



MAKE POVERTY HISTORY - A MOBILIZING MODULE

Purpose

To garner membership support and mobilization for the Make Poverty History Campaign.

Objectives

By the end of this activity participants will be able to:

- Speak knowledgeably about the four demands of the Make Poverty History Campaign; debt cancellation, foreign aid, just trade, and child poverty in Canada; and
- Develop and/or participate in actions that support the Make Poverty History Campaign.

Tools

- flipchart & markers
- masking tape
- coloured paper
- handout (one pager) - "Make Poverty History Campaign" - step #1
- statistic packages (x4) - step #2
- handouts - "Make Poverty History Demands" - step #2
- handout - "Make Poverty History Campaign Action" - step #3
- form Letter – step #3
- call-out to PSAC members Social Justice Fund: Anti-Poverty Initiatives in Canada

Suggested time frame 45 - 60 minutes

Before the session

- post session objectives on flipchart - step #1
- post the websites for the PSAC and the Make Poverty History Campaign on a flipchart displayed in a central location in the room - step #1
- cut-up statistic packages - step #2
- post flipchart questions re: statistics - step #2
- post header flipcharts around the room - step #3
- post workshop task - step #3
- create a number of flipcharts (or one long piece of butcher paper) with stick-people holding hands, and post them side by side in the room. Try to depict diversity in your figures. - step #4

Note to Facilitators: This activity is designed to be delivered in a lunch-hour, after-work, meeting or conference session (*a short time-frame*). All activities, discussions, and tasks should move along at a fairly brisk pace. Participants who are interested in further exploring the Make Poverty History Campaign should visit the website (www.makepovertyhistory.ca) and/or visit the PSAC website (www.psac.com) for an update on the PSAC's role in this campaign.

METHOD

1. Introductions - 10 minutes

Introduce yourself and outline the **objectives** of the session. Remind participants of timeline restrictions, noting that discussions, exercises & activities will move at a brisk pace. Invite participants to visit the Make Poverty History Website and/or the PSAC website (**post both on flipchart**), to find out more about the campaign.

Conduct a **line-up exercise** where participants will indicate how much they know about the Make Poverty History Campaign. Those who are fairly knowledgeable will start the line-up at one end, moving to those who know little or nothing at all about the campaign at the other end.

Once participants have found their place in the line, check-in with 3 or 4, at various points in the line-up, to find-out what they do know or what they imagine the campaign might be about.

Before participants take their seats, conduct a quick round of introductions, with each participant sharing their **NAME** (only).

Distribute the handout - **“Make Poverty History Campaign”** and review it briefly with participants as an introduction to the session – highlighting the “WHEN” section of the flyer which outlines a series of key meetings taking place in 2005.

2. What in the World!! - 15 minutes

Note that it is important to understand why so much emphasis is being put on an anti-poverty campaign at this time. As such, we will conduct an exercise to put things in perspective.

Have participants break into **4 groups**. Provide each group with a **package of statistics** related to the 4 Make Poverty History Campaign demands:

1. Foreign Aid
2. Just Trade
3. Debt Relief
4. Child Poverty in Canada

In their small groups participants should take **5 - 10 minutes** to review the information provided, and answer the following questions (post on flipchart):

- **How do these issues affect your family**
- **How do these issues affect your community**
- **How do these issues affect us globally**

Ask them to answer each question with one sentence that best illustrates their discussion.

Ask groups to post their statistics in a cluster on the wall and quickly conduct reports in a round - with each group answering question 1 in turn, then moving on to question 2 and finally question 3. Confirm their experiences/answers and draw links between the different reports.

Summarize with the following points:

- The cycle of poverty caused by conditions put on foreign aid, trade exploitation by rich countries, extortion through debts owed, and negligence of the needs of children and their families, inevitably touches our lives in very real ways.
- The affects of these competitive, for profit practices, driven by unlimited greed, are far reaching; impacting the environment we live in, the quality and availability of the food we eat, our standard of living and ability to earn a living, and the health and well-being of our communities.
- The earth has a limited capacity with which to sustain all its peoples. Exploitation and environmental devastation of poor countries has far-reaching implications for us all.
- The fate of our children, and the children of the world, will establish the future of this planet, and those of us who live on it.

Distribute the handouts - **“Make Poverty History Demands”** and quickly review them with participants, paying specific attention to the section on Canadian action.

3. Count us In - 20 minutes

Preface this exercise by providing participants with the **“Make Poverty History Campaign Action”** handout.

Refer to the **4 flipcharts posted** around the room with the following headers:

WHITE BAND CAMPAIGN

POLITICAL ACTION / LOBBY

FAIR TRADE INITIATIVES

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Invite participants to quickly go to the flipchart that represents an action they would like to strategize around (ensure that all small groups are made-up of 2 or more participants).

Allow **10 - 15 minutes** for each group to (**post on flipchart**):

- **review the handout briefly, paying particular attention to those things related to their heading that can be actioned by Local and/or regional members and activists**
- **brainstorm actions related to the header they have chosen that will support the Make Poverty History Campaign through membership mobilization**
- **write their strategic actions on the flipchart, and**
- **be prepared to summarize in a 60 second presentation**

Have each group report back - emphasizing and/or drawing out specific actions that will best involve members in the campaign.

Sample Responses:

WHITE BAND CAMPAIGN

- establish a group of members who will make/buy white bands to distribute to the membership as well as the greater public
- develop/download a flyer that explains the Make Poverty History Campaign and emphasizes the White Band Campaign
- distribute / desk-drop white bands and flyers to members
- organize members to distribute the white bands and flyers at labour events, schools, and community events
- organize a strategic event/ rally/educational for each of the White Band Days

POLITICAL ACTION / LOBBY

- establish a Make Poverty History coordinating committee at the Local level
- make a list of other Locals/unions, organizations and/or individuals who are, or would be willing to be, connected to the Make Poverty History Campaign, in your region

- develop/download and distribute a petition and/or form letters, along with applicable addresses, and encourage members to sign and forward them to their MPs and to the Prime Minister's office
- organize mass e-mail messaging to politicians
- establish lobby teams and lobby government representatives at all levels – with the priority being federal MPs
- coordinate actions around key dates – making sure that members are always made aware of how they can participate
- meet with management and negotiate work time or lunch hour sessions at the workplace to promote the Make Poverty History Campaign

FAIR TRADE INITIATIVES

- lobby the government on incorporating fair trade into its trade negotiations
- educate/inform the members through flyers, educational and by example
- encourage the employer to deal with fair trade suppliers – put the issue on your next UMCC
- encourage members to buy fair-trade goods – obtain lists of local suppliers and distribute
- send letters to local businesses encouraging them to obtain and sell fair trade goods and services

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- plug-into organizations and other Locals/unions in your community who are participating in the Make Poverty History Campaign – **OR** – call together a meeting of likely parties
- check with the District Labour Council to see what activities they may have planned
- organize actions to support the Make Poverty History Campaign at community locations and specific community functions and events (i.e. Labour Day, May Day, July 01, church socials, youth groups, schools, etc.)

- promote all activities at the membership level and coordinate participation

Distribute the “**Call-out to PSAC members Social Justice Fund: Anti-Poverty Initiatives in Canada**” and note that if they are interested in developing a project, or promoting a project to the SJF they can consult with Louise Casselman (SJF Coordinator), their REVP or Regional Rep for further information. Also distribute the “**Form Letter**” which can be used/adapted for lobbying activities.

4. Making it Happen - 5 - 10 minutes (TIME PERMITTING)

Refer participants to the **stick figures** you have posted side by side around the room - representing membership power and solidarity.

As a closing exercise, provide participants with a sheet of **coloured paper** a piece of **masking tape**, and a **felt marker**. Ask them, based on the campaign actions identified earlier, to:

- **Identify one immediate action they can commit to that will mobilize others to support the Make Poverty History Campaign,**
and
- **Write their idea on the paper provided and post it on or around the stick figures – indicating the momentum and tools needed to “make it happen”.**

Invite participants to review the actions posted. Time permitting, allow for discussion on the actions posted.