



GLOBAL ACTION DAY FOR THE
ERADICATION
OF POVERTY

17TH OCTOBER 2012

*Poverty is not an accident.
Like slavery and apartheid it is man-made
and can be removed by the actions of human beings.*

Nelson Mandela

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1. Day for the Eradication of Poverty

1.1 Background Information

The observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty can be traced back to 17 October 1987. On that day, over a hundred thousand people gathered on the Human Rights and Liberties Plaza at the Trocadéro in Paris, where the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed in 1948 to honour the victims of extreme poverty, violence and hunger. The call for it was made by Joseph Wresinski (1917–1988), the founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, a nonprofit organisation which aims for the eradication of chronic poverty through a human-rights based approach.

The people who gathered on this day, proclaimed that poverty is a violation of human rights and affirmed the need to come together to ensure that these rights are respected. Their convictions are engraved in a commemorative stoned unveiled on this day and reads as follows:

“Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty.”

Only five years later, in 1992, the General Assembly of the United Nations declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and until today it is celebrated every year throughout the world. It is an opportunity to bring together all those who are dedicated to overcoming poverty and those who live with it on a daily basis.



1.2 Millennium Development Goals and the Eradication of Extreme Poverty

The Eradication of Extreme Poverty is part of the 1st goal of the [Millennium Development Goals](#)¹ (MDGs) which were created from the [Millennium Declaration](#)² in 2000. Broadly the MDGs include 8 goals with 21 targets and a series of measurable indicators for each target. They are set to expire in 2015 and efforts are underway to reflect on progress and design the next suite of goals. Also, as an outcome of the recent Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development there is a commitment to create [Sustainable Development Goals](#)³ (SDGs) which are likely to be combined with the post 2015 development agenda.

This process and the goals which are generated in the next 1-2 years will significantly influence the future global response to the numerous and combining environmental, social and economic crises. Including youth as part of this process is obviously an incredibly important element as it is us who will inherit outcomes of these decisions.

This Global Action Day is part of the Global Young Greens' efforts to raise awareness of the important issue of extreme poverty as we continue our efforts to improve the global response to such issues as part of the post 2015 development agenda.

Check out this [video](#)⁴ which explores recent claims made by the United Nations that extreme poverty has been halved; as you will find out this issue is still important and requires our efforts to raise awareness!



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

2 <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm>

3 <http://www.earthsummit2012.org/conference/themes/sdgoalsintro>

4 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL1QIEGCIw&feature=player_embedded

2. Global Action Day

2.1 What is a Global Action Day?

A Global Action Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of an important global issue such as the eradication of extreme poverty. The aim is to place the issue back on the political agenda and to effect change.

A Global Action Day is characterised by its three words.

“Global” – it is not limited to several regions of the world and its aim is to catch the attention of as many people as possible.

“Action” – particular promotion and activities encourage people to take their own initiative and get involved.

“Day” – the concentration on a certain period of time is essential to make the issue visible and to motivate a public response.

Some aims of actions are:

- To pressure your government to make meaningful progress towards eradicating poverty nationally and to advocate for strong action at the global level
- To create awareness on the impacts of poverty on youth and children
- To bring together different youth groups around a common cause
- To use media to raise the profile of the eradication of poverty



2.2 Promoting a Global Action Day

An action should take place at a central and busy place to reach as many people as possible. To mobilise many people to come and participate in your action, use as many information channels as possible and do it early enough: e-mails, Facebook, Twitter and websites. Remember to tell people personally and ask other organisations to promote your event.

Do not forget about public relations! Invite local media to come to your action. Decide beforehand which person of your group shall be responsible to speak with the media representatives and agree on the messages you want to convey. Write a press invitation letter about 2-3 days before and a press release on the day itself together with a picture of the action if possible.

You can find an example of a press release in this reader.

In many countries/cities you will need the official permit of the responsible department. In order to find out which one this is and what you will have to do, ask people from your organisation and make a phone call at the city's administration with sufficient time before your planned action (at least two weeks).



2.3 Types of Actions

Flash mob

A flash mob is a spontaneous action which involves many people in a public place. Search the internet for examples of flash mobs if you are unfamiliar with the concept. A flash mob is quick and spontaneous. Try to mobilise enough people from your local as well as neighboring branches of your organisation. Remember to take photos to circulate to the media afterwards.

Action or Protest

An action should be realised at a public square of your city where there are usually many people. Draw a noticeable banner with an eye-catching message, organise a megaphone in order to deliver speeches, get information material such as flyers and booklets and try to realise your action as visible as possible. Write a press release around two or three days before the action is meant to happen and send it to newspapers, television broadcasters and radio stations.

Demonstration, Manifestation or March

A demonstration, manifestation or march needs to be registered with the responsible authority. Think about a proper route as well as a fancy slogan and do not forget to draw banners. Moreover, you should organize a loudspeaker van or a boom box for ample music and megaphones for announcements. Besides, you need to designate and brief stewards.



Your demonstration, manifestation or march should be promulgated via social media and word-of-mouth advertising in order that many people participate. If you are unsure that you can organise many people to join your demonstration, consider organising an action instead as without many people a demonstration may not have a positive impact. Search online for examples if you are unsure.

3. Eradication of Poverty

3.1 Focus Climate Change

The youth of today will need to live with the impacts of human induced climate change; it is therefore our responsibility to raise our voice today to influence decision makers.

Climate change will also make problems of extreme poverty worse, as changing weather patterns alter food production and access to fresh water. This will lead to large scale people movement and will disproportionately impact on women and young people. It is our responsibility to foresee these challenges and to raise awareness around the interrelated nature of climate change and extreme poverty.

Action: Climate Change Film Festival

Documentaries, short films and movie clips on climate change and related issues will be screened. The film show will run for two hours and will be followed by discussion on the issues highlighted by the documentaries.



This can be achieved through a [World Cafe](#)⁵ format of group discussion to ensure there is significant involvement by the audience. More detailed information on how to run a World Cafe session can be found [here](#)⁶.

3.2 Focus Economy

The current global economic system is productive enough to supply the whole world's population with the goods and services everyone needs to survive and live with dignity. But despite the rapid economic growth in the last decades and the growing interconnectedness of economies, there is a huge gap between those profiting from the current model of globalisation and those who do not.

The distribution of wealth is extremely imbalanced as the richest 1% of adults in the world own 40% of the planet's wealth, while 50% of world's adults own just 1% of the wealth. The division line is not simply between Global North and South but also within the world's countries.

An economic model oriented towards global justice must be based on fair rules for trading regimes, a strict control of financial markets and the support of social security. Trade agreements must allow countries to use protectionist measures, which help to reduce dependency and poverty. Negotiations must be transparent and include a comprehensive evaluation of how these agreements will affect workers, farmers and the poorest people.



5 <http://www.theworldcafe.com/index.html>

6 <http://www.theworldcafe.com/pdfs/cafetogo.pdf>

Action: The Global Justice Game

Where: public space, highly frequented streets in the city

Requires: a big drawn map of the world on the ground (chalk), some prepared numbers and people to participate

How: One speaker announces a category like "World Population", "Possession of Global Wealth", or "Global Income". The participants have to distribute themselves on the continents of the globe in the proportion they think is correctly mirroring the conditions.

It is also possible to use objects like big chess figures or cubes or anything else (if you take ten of those it is easier to calculate the corresponding number). In this case people have to decide commonly by discussion how many they place on the continents. The speaker reveals the true numbers and rearranges the participants respectively the objects accordingly.

World Population: Europe 11% | North-America 7.8% | South and Central-America 5.7% | Africa 15% | Asia 60% | Australia/Ocenia 0.5%

Income: Europe 35% | North-America 31% | South and Central-America 5.2% | Africa 1.9% | Asia 25% | Australia/Ocenia 1.8%

CO2 Emissions: Europe 21% | North-America 22% | South and Central-America 5% | Africa 3% | Asia 48% | Australia/Ocenia 1%

Feel free to think of more categories!



Action: Banks Kill!

Where: public place, in front of a bank, credit institute

Requires: probably the official registration of a public action as well as good speeches, taglines, songs and transparents and flyers to inform people on the streets, some tool to give the signal (e.g. siren of a megaphone)

How: Many people should gather in front of a bank. When the signal sounds, everyone falls to the ground and dies, while shouting something like "banks kill". Someone should distribute flyers and make a little speech. You can repeat this several times.

[Here](#)⁷ you can read an example of a press release about this type of action that was realized by the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG) in May 2012.

3.3 Focus Education

It is widely agreed that the relationship between poverty and education operates in two directions: poor people are often unable to obtain access to an adequate education, and without an adequate education people are often constrained to a life of poverty (Servaas van der Berg)

In order to address the challenges posed by unequal access to education as a result of poverty, the right to education must be implemented as a universal right. Governments must support its citizens through primary education and on to higher levels of learning.



⁷ <http://www.fyeg.org/main/index.php/news/press-releases/358-when-finance-becomes-fatal>

An educated society also pays regard to informal education. It also allows people to be alive to their rights and aware of their circumstances. It has been concluded through research for example that education impacts positively upon health and other social economic aspects.

Action: Dialogue Session

Organise a dialogue session with groups of around 5. This can be achieved through a [World Cafe](#)⁸ format of group discussion to ensure there is significant involvement by the audience. More detailed information on how to run a World Cafe session can be found [here](#)⁹.

Focus the discussions on specific questions such as:

- What role has education played in your life so far?
- How can we work with partners to improve access to education for young people?
- What are other forms of educational experience we can organise for those who do not have access to formal programs?

The people should be encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences through collaborative and participatory methodologies whereas the educator performs work as a facilitator.



8 <http://www.theworldcafe.com/index.html>

9 <http://www.theworldcafe.com/pdfs/cafetogo.pdf>

3.4 Focus Gender

The majority of the global population, that falls under the category of being “extremely impoverished”, are women. They have limited access to productive resources like education, land, credits or modern technology. Two thirds of all the illiterate people in the world are also women.

As well, approximately $\frac{2}{3}$ of unpaid work is done by women, which results in an extremely unequal distribution of income. Women receive only 10% of the global income and own only 1% of global wealth. This means that women have fewer possibilities than men to improve their lives economically by their own efforts.

Gender Equality is not only one of the Millennium Goals next to Eradication of extreme poverty, but is neatly linked to its realisation. In order to overcome these causes of gender related poverty, we must strive for a society, which sets an end to the hierarchical relation of women and men.

Therefore it is important that we acknowledge gender and the disproportionate impact extreme poverty has on women while we carry out this Global Day of Action.

Action: 10%–Income Cookies

Where: public space, highly frequented streets in the city

Requires: cookies, which symbolise that women receive only 10% of global income, flyers to explain the problem more in detail and people to distribute them

How: Bake cookies in a circular shape and cut them into ten pieces each. Write “10%” with some cake glaze, food coloring or marmelade on it.



4. Public Relations

It is incredibly important to promote your action. This section provides some ideas and assistance to help you do so! You should spend around half your time promoting your event.

4.1 Press Release

You can use the following example of a press release in order to promote your action to the media. In order to adapt the text to your needs, you can modify the given example by integrating quotations of your organizations' spokespersons and adding information about where and when your action will be realised and under what motto it will take place. If you plan to invite journalists to your action, do not forget to agree in advance upon who from your group will talk to the media and what matter and objective you exactly want to convey.

Example Press Release¹⁰

Date:	You should send your press release to the media by no later than 24 hours before your action is meant to happen.
Organization:	Do not forget to mention the name of your organization.
Title:	"International Day for the Eradication of Poverty"
Subtitle:	"Millennium Goal of reducing poverty still far ahead"
Alternative:	"Economic crises must not be an excuse to let poverty reduction fall behind"



¹⁰ You can download a text document including a modifiable version of this press release under <http://www.globalyounggreens.org/wordpress/?p=3032>

On the occasion of this year's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, the *<insert your organisation>* call on governments, policy makers and civil society world wide, to step up our efforts in the struggle for eradicating poverty and creating equality around the globe.

Almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day. More than 80 percent of the world's population lives in countries where income differentials are widening. According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty.

In response to this drastic situation today we are *<insert some information about your action, describe what is happening or happened and how it is raising awareness about the theme your action is linked to - climate change, education, economics or gender>*.

All around the world, organisations which are part of the Global Young Greens network which are steered by the vision of a poverty free society are holding various actions to mark this day. These actions revolve around four key themes that have been identified to be closely related to poverty and the alleviation of poverty. Climate change, economy, education and gender are the four themes we highlight through the actions this year.

ENDS.

Contact details: Do not forget to indicate the name, mobile number and email address of a person responsible. This person should be well-informed and easy-to-reach.



4.2 Website and Blog

Announce your action on your website and use the logo of the GYG Global Action Day in order to link to the GYG website where people can download the GYG Global Action Reader and other material:

<http://www.globalyounggreens.org/wordpress/?p=3032>

Put a small series of pictures accompanied by a short text online afterwards and do not forget to send your pictures, video clips and short texts also to us (see Support and Contact details below), in order that we can publish them on our website:

<http://www.globalyounggreens.org>

4.3 Social Media

Make sure you publicise your event on social media to raise awareness about the issue and to invite people to attend. You can easily create an event on Facebook or advertise the action via Twitter in order to invite as many people as possible.

Moreover, you can follow the Global Young Greens on Facebook and Twitter in order to promote your action on a bigger platform. More than 2,400 people like us on Facebook and more than 340 people follow us on Twitter. Hopefully we all increase our followers on social media after this Global Action Day!

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Global-Young-Greens/130257840338563>

Twitter:

https://twitter.com/GYG_YoungGreens



4.4 More Information and Material

More information about the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty can be found on the following websites:

<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/poverty/>

<http://www.un.org/events/poverty/2006/index.html>

<http://social.un.org/index/Poverty/InternationalDayfortheEradicationofPoverty.aspx>

Moreover, the Green European Foundation's campaign handbook, an online guide to successful political campaigning, can help you planning and realising your own campaigns and actions on the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and beyond:

<http://campaignhandbook.gef.eu/>

5. Support and Contact Details

In case you need support in order to realize your own actions or you want your action to be promoted on the website of the Global Young Greens, please get in touch with Sarah Benke via sarahb@globalyounggreens.org.



Imprint



Publisher

Global Young Greens
c/o Wiertzstraat 31
B-11050 Brussels
Belgium
www.globalyounggreens.org
info@globalglobalyounggreens.org

Editorial Team

Marcus Aghte
Sarah Benke
Pedro Cunha
Alex Surace
Rajan Thapa
Norma Tiedemann
Rose Wachuka

Editor

Alex Surace

Layout

Sarah Benke

Graphic

Arno Bauer (Büro Alerta!)

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Berlin, Sydney 2012

