

This declaration, made by the 80 participants in the International Young Professionals Summit 2008, and on behalf of the International Young Professionals Foundation, is our public statement to the world on our commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and our call for you to join us.

We recognise that young professionals are not engaging effectively or sufficiently in the global and local work towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As a network, we commit to rectifying this situation through engaging businesses and organisations, engaging each other and holding governments accountable to their actions.

### **The Need: Our Future at Risk**

Right now, we face the imminent risk of missing a momentous opportunity to create a better future for the planet and its inhabitants. Young professionals must be engaged to secure a better world for all.

The MDGs, a transformative set of goals agreed to by heads of state in 2000 and to be achieved by 2015, have put out a rallying call to governments, business and civil society to tackle poverty, injustice and environmental devastation and usher in a new world at the dawn of the 21st century.

The MDGs have proved very powerful in the last eight years. They have given hope to billions in need. They have fuelled courage amongst development workers, social entrepreneurs, and activists. They have mobilised action and investment by business and government; forged partnerships; given rise to new collaborative projects. They have set roadmaps and targets, and brought together the knowledge that we need on how to achieve them.

Despite this, and because of many factors, not least of which is a lack of political will from the governments of rich nations to deliver on their commitments, the targets set out in the MDGs are highly likely to be missed.

Failure to meet the goals on a large scale will be a tragedy and keep billions in poverty and put our ecosystems at risk. It will also deny our global community the opportunity to move to a more just, peaceful and sustainable world - something that daily events show us we desperately need.

**In the pursuit of the MDGs thus far, we believe that the intellectual, financial and political capital of young professionals has been underutilised.**

Young professionals are educated, employed and connected locally and globally through information and communication technologies and their social and professional networks.

Many young professionals are now, or soon will be, significant decision makers in homes, businesses and communities around the globe. Their generation will most certainly be a powerful constituency come 2015 and are key stakeholders in the achievement of the MDGs. Whether these goals are achieved will have a major impact on their lives for the next four or five decades.

**As young professionals, we must utilise our skills, abilities, power and privilege to help realise the full promise of the MDGs for the future of the planet and all its peoples.**

## The Keys to Success: Awareness, Action and Association

The International Young Professionals Summit (IYPS) 2008 was a forum that heightened the **awareness** of the MDGs amongst participants and the role they can and must play in seeing them achieved. Participants are now advocates for the MDGs and have pledged to take **action** to achieve them, with the support of the International Young Professionals Foundation (IYPF) and other organisations.

**Individual participants at IYPS 2008** have pledged the following actions and will hold each other accountable to them:

- Advocating the importance of the MDGs at home, at work and in their networks – including simple actions such as including the MDGs in email signatures;
- Participating in Stand Up Against Poverty events in 2008 and beyond;
- Building the IYPF network to reach more people, more professions and more countries;
- Speaking out to their governments about the role of young professionals in achieving the MDGs; and
- Completing personal pledges made at IYPS 2008 and available on [www.iyps.org](http://www.iyps.org).

**Groups of IYPS 2008 participants** are pursuing the following initiatives:

- Leading economic empowerment through social entrepreneurship, ethical investment and fair trade;
- Developing networks and learning environments to promote leadership using localised schemes and online communities;
- Creating an education and conference framework to enable MDG and young professionals events to be held regionally and virtually;
- Increasing attention on gender equality and sexual violence through speaking out and campaigns in our homes, networks and work places;
- Increasing the understanding of the importance of MDG3 – The Promotion of Equality for Women - through education of men by men; and
- Providing education and skills training on entrepreneurship, HIV/AIDS prevention and environmental impact reduction in our communities.

The **International Young Professions Foundation**, the organisation behind IYPS 2008, and the platform for ongoing **association** between participants, will:

- Encourage and provide support to young professionals to host and participate in Stand Up Against Poverty 2008 events, with the goal of 50 events in 30 countries;
- Create and launch [mdgpledge.org](http://mdgpledge.org) on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to facilitate young professionals making further action pledges towards the MDGs, commencing with an e-mail signature campaign;
- Create and launch [onedoes.org](http://onedoes.org) on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2008 to catalogue the amazing work of 1000 young professionals creating a better world for all to inform and inspire others to take action on the MDGs;
- Refocus its vision, mission and objectives towards mobilising and engaging young professionals to act on the MDGs from now until 2015;
- Create and promote an online database of young professionals who are contributing to the MDGs and the support they need by the end of 2009;
- Act to expand IYPF's membership to over 100,000 in the next 12 months;
- Host and facilitate monthly online meetings of young professionals for at least the next 12 months to facilitate further education and project development on how young professionals can help to achieve the MDGs, commencing in October 2008;
- Obtain formal status within the UN system through ECOSOC and update membership of the UN Global Compact by mid 2009;
- Renew its association with the Commonwealth Heads of Government and send a delegation to their next meeting in Trinidad & Tobago in 2009;

- Pursue partnerships to create an International Young Professional of the Year award scheme by 2010 that recognises and rewards young professionals making powerful contributions to achieving the MDGs;
- Champion a formal young professional group status in the Commission for Sustainable Development process by 2012;
- Champion a UN Commission for Young Professionals with its patrons and partners to enable young professionals to increase our visibility and engagement in multilateral processes by 2015; and
- Work towards becoming a voice for young professionals in the generation of a sustainable post-MDG framework, in recognition that we believe work should not stop in 2015, but should capitalise on the framework and management put in place for the MDGs to continue to set goals towards a better world for all.

### **Our Call: Assisting us to Make an Impact**

We cannot successfully undertake the above activities alone. Targeted and specific support from certain individuals and groups will act as a force multiplier for our network and its activities, and greatly increase our effectiveness. We ask that you answer our call, contact the IYPF and help us deliver on our promises.

We call on **Jeffrey Sachs** to collaborate with us and:

- Advise us on young professionals gaining access to the UN and multilateral systems;
- Link IYPF members and our activities with the Millennium Villages campaign;
- Challenge us to respond to key MDG implementation challenges; and
- Provide endorsement of [mdgpledge.org](http://mdgpledge.org) and the Young Professional of the Year Awards once launched.

We call on our patrons **Professor Tony Ridley and Dato Lee Yee Cheong, as well as the Commonwealth Engineers Council**, to support us by:

- Guiding and facilitating access to decision making forums including CHOGM, DESA, ECOSOC and CSD;
- Maintaining their support and advocacy of the abilities of young professionals and the IYPF.

We call on the **Commonwealth Heads Of Government** to:

- Engage young professionals at their 2009 meeting in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; and
- Consider the role of young professionals in the Commonwealth to achieving the MDGs in their programs and activities.

We call on **Businesses** to:

- Learn with us how to incorporate pursuing the MDGs into core business practices;
- Take regard of the MDGs in decision making processes and business planning;
- Support young professional employees to:
  - Carry out pro bono or voluntary work towards the achievement of the MDGs;
  - Work on projects which actively support the MDGs;
  - Develop skills and competence to help them work on the MDGs;
  - Network with other young professionals within and outside your own organizations.
- Align your CSR objectives with the MDGs; and
- Introduce sustainability best practices within your organisations.

We call on **NGOs** to:

- Introduce us to volunteerism and schemes which make a difference;
- Partner with us on our projects where you see mutual value and benefit; and
- Involve young professionals in your organisations in our network and actions.

We call on all **young professionals** around the world to:

- Stand Up Against Poverty with IYPF, 17-19 October 2008, and each subsequent year Stand Up is held;
- Get educated about the MDGs – start with the IYPF website, our monthly MDG events, and go from there – and then speak about them with others;
- Go to [www.mdgpledge.org/sig](http://www.mdgpledge.org/sig) and include the eight MDGs in your email signature and sign up for future action pledges;
- [Become a member of IYPF](#) (it's free).

Finally, we ask that **readers of this communiqué** support us by:

- Forwarding this document to one of your colleagues or friends;
- Visiting the [IYPF website](#) and becoming involved in achieving the MDGs; and
- Holding us accountable to the actions we have promised.

The world in its current state desperately needs the successful implementation of the MDGs. We, the 80 young professionals of the IYPS 2008 believe that young professionals around the world are prepared to stand up and take action. We look forward to your support.