

## Big Promises? How the G8 and YOU can make a big difference.

### Activity 3.1 The W8 shows the way to the G8

#### What you need:

Internet access and the facilities to display the stories of the eight 'W8' women featured at: [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get\\_involved/campaign/health\\_and\\_education/w8-extraordinary-women.html](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/health_and_education/w8-extraordinary-women.html)

#### Aims:

- To reinforce the understanding that women are most affected by the lack of health care and access to education – and that health and education for women has many wider benefits (e.g. for their families and communities).
- To inspire pupils with stories of how women in many of the world's poorer countries are acting to make a difference in their communities and putting pressure on governments to keep their promises.

#### What to do:

Show a selection of the slides featuring the W8 group of women. Explain that:

- This year, eight women from around the world will join together to form the W8. These extraordinary women have dedicated their lives to fighting for health and education in their own countries.
- The cost of doing nothing is huge and will affect women and children (especially girls) most of all:
  - Every three seconds a child dies from a preventable disease.
  - Every minute a woman dies in childbirth or pregnancy.
  - Around the world, 72 million children don't go to school. Most of those are girls.
- Each member of the W8 already leads national groups in their own countries, calling on governments to turn promises into deeds. They educate and inform about the basic right to health and education that we all deserve. They have achieved a lot - and they want to do more. But they cannot do it alone. They need our support to get world leaders and decision-makers to deliver on their promises.

You may need to paraphrase some of the information about the work of the W8 women. You might like to get pupils engaging with what they are doing more closely by asking them which stories are the most inspiring for them.

## Activity 3.2 Broken Promises

### Aim:

- To familiarise pupils with promises that governments have made about aid and their record in keeping them, and with the role that aid can play in development.

### You will need:

A copy of the true/ false statements below – on the board or on a handout for each pupil.

### What to do:

Ask pupils what aid is and what it is for. Establish that everyone knows that it is money that richer countries give to poorer ones to help their people. Note that this can be given by governments or by individuals through giving to charities such as Oxfam. Explain that while the money that people give to charities such as Oxfam can make a huge difference, governments have much more money to give and can make an even bigger difference if it is spent wisely. Emphasise that these activities are all about the aid that governments give – or don't give!

Ask the pupils to decide whether the following statements are **TRUE** or **FALSE**:

1. Aid helped to eradicate smallpox (a deadly infectious disease) from the world.
2. If it had not been for aid given by the USA after the Second World War, some countries in Europe would not enjoy their current standard of living.
3. In 1970, about 20 of the world's richest countries pledged at the United Nations to give 0.7 per cent of their national income in aid.
4. Nearly forty years later, in 2009, not one of the G8 countries has met this 0.7% target.
5. In 2007, rich countries spent three times more on bottled water (\$58 billion) than it did on aid to Africa (\$18 billion).
6. The UK spends six times more on the military than it does on aid.
7. Canadians spend 6 times more money on fast food than they do giving aid to Africa.
8. Americans spend twice as much on pet food than they do giving aid to Africa.
9. The world's richest countries spent **70** times more on keeping their banks in business than they did on aid in the last year.
10. Altogether, the G8 spent almost **10** times more on their military than they did on aid last year.

Tell pupils that **all** the statements are **TRUE**. Ask them whether they were surprised by any of them and why. Discuss any points arising from these true statements as a class.

Explain that:

- Oxfam believes that an increase in aid is vital to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- The people of Zambia (below – you might like to display this image) know the difference aid can make. In 2006 Zambia received a combination of aid and debt relief from rich countries. This freed up enough cash to enable the Zambian Government to start providing free health care to people in rural areas. It was a huge leap forwards. Four million people who were previously missing out now get free health care.
- The Zambian Government didn't receive this extra cash by accident. It happened because in 2005 people across the globe called on world leaders to Make Poverty History. As a direct result of public pressure, the G8 agreed to provide aid and debt relief for some of the world's poorest countries. Zambia was one of the countries that benefited.
- The G8 hasn't kept all its promises. At the G8 summit in Gleneagles in 2005, the G8 promised that aid would increase by \$50 billion by 2010, with half of this, \$25 billion going to Africa. Four years on, the G8 is far off track from meeting this promise, and the G8 leaders have not made it clear how they intend to put this right.
- In fact, the G8 countries are the least generous to the world's poor and give half as much of their income as the rest of the rich world. For rich countries outside the G8, the average level of development assistance is 0.54% of Gross National Income, but for the G8 the average is less than half of this at just 0.23%.



For alternative views on aid, pupils could do internet research. Suggested websites:  
www.dfid.gov.uk (UK Department for International Development), <http://news.bbc.co.uk>

## Activity 3.3: The Big Promise

### What you will need:

- MDG Goal 8 poster (available at: [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change\\_the\\_world\\_in\\_eight\\_steps/?37](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change_the_world_in_eight_steps/?37) - click Goal 8: Build a global partnership for development - poster)

### Aim:

To enable pupils to convey their messages to the G8 leaders.

### What to do:

Display the following image (available at [http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change\\_the\\_world\\_in\\_eight\\_steps/?37](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change_the_world_in_eight_steps/?37) - click Goal 8: Build a global partnership for development - poster)



Explain that:

- In 2008, the G8 met in Japan. This picture shows campaigners from Oxfam holding up placards at the meeting, saying what needs to change in order to make the world a fairer place. For example, rich countries need to give more aid, more help needs to be given to

people suffering from HIV and AIDS, and more people need access to basic healthcare and education. The richer countries are very powerful: their decisions affect the lives of many millions of people, not just those living in their own countries. This means that they have a huge responsibility towards the poor people of the world.

- Ordinary people in richer countries can help by making sure that their leaders know that they expect them to act to make the world fairer. At the 2008 summit in Japan, Oxfam and other organisations told the world's newspapers and TV stations that the food crisis, which is causing millions of people to go hungry, was unacceptable and unnecessary, and explained that it was partly caused by biofuels (corn and other crops grown to make petrol rather than as food).
- Demonstrating, campaigning and calling for change will help persuade powerful people that most of us want the world to be a better place for everyone.

Ask pupils what messages they would like to send to G8 leaders (or simply the UK government) about what they have learnt.

You might like to collate these and use a voting system to decide on an overall message from your class (or school) or you might like to facilitate each pupil in sending their own message.

If your pupils need support in coming up with suitable ideas, here are some suggestions from Oxfam that they might like to consider:

- A letter to the Prime Minister urging the UK to become the first G8 country to reach the 0.7% target for aid.
- A letter to the Prime Minister asking that the UK puts pressure on other G8 countries to increase their aid to poorer countries and to keep the promises made at the G8 summit in 2005 (the UK is currently closer than any other G8 country to meeting the ) 0.7% target, even if it still has a long way to go.
- A letter to your MP expressing your concern about the broken aid promises and asking her/him to ask the UK government to either (a) be the first to G8 country to reach the 0.7% aid target; or (b) put pressure on other G8 countries to keep their promises and increase their aid; or both! You can find out more about your MP at:  
<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

Of course, pupils might decide they want to do all of the above!

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## **The Big Promise!**

**You might like to draw pupils' attention to the Big Promise action on the Oxfam website – this is something that they might like to get involved in.**

**Please ensure that they understand the issues around sharing personal data on websites and Oxfam's commitment to protecting their confidentiality.**

[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get\\_involved/campaign/health\\_and\\_education/big\\_promise/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get_involved/campaign/health_and_education/big_promise/)

The idea is simple – pupils make and keep a promise (any promise) and show world leaders how it is done.

Pupils promises might be about action they are going to take on the issues they have learnt about (e.g. 'I promise to write to my MP about improving primary education for children in African countries') or might be about something they are going to do in school or at home.

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