

GETTING RICHER AT THE EXPENSE OF  
**PEOPLE** AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
MAKES EVERYONE POORER  
WE CAN CHOOSE TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY

**WE CAN RECLAIM THE FUTURE!**

WE CAN CHOOSE TO LIVE IN A WAY THAT CREATES  
A BETTER WORLD FOR EVERYONE  
WHERE HUMAN DIGNITY  
AND THE **ENVIRONMENT** ARE RESPECTED

GOD CALLS US TO **LIVE SIMPLY**

**LIVE SUSTAINABLY**

AND LIVE IN SOLIDARITY  
WITH PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

**National Youth Sunday 23rd November 2008**

**Session 2**

**Reclaim the Future! Prayer Stations**



live simply

# WE CAN RECLAIM THE FUTURE!



National Youth Sunday 2008

## Session 2: Reclaim the Future! Prayer Stations

- Introduction** This year's National Youth Sunday (NYS08) takes place on the Feast of Christ the King (Sunday 23rd November.) Young people have an important role to play in the life of the Church: NYS08 celebrates this role by inviting them to join together in school and parish communities to reflect, pray, think and recreate. NYS08 draws on the theme of living sustainably, a crucial part of the *livesimply* key message. **Reclaim the Future!** reminds us that we have a great opportunity to work together as a Christian community, and to play our part in thinking about what's really important to us, respecting the environment, and striving to end poverty.
- About this session** This resource contains six **Reclaim the Future!** (RtF!) prayer stations, based on the Gospel reading for the Feast of Christ the King. Jesus' familiar words about the Last Judgement (Matthew 25:31-46) divides people up into sheep or goats. The sheep are the good guys – those who have looked out for Jesus and shown care and compassion by their actions for people in need. Jesus tells us that they will be rewarded in heaven. But the goats are those who have thought only of themselves. Their decision not to help the poor and vulnerable shows that they have no love for God – and so they are destined to a future of misery.
- The Gospel features in this year's Eucharistic celebration of Christ the King – you can find further ideas and resources for Mass on the RtF! website. These prayer stations can help young people to reflect on God's call to live sustainably whether you're celebrating Mass for NYS08 or not. The prayer stations will help to introduce and prepare for such a celebration, but they also stand alone in their own right.
- How they work** We've split the Gospel reading into the six main points of action mentioned by Jesus and each forms a prayer station which invites participants to make some sort of response or action. The stations should be set up in advance, placed in various locations, with the necessary equipment and with an explanatory sheet (available to download from the website.) You can begin the session by reading the Gospel passage, briefly explaining the six stations (if necessary) and then simply invite the group to visit each station as they wish. The stations can be visited in any order and for any length of time.
- Once everyone has visited the six stations, you may wish to conclude by asking the group to share their thoughts and opinions, and perhaps see what responses have been made. You can then conclude with a prayer.
- Scripture** Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate one from

another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me."

Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."

Next he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me." Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" Then he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it for me." And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.

## Station 1

### I was hungry and you gave me food

#### You will need

'Value' items of food

The information and quotes from **Prayer Station Food Labels** – printed, cut out and attached to the food items

Table set for dinner (with empty plates, glasses, cutlery etc.) and a tablecloth (use paper cloths)

Pencils or pens

This station takes the theme of poverty, responding partly to the current global rise in food prices and the subsequent challenge faced by many people who already live in poverty. Oxfam reported that some of the world's poorest communities were already paying 80% of their income on food and asked the question 'What happens when food prices double?'

The 'credit crunch' is being felt by many people in the UK, too. So this visual prayer station provides some information and quotes (many taken from GCAP – Global Call to Action against Poverty) attached to value items of food from local supermarkets. The idea is simply to present the information. A table is also set up for dinnertime – but with empty plates

# WE CAN RECLAIM THE FUTURE!



and glasses. Participants are invited to write prayers and thoughts for the poor on the tablecloth.

## Station 2 I was thirsty and you gave me drink

You will need  
A bamboo tree *or* canes  
Strips of coloured paper or card  
String  
Pens

The leaders of the world's eight richest countries (the G8) met in Japan in July 2008 where poverty was again an important part of the agenda. At the time of the meetings the Japanese Tanabata festival was taking place, a time where people tie their written wishes to bamboo trees.

This Japanese festival inspires this second station, where we reflect the thirst for justice. Participants are encouraged to think about how God's world could and should be and to think about their wishes for the global community. They are invited to form a 'wish' tree, writing down their prayers and wishes on coloured strips of card and attaching them to the bamboo tree. If you can't get hold of a bamboo tree, use a number of canes instead, placing them in a large pot.

## Station 3 I was a stranger and you made me welcome

You will need  
Images of people from different cultures from newspapers, magazines or from the book *Portraits* by Steve McCurry (Phaidon Press, 1999.)  
*Optional* Push lights arranged in circles on the floor  
*or* Votive candles placed in sand trays

This prayer station reminds us that we are a global community and that we're all part of God's creation. One of the challenges of **Reclaim the Future!** is to accept that our actions here and now affect people in different places – people that we do not know personally, yet are connected to as part of God's family.

Place images of people from different cultures, places and traditions, randomly across the worship space. Participants are invited to choose one or more of the images, and simply to think about the person, how they are treated, their feelings and concerns. They can spend time praying for them too. If you wish, set up circles of light using small push lights where people can spend some time in quiet prayer and reflection, or provide votive candles – ensuring that they are placed somewhere safe.

## Station 4 I was naked and you clothed me

You will need

**Prayer Station How Much Do You Wear Cards** (enough for each participant) *or* slips of paper  
A map of the world  
Coloured dot stickers

Living sustainability includes making positive choices as consumers. The footwear and clothing industry have been held very much in the spotlight as unfair practices and the use of sweatshops have been exposed in the media. This station invites participants to think about where their clothing comes from, its value and whether that represents a fair deal for the people involved in its manufacture.

Provide enough 'How much do you wear?' slips for each young person. Each person is asked to add up the values of the clothes they are wearing – including things like jewellery if they wish – and to put the total on the slip of paper. They can also look at their clothes labels to see where their clothes have been made. Participants are asked to look for the appropriate country on the map and to place a coloured dot where their clothes have been made.

## Station 5 I was sick and you visited me

You will need

Plasters  
Pens  
Large sheet of paper or card

Jesus' ministry to the sick is illustrated many times over in the Gospel healing miracles. In this station, we think about the connection between poverty and sickness by inviting young people to pray for the sick. Of course, sickness occurs everywhere in the world – and young people may wish to use this station to pray for family members or friends who are sick as well.

Place a large sheet of card in the worship space and provide plasters. The plasters represent our need for healing and care. Participants are invited to write their prayers for the sick on the plasters and to place them on the sheet of card. OHP pens or permanent markers work well for this.

To help make the connection between poverty and sickness, you may wish to display the following statistics on the sheet of card:

- HIV claims more than 5,700 lives daily – that's five people, every minute of every day.
- An estimated 150,000 people die annually from diseases that the changing climate has encouraged to grow.

# WE CAN RECLAIM THE FUTURE!



- Half the world – nearly three billion people – live on less than \$2 a day
- Hunger and malnutrition are the number one risk to global health, killing more people than AIDS, malaria and TB put together.
- A child dies every five seconds because she or he is hungry
- Every year, 17 million children are born undernourished because their mothers don't have enough to eat

## Station 6

### I was in prison and you came to see me

You will need

Copies of the **Prayer Station Millennium Development Goal Cards**  
Pieces of paper or card  
Glue or tape  
Pens

This prayer station expands the idea given by Jesus in the Gospel to speak about the feeling of imprisonment felt by people who live in poverty. The 'cycle of poverty' suggests that it will be difficult – if not impossible – to break the chains of poverty unless radical change and action takes place in the world. The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals work towards this radical change. The eight goals, agreed in September 2000, aim to address the causes of extreme poverty by 2015. Though some progress has been made already, most people would recognise that we still have a long way to go before we reach the targets set.

In this station, participants are asked to focus on one of the eight goals, choosing to find out a little more about it and to pray about the issues involved. They are then asked to write a prayer and message on a slip of paper. The different slips of paper will then be joined together to form a prayer chain – symbolising the imprisonment felt by those living in poverty.

We've provided MDG cards for use in this station – but you can, of course, collate your own information.

Goal 1	Eliminate extreme hunger and poverty
Goal 2	All children to get at least a primary school education
Goal 3	Promote gender equality and empower women
Goal 4	Reduce the number of child deaths
Goal 5	Improve maternal health
Goal 6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
Goal 7	Improve the environment
Goal 8	Develop a global partnership for development

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These prayer stations are based  
on Jesus' words  
in the Last Judgement  
(Matthew 25:31-46)

In this story,  
he tells us that people  
will be judged  
at the end of time,  
according to the way they have treated  
others.

We're challenged to think  
about how we care for the hungry,  
the thirsty, the stranger, the sick,  
the poor and the imprisoned.

Jesus promises that those who treat  
others well will be rewarded with eternal  
life in heaven.  
But it's a different story for those who are  
selfish and without care...

Take a moment to visit each station  
- you'll find instructions at each one.

## WE CAN RECLAIM THE FUTURE!

1

# “I was hungry and you gave me food...”

Some of the world’s poorest people  
have to spend 80%  
of their money on food.  
Imagine, then,  
what happens when  
food prices double.

The ‘credit crunch’  
that we’re experiencing here in the UK  
is even worse in other parts of the world.

For some families, it really is a matter  
of life or death.

Take a look at some of their words here.

God tells us  
to help the poor.

So, if you feel inspired,  
add your prayer for the poor  
to the table cloth.

Food prices  
have reached  
record levels.  
At the current rate,  
600 million people  
will be hungry by 2020.

**Poor people  
in developing  
countries  
spend between  
50-80%  
of their income  
on food**

**Wheat  
prices  
are up 120%**

Rice prices  
have risen  
by 75%

Climate change,  
high oil prices,  
increased demand  
from China and India,  
population growth  
and the growing pressure  
for biofuels  
are just some of the reasons  
for soaring food prices.

Other reasons include  
underinvestment  
in agriculture,  
the dominance  
of big companies,  
and the mismanagement  
of agriculture  
and food policy.

**“...Between now and September 90% of people in Sierra Leone will not afford a bag of rice...”**

**Sierra Leone foreign minister**

**“In the last two month two heads of families who could not feed their family members committed suicide. Afghanistan faces widespread poverty due to rapid inflation in food prices.”**

**Raz Mohammad Dalili**

**“...in times of illness the family go to bed on an empty stomach... since the past seven years they have not received the government food rations... so where will we get the food?”**

**Kaushalya from India**

**“I was just watching television and saw the news about human tragedy. A mother kills her children then herself because they can't afford the food for her family.”**

**Ms. Ijah from Indonesia**

**“We are organizer villagers who have no food, no education, no proper health services, to improve their living conditions.”**

**Manju from India**

**“Everyday, we have to line up at shops selling subsidized rice because we cannot afford commercial rice.**

**Rosita Diaz from the Philippines**

“We are eating less and less. We can't afford the rice sold in the market so have to go to the government-subsidized outlets. If the prices increase again, we will not be able to buy fish to go with rice. As it is, we cannot afford vegetables. The price of vegetables has gone up too.”

Dory Sacaguing from Philippines.

“This situation is really hard on us. I have many grandchildren and we do not have enough income to support them all. We don't need a rise in food prices. Our life is miserable enough.”

Susana Almodebar from the Philippines

“School is opening soon. Our problem is we cannot afford to give our children lunch money anymore. How can we sustain our family when we cannot even afford the most basic need, which is food?”

Anita Bergonia from the Philippines

“Since the food prices increased, the number of women coming here for handouts has increased from 50 to 65 in just a month...”

Señora Licha from El Salvador

“The price of every staple food item has gone so high... Gas, water, electricity are also so high... The price of transportation has gone 25% higher and there are threats that it will double soon.”

Sisters Ana and Antonia from El Salvador

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2

**“...I was thirsty  
and you gave me drink...”**

In July, leaders from the world's richest countries met in Japan for the latest G8 summit.

These people have great power and responsibility. They have the opportunity to do something active to end world poverty.

In Japan, there's a festival called Tanabata where people write their wishes on coloured pieces of paper and tie them to bamboo trees.

Write down your wishes for the world - how would you like the world to be?  
Are you thirsty for justice?

Tie your wishes to the tree.  
And ask that God will hear your prayers.

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3

**“...I was a stranger and  
you made me welcome...”**

A stranger is just a friend  
you haven't yet made...

It's the sort of attitude God asks us to have  
for our sisters and brothers  
throughout the world -  
we're called to care for others,  
especially those living in poverty.

In this prayer station, you're invited to take  
a look at people from different cultures and  
nations.

You don't know them.  
But they are a part of your family -  
God's family.

So think about their lives.  
Pray for them.  
Ask God to help them,  
whatever their needs might be.

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4

“...I was naked and  
you gave me clothes...”

Living sustainably includes thinking about the  
clothes on your back...

Where do your clothes come from?

How much are they worth?

Who made them?

Do you think these people were treated fairly  
and paid a good wage?

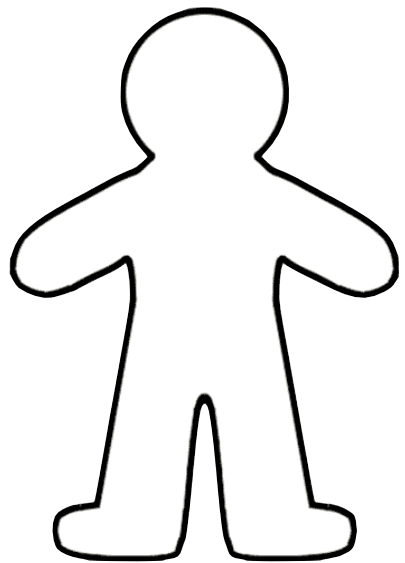
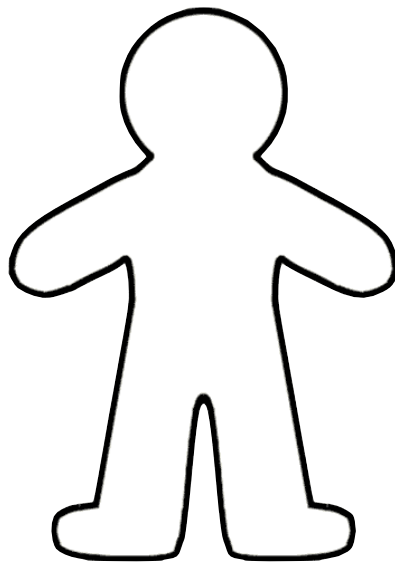
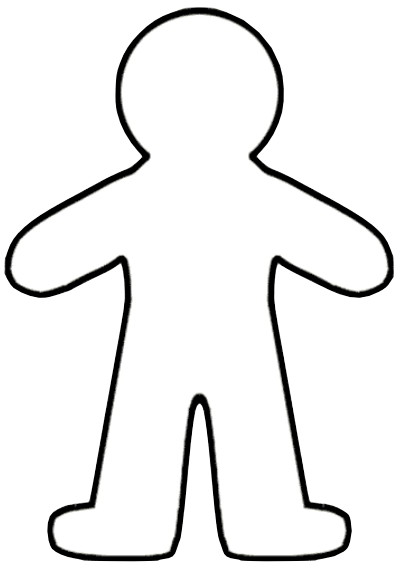
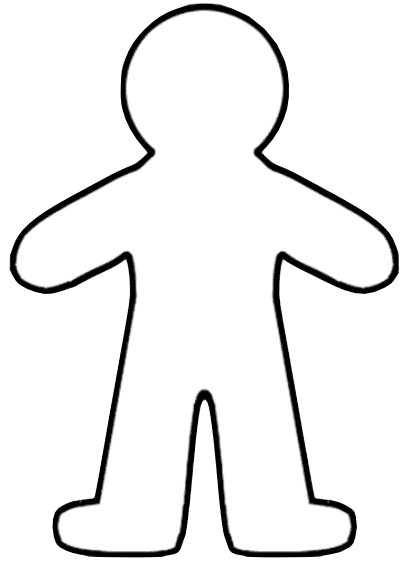
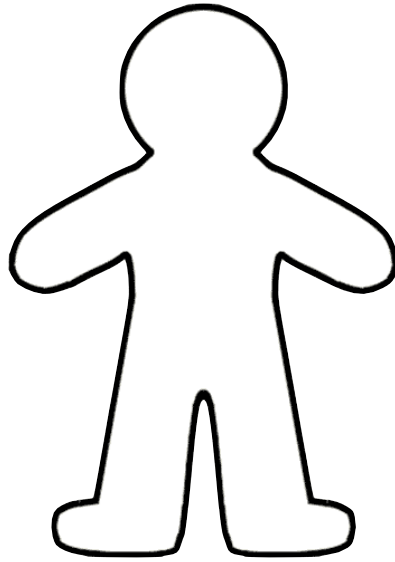
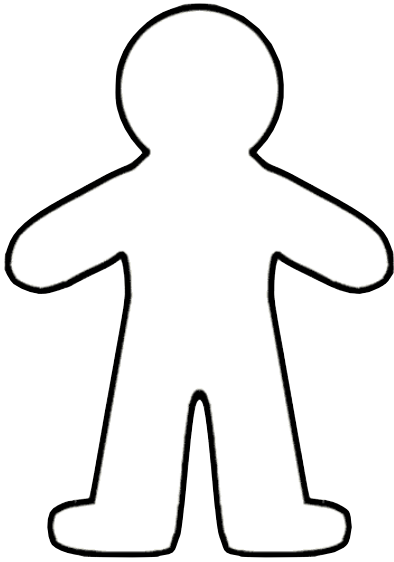
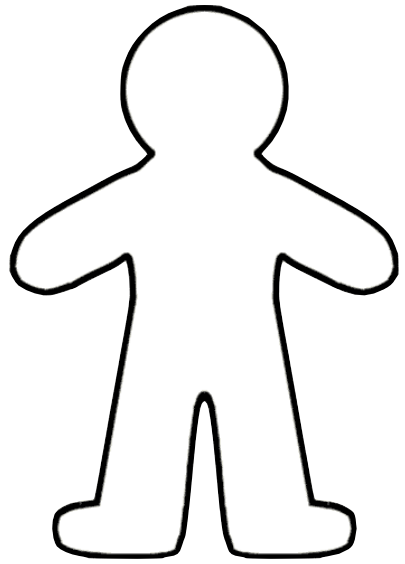
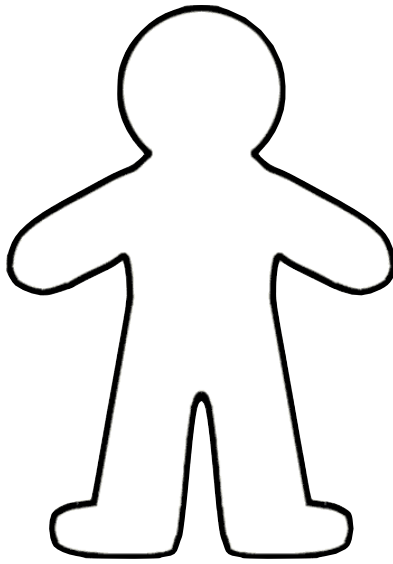
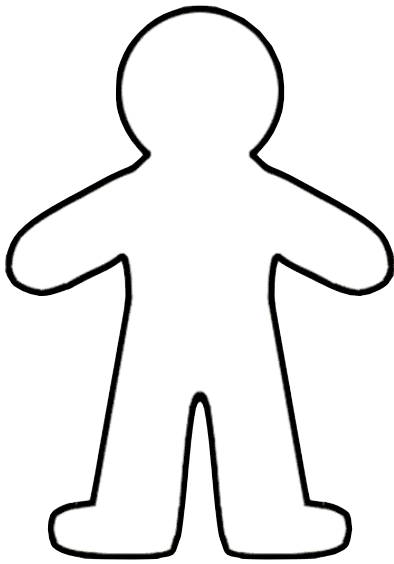
The sad truth is that the clothing industry is well  
known for exploiting its workers.

Those cheap clothes we buy -  
there's a reason why they are so cheap.

At this station, add up the value  
of what you're wearing -  
you might be surprised by  
how much you are worth!

Then look at your labels -  
find out where your clothes were made  
and mark it on the map with a sticker.

Is what you wear fair?  
Or would you be better off naked?  
Pray for those who work in unfair conditions.



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5

“...I was sick and  
you visited me...”

Jesus shows lots of examples  
where he heals the sick and  
helps them to feel supported and loved.

Illness is a huge problem  
for people living in poverty.

HIV, for example,  
claims more than 5700 lives each day.  
Over a million people die from malaria  
each year - yet the disease is preventable.

But in poor countries, access to good  
healthcare and clean water stop people  
from getting the help they need.

Here, you're invited to pray for the sick  
(you can, of course,  
include people you know).

If you wish,  
write a prayer on the plasters  
and add it to the card.

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6

“...I was in prison and you came to see me...”

Millions of people are imprisoned:  
trapped in a cycle of poverty.

But there is something we can do  
to release people and to bring them  
the freedom we enjoy.

In 2000, the United Nations set out eight  
Millennium Development Goals,  
aiming to do something positive in the aim  
to make poverty history.


Here, you're asked to choose  
one of the goals to think and pray about.

Use a slip of paper to add your  
thoughts and prayers to a chain -  
symbolising the imprisonment felt  
by people living in poverty.

**Goal 1**

### Eliminate extreme hunger and poverty

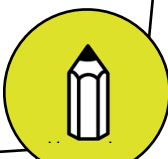
About a fifth of the world's population live on less than \$1 a day. The aim is to halve this number by 2015.



**Goal 2**

### All children to get at least a primary school education


About 114 million children in the world aren't able to attend school. By 2015, the aim is to allow all children - boys and girls - to go to primary school.



**Goal 3**

### Promote gender equality and empower women


This is a big issue when it comes to education. In some parts of the world fewer than 8 girls go to school for every 10 boys. The aim is for equality in primary and secondary levels by 2015



**Goal 4**

### Reduce the number of child deaths

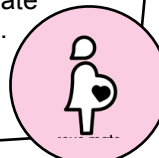
Nearly 11 million children under the age of 5 still die each year as a result of poverty. The aim of this goal is to reduce this death rate by two thirds by 2015.



**Goal 5**

### Improve maternal health


Half a million women die in pregnancy or childbirth each year. The aim of this goal is to reduce this death rate by two thirds by 2015.



**Goal 6**

### Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases


30 million people are living with HIV. A million people die from malaria each year - despite the fact that this disease is preventable. The aim of the goal is to stop and reverse the spread of these diseases.



**Goal 7**

### Improve the environment

This is a big goal! A billion people still don't have access to clean water and hundreds of millions still live in slums. Amongst the aims of this goal are to help countries work together to create sustainable policies, to halve the number of people without access to clean water and sanitation.



**Goal 8**

### Develop a global partnership for development

The eighth goal asks the world to work together to put an end to unfair trade rules, and to put an end to the debt owed by some of the world's poorest countries. There are many aims - including providing adequate medical care and aid for the world's poorest nations.

