Be courteous and patient when requesting a meeting with your member.
- Be on time and wear proper attire. Have the office phone number handy so if you are running late, you can call and let them know.
- Be prepared! Establish your agenda and divide up your main talking points beforehand.
- Be friendly. It is acceptable to talk about any personal connections you may have with the member, and give a brief overview of who you are and why you are there.
- It is a good idea to bring a written document with your more complex requests clearly delineated with you to your meeting. You should leave your written request with whomever you are meeting with.

Dear Representative [INSERT NAME]:

Thank you for meeting with us today on the very important issue of debt cancellation. The Finance Ministers of the G7 will be meeting February [INSERT DATE], 2005, in the United Kingdom to discuss a variety of issues, one of which will be 100% debt cancellation for some of the world's most indebted countries. It is imperative that the G7 and the International Financial Institutions cancel the debt for all impoverished countries without harmful economic conditions attached if the world is to have any hope of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, 189 countries pledged to reduce poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. This agreement generated the Millennium Development Goals—eight objectives placing human well-being and development at the forefront of the global agenda.

Unfortunately, the chains of debt are preventing most countries from making progress on these goals. According to Jubilee Research, those countries participating in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative will need to spend \$20 billion annually on health in order to meet goals 4, 5 and 6, all of which relate to health—that is nearly three times the amount spent on debt service in 1999.

Many people are concerned that debt relief will cause corruption and misspending. However, this has not been the case. The HIPC Initiative has delivered approximately \$30 billion in debt relief. With these now recovered resources, Malawi has been able to, among other things, train 3600 new teachers a year, allowing them to progress toward achieving Goal 2, Achieving Universal Primary Education. In Benin, over half of the debt relief was used to hire health staff for clinics and implement HIV/AIDS and anti-malarial programs (Goal 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases).

We are requesting that you write a formal letter to US Treasury Secretary John Snow telling him to implement 100% debt cancellation all impoverished countries without harmful economic conditions attached. This would double current relief so poor countries can spend more of their limited resources fighting AIDS and poverty. It would also start to de-link debt cancellation from structural adjustment policies.

With your help, we can achieve 100% debt relief for the most impoverished countries, allowing them to focus those resources on such vital areas as health and education to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Sincerely,  
[YOUR NAME]

> Description of the situation/problem and presentation of the proposal: in one paragraph, describe the issue you are concerned about and end it with a strong sentence that summarizes what you are lobbying for.

> Contrast binding agreements or commitments with reality: by showing what has been promised and how those promises were not kept, your proposal is bound to have a much stronger call to action.

> Immediate action: let your representative know what she/he can do right now and how that could help.

> Goodbye Zinger! Let your representative know how important and needed his/her action is. Summarize why she/he should help, in one sentence.

## rallies & demonstrations

A fun and potentially powerful part of an advocacy campaign is a rally or demonstration. In the majority of cases, these types of actions take more time to plan and organize than a letter writing campaign or call-in day do. You will need to do a lot of media work to make sure that your rally/demonstration is well-covered. Use the media guidelines above to figure out how to get media coverage of an event.

### questions to keep in mind

When doing a rally or demonstration there are a lot of questions that you want to answer before and as you start planning it.

- Who is the target? What is the ask?
- What is the story for the press?
- What will the headline be and is that clearly conveyed? Is your message clear and will it be clear when the media gets through with it?
- Are you creating a picture for the press? (A picture can be large numbers of people as in a rally or it can be some creative action as in a demonstration)
- Will the press want to come? How is this new and fresh? Will their viewers/readers care?
- How will the target know about the action? Will it just be through the media or will you do it in front of his/her office?
- Will people want to come to the rally or demonstration? Is the purpose getting people out to it or can it be successful if it's smaller?
- Will people who come be engaged in some way and will they know what to do? If it's a rally, will you have signs for them and well-thought-out chant? If it's a die-in, will they know when to die?
- Can you talk through the demonstration? From beginning to end, can you say what happens—action by action? If not, how will that be determined?
- Will you need a stage, a sound system, a permit? How will you get these? How will you pay for these?

### getting people to join you!

If you're doing a rally or any other event where turnout is important, you're going to have to put a significant amount of time and effort into this aspect of it. Some strategies for doing turnout for a rally (in addition to advertising for it, doing campus wide emailing, etc.):

- Set up a table in the student union building, the dining hall, the quad, or some other high traffic area and have people sign up.
- As people sign up, have them sign a commitment card to themselves that you will send to them a couple days before the rally.
- Get dorm captains for each dorm who go door-to-door to recruit for the rally and then are responsible for getting information to that dorm and making sure that the people from that dorm who sign up actually come out.
- The day before the rally, put signs on everyone's door who signed up reminding them that they signed up. (The dorm captains can do this if you have dorm captains)
- The night before the rally, put a quarter sheet of paper reminder under the door of everyone on campus.
- The morning of the rally (if people will be meeting in the dorm) have the dorm captains go door-to-door and get anyone who signed up but didn't show up in the meeting spot.
- The day of the rally (if the rally will be later in the day) have the dorm captains call everyone in their dorm who signed up and remind them about the rally.

### checklist for the day of the rally/demonstration

Here is a checklist of things to remember as rally/demonstration day approaches:

- No matter what angle a photo is taken from, it should have your message in it. This means having posters that are front and back and having the message behind the stage or the speaker
- Make sure you have handouts for people about your chapter and any sort of informational sheets you need/want
- Have a press sign-in station and make press kits available there (read in the media guide about how to do this)
- Be sure to have chants ready for a rally. You may want to have these written out on chant sheets.
- If you're having a rally, have lots of signs/posters for people to hold and ask them to bring their own
- Know what the message of the event is and make sure that this is the most prominent message (a banner will help with this)
- If you're going to have a large number of people there, make sign-in sheets or, better yet, sign-in cards. You can print cards on cardstock and they'll be better than sign-in sheets because you won't have this huge delay at a table while everyone waits to sign-in. You can have buckets going through the crowd for people to drop their cards in.
- If it's a rally, explain to people over the microphone why you're asking them to sign-in so that they'll be more likely to do.
- If it's a rally, consider making noise makers (pennies in a milk gallon jug work) and having people bring drums.

## guest speakers

Speakers can be a great way to get more than your regular chapter crowd to become interested in the issues you are concerned about. But guest speakers do more than just attract more people - they can provide general information for people who are first approaching a certain topic, yet a panel of experts can also discuss a particular issue in depth.

Here you can find multiple ways to identify speakers, get them to come to speak to your events, and establish important relations with your chapter and other like-minded organizations.

## identifying potential speakers

### START AT YOUR SCHOOL

- Go to your school's website and browse through the list of scholars at the different relevant departments (Politics/IR/Government).
- Go to your school's website and search for the key phrase "visiting scholars/speakers" and another key word that best represents the topic of the panel/lecture you are trying to organize (e.g. "child survival," or "HIV/AIDS").
- Check at your school's website if there is an 'Expert' or 'Media' database available by searching for the words 'experts' and 'media guide.'

### BROADEN YOUR SEARCH TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS IN YOUR AREA

- Google for your area code and the word 'ambassador' to see if any former/incumbent ambassadors are in the area.
- Look through the op-ed contributions of your local newspaper to see if any former government officials have written op-eds. Often retired policymakers submit pieces to the newspaper of the region where they retire. You can also Google the words 'former' and 'op-ed'.
- Go through the list of speakers who have recently visited nearby universities to discuss these issues. You can try all three of the options in the 'Start at your School' section above in other schools' websites.
- Think about the relevant centers/foundations/institutes in your area and invite their presidents/experts. Google for 'NGO', a key word/phrase such as 'poverty', and your area code, to see if there are any international NGOs in your area. If so, look for a bio of their leader to see if one of their staff might be relevant.

## some extra tips to organize a popular lecture/panel discussion...

>**Getting faculty recommendations:** Often, it is helpful to go to faculty office hours. Explain to the faculty member that you are organizing a lecture/panel discussion at your campus and ask them if they have ideas of qualified speakers. Then, when you contact those suggested speakers, make sure to mention the professor's name at the outset of your e-mail when contacting speakers (i.e. "Professor Schwartz recommended that I contact you...")

> **Invite your congressman/congresswoman and their relevant staff:** Send your invites in to the Congressperson's local office in your state/area, not to their Washington Office. You should always call in advance to get the name of the scheduler in your congressperson's office and address your invites to the scheduler. To find your representative, go to <http://www.house.gov/writerep>.

> **Invite local journalists/columnists:** Local newspaper columnists may also comment more generally on international affairs. Go to the opinion page archives of your local newspaper(s) and see if any of the newspaper's columnists have recently discussed issues relating to the topic of your lecture/panel. Once you have identified a journalist, find his/her contact details at <http://www.newspapersol.com/usa.html>.

## teach-ins

Many youth are not aware of the MDGs. You can change that by setting up a teach-in, where youth can come together and listen to an expert on the topic. This person can be a member of your organization, a professor, someone who has personally been involved with a campaign on one or more of the goals, or anyone else who you believe would be able to convey the message of just how important it is to encourage a global movement in support of these goals.

### tips on organizing a teach-in

- > **Reserve a space in advance.** There may be special procedures to follow, deadlines and forms to fill out, so never wait until the last minute.
- > **Make a checklist of essentials to take care of—** a reliable sound system and someone who knows how to use it should be on the list.
- > **Think broadly about possible speakers.** Some ideas:
  - Ask **professors** of political science, public policy, development and other international studies, government, or history who can give background on the millennium development goals, ways in which we can meet them by 2015, or on specific aspects of the MDGs, such as child survival, women's empowerment, or HIV/AIDS.
  - Invite local **journalists or newspaper editors** who have written op-eds/editorials on the millennium development goals, U.S. foreign aid, or other development issues.
  - Contact **local social justice/development organizations** to find specialists, who can speak on the realities of U.S. foreign aid, what it means to meet the Monterrey Consensus or the Millennium Development Goals, while also sharing their personal experiences on the field.
  - Co-sponsor or collaborate with **student organizations** on campus to make sure you are covering the MDGs as more than just a development or an aid issue. You might be able to find a student speaker on health, development, justice, peace, or U.S. foreign policy from personal experience.
  - Invite **local activists**, including those from Global Justice affiliates. Some community activists may also be able to speak on both the need and the urgency of foreign aid to lift entire countries out of their poverty traps. Activists are not only informed - they are mostly willing to go to your campus and motivate students.
- > **Publicize far and wide.** Use flyers, posters, table tents, leaflets, announcement bulletins, word of mouth, sidewalk chalk, plugs on campus radio, and other means to promote the event.
- > **Get help to cover your costs**, which may include speaker fees. Many colleges have funds reserved for invited speakers, for which registered groups are eligible to apply. Put in formal requests to departments: peace studies, international affairs, political science, religion, development, etc. Ask for donations from local businesses: paper, envelopes, pens, poster board, paint, photocopying services, etc. If you want to serve refreshments, many bagel shops and grocery stores will give you day-old baked goods for free.

### the multiple uses of a teach-in

- > **Give your audience an immediate opportunity to act.** In addition to a table with literature, have a letter-writing table set up with envelopes, paper, pens, addresses for your state representatives, and basic talking points on the millennium development goals. This ensures that your efforts go beyond education and carry over into immediate action. Point out the table several times during the teach-in.
- > **Use the opportunity to fundraise.** At the letter-writing table, have clearly labeled containers for donations, and ask people to give what they can to cover the cost of postage and supplies. Between speakers, announce that you are taking a collection and pass around a basket.
- > **Use the teach-in to build support for future actions.** Pass around a sign-up list for people who would like more information, want to be contacted to volunteer, or want to be notified of your group's activities. Have another one at your tables. Publicize your group's meeting times.
- > **Maximize the impact of the teach-in** by getting media coverage. This means on and off-campus media—this is the time to use (or make) contacts at the school paper and radio station. Getting off-campus media coverage for your event is easier than you think, and it will help promote your message as well as demonstrate the strength of the opposition to the war.

## movie screening

Movies are a great way to get students and the general public interested in the issues you are concerned about. They provide a great first approach to people who have never heard about a problem, and at the same time they show a clearer picture that is less likely to be ignored, the way statistics are.

You might want to choose the movie according to your audience. Sometimes, a great documentary, though interesting, will not get as many attendees as a more commercial movie. If you are trying to use the movie as a way to get people to join your club, you might want to try the latter first, and then use the former as an opening for the first official club/chapter meeting.

Movies are a great starting point for people who do not know the issues you are interested in as well as you do. They can shock, move, or call people to action. Make sure that your movie of choice is one that is mainly trying to call people to take action. Otherwise, interest in the cause may dwindle as time goes by.

Below, you can find some useful tips on how to go about planning for a movie screening on campus. Make sure you go through the necessary steps and plan ahead, so that the day of the movie you can worry about getting people interested in your cause - and not on whether you brought the right adaptor to the room or not.

### some tips to plan ahead for a popular movie screening

**>Work with student organizations on campus:** some campuses already have a regular monthly/weekly screening that is organized by a university department or by a student organization. Before you start planning your own screening, try to contact them first. They might know the procedures better than anyone, and they might even be willing to guide you through the planning process and co-sponsor the movie-screening with you. Whether you are going it alone or with other groups, make sure your screening is on the Student Body Government Calendar and that you start advertising it early on.

**>Book the room and the technology:** before deciding on the movie, talk to your campus facilities office and request a room-request form. Facilities might also be able to help you book the technology, though most schools have a separate office to do that. Try to find that office in your school's website and book the TV/DVD/VCR ahead.

**>Select the right movie:** while there might not be one 'right' movie, there is indeed a movie that is right or suitable for the message you want to convey. Try to find that one movie that makes a point that is similar to your organization's mission statement. Also, movies are not just for recruiting new members -they can indeed be used to keep people informed on a certain issue. Whatever the message, try to

find a movie your organization/club/chapter feels comfortable with, and that conveys the message as clearly as possible. Your professors are a great resource; talk to them for recommendations for suitable movies.

**>Take advantage of the movie screening:** first off, set up tables at the entrance of the room. You might want everyone who is interested enough to show up for the screening to also subscribe to your mailing list and stay up to date and informed about future movie screenings. The table can also have a brochure or a one-pager with a description of the problem you are concerned about. Those who were shocked or touched by what they saw might want to learn more about the issue. Last, you might want to turn your on-campus screening into a fundraiser, and either charge a cover fee or have a box for donations.

**>Invite a speaker afterwards and make it a forum:** by inviting a member of faculty to come after the movie is over, you can also have a brief student-faculty discussion that can make the screening more than just a cinema experience. Some members of faculty are very good at making students come away from movies with a conscientious interpretation. Go find them!

**>Never forget the indispensable:** free food and soft drinks are a must. Make sure you get an idea of how many students are attending the event by requesting that people RSVP in advance.

# where to go from here

USING THIS TOOLKIT



mdg student toolkit 05

## keeping the millennium promise

We put together this toolkit hoping it will provide you with the necessary know-how to get involved and organize students on your campus to make countries around the world keep their share of the millennium promise. Now it's your turn to act up and start getting organized. Where to begin?

Now that you are informed about the millennium development goals, and of the ways in which you can contribute to see them achieved, this is the perfect time to get together with other like-minded individuals on campus, and if you haven't already, set up a Global Justice chapter. Throughout this toolkit, we have suggested several ways in which you can organize your first event to discover who else on campus is interested in advocating for the MDGs. That said, feel free to be creative and design the recruiting event that you feel would best appeal the students at your school.

Setting up a chapter can be a lot of work, even with the guidelines in this toolkit. That is where we come in: feel free to contact us with questions on how you can get started—we are here to assist students, so don't hesitate to call. If you are interested in a particular issue of the millennium development goals that coincides with one of our student campaigns, better yet. National Coordinators of both the Student Global AIDS Campaign (SGAC) and of the Student Campaign for Child Survival (SCCS) can provide you with the experience and the advice you need to set up a campaign chapter.

However daunting the task of organizing students at your campus will be, we trust that you understand both your possibilities and your unique capabilities as a student. We are here to help and make your job a lot easier. Use the contact information below to learn more about global justice and about the various ways in which we can assist you set up your own chapter.

Looking forward to working together with you,

The Global Justice Team



Student Global AIDS Campaign  
<http://www.fightglobalaids.org>

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