

Study Guide for the Australian Collaboration Fact and Issue Sheet

GLOBAL POVERTY

FOR REVIEW

1. Background

- 1a. What is the “poverty line” currently used by the World Bank, and what proportion of the world’s population currently lives below this poverty line?
- 1b. What evidence is there to suggest that the global fight against poverty has been failing? (Give one example.)
- 1c. What evidence is there of progress in this area? (Give two examples.)
- 1d. In which parts of the world has the problem of poverty been the most intractable, and which parts have seen most progress?
- 1e. What are the “Millennium Development Goals”?
- 1f. Name three basic measures which can be taken to assist with the achievement of the Millennium Goals.
- 1g. Which three Millennium Goals appear to be closest to being achieved?

2. Australia’s role in fighting poverty

- 2a. What is Australia’s current official development aid commitment (as a percentage of Gross National Income)?
- 2b. How does this compare with other countries in the OECD?
- 2c. Name four significant commitments that have recently been made by the Australian government in the area of international aid.
- 2d. What is the current level of public donations in Australia to non-profit aid agencies?
- 2e. Have the donations to these agencies been increasing or decreasing in recent years?
- 2f. What kinds of work do these agencies perform?

3. What needs to be done?

- 3a. What level of official aid expenditure should Australia be aiming for in the coming years, according to the Australian Council for International Development?
- 3b. What percentage of the federal aid budget has been spent in partnership with non-profit aid agencies?
- 3c. Is this a high or low figure by international standards?
- 3d. What can Australian companies do to help with the global fight against poverty?
- 3e. What can individuals do to help with the fight against poverty?

FOR DISCUSSION

- 1. Why is aid important? Is aid simply a matter of helping those in need or is it also about the self-interest of wealthier nations and the maintenance of peace and stability? Is the moral obligation to help greater if the countries in need have been suffering as a result of historical injustices or structural forms of disadvantage (for example, unfair trade rules), or should people in richer countries always try to do what they can to alleviate human suffering in other parts of the world?
- 2. Should governments bear the main responsibility for international aid, or should it be left to individuals to decide if, when and how they would like to assist?
- 3. Can you think of any reasons why the fight against poverty has been more successful in some countries and less so in others? What are the various factors at play?

FOR RESEARCH

1. Use the internet and/or any of the works on the list provided under Useful Sources to learn more about the Product Red initiative. How does it work, and what are its aims? Can you think of any potential drawbacks or flaws in the project?
2. Use the internet and/or any of the works on the list provided under Useful Sources to learn more about the Make Poverty History campaign. What are its aims and assumptions? What methods does it use to achieve its goals what have been its successes/failures thus far?
3. Write a list of all the non-profit agencies that you can think of and (if possible) what they do (this can be done as a class activity). Choose one organisation to investigate further. What is the history of the organisation? What are its main goals, methods, achievements and so on?

For advanced students:

4. Use the internet and/or any of the works on the list provided under Useful Sources to learn more about the history of “development”. Does this term have a specific meaning and history in the context of international aid, and if so, what is it? How and why have our approaches changed in recent years, and do these show signs of being more successful?