

8 ways to change the world



Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Imagine you have decided not to eat anything. Moreover, you did not set a deadline to stop this fasting. The first hours were tough, but bearable. Afterwards, there was a feeling of progressive emptiness. A mixture of dizziness, irritation and sleepiness that rises to desperation. This is hunger.

Eating is the most basic human need. Therefore, hunger is a signal that should not be ignored. A Brazilian song says: "Hunger is impatient, hunger eats people".

Misery and hunger are a link between civilization and barbarity, because the human society allows that to happen by action or omission.

It is not by chance that the first of the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) presented by the UN in 2000 is to *Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*. In Brazil, these goals are the **8 ways to change the world**.

Millions of scientists, non-governmental organizations, politicians and educators around the planet undertook the challenge of trying to change this scenery we are shocked with and ashamed of. Several times, we have the feeling that we cannot change anything. But we can, and it is important to believe that.

There are clearly no magical solutions. When there are huge social inequality and unemployment, there will be misery and hunger. Nevertheless, it is possible to progress, if everyone is willing to help.

By the way, the goal of this text is to show that, in Brazil, we can do something sustainable, lasting and transforming to help decrease poverty and hunger.

But how? If you have come this far, this is a positive beginning already. The next step is to read the whole text.

The main component is Education

It is not because of the lack of money, studies, diagnosis, or statistics that misery subsists as a chronic social disease. And neither because of the lack of denouncement, newspaper articles and sharp pictures that shock us daily, but fail to point to long-lasting solutions.

The thing that feeds hunger is the feeling of the problem does not belong to us, and we cannot fight against it, because there is so little we can do.

But educators know, as they deal with it everyday, that it is possible to correct the course of things if we bring children, teenagers and adults food that can not be wrapped, weighted or caught, and the more we offer, the more we have to offer: knowledge.

It is in the classroom that the solution to the misery should be found.

In this text, we present how schools can contribute to solve this world and local challenge. We aim at showing much can be done when schools make consistent projects of educational volunteerism in order to banish the misery of stomach, of mind, of heart, and of humankind lives.

The first task is obvious: to educate very well, to keep the children at school, to make them believe a better world is not a destiny, but something to be built.

The second task starts right now: to show students that, even young as they are, they can be agents of transformation, and they can already teach and promote transformation.

Here, there are not receipts; however, it offers excellent ingredients for those who wants to help Brazil to achieve this goal launched by the UN. Also, this text is aimed especially at educators (principals, coordinators, and teachers), who will have the mission to start a game everybody can win.

Several kinds of information as well as work suggestions are available here. We hope they are clear and easy to understand. Visually, the text organization intends to facilitate the search for all the necessary subsidies for educators.

The contents can be united in the following order:

1. Ideas about how to develop educational volunteerism projects in three levels:

- The school, as an institution, centralizes important actions for the community;
- Educators suggest activities in which students learn and, as a result, give the community information, knowledge and development;
- Students are mobilized to change the world around them via educational volunteerism initiatives.

2. Information about:

- Misery and hunger;
- The UN and what this organization represents to the world;
- "Faça Parte Institute" and its main mission, which is to encourage educational volunteerism practices.

8 ways to change the world

In 2000, after several forums, discussions and debates carried in the entire world, the UN launched a global program to improve the quality of human life, that was known in Brazil as the “The 8 ways to change the world”.

In Brazil, the “Faça Parte Institute” and the UN Volunteer, the UN’s entity that promotes volunteer work, accepted the challenge from the perspective of educational volunteerism.

The idea is to encourage schools that believe in the educational potential to make the volunteer work a tool to be used in new projects in each of the 8 ways to change the world.



The “Faça Parte - Brazil Volunteer Institute” is a social organization whose mission is to promote the development of culture and practice of volunteer work in Brazil.

The institution attempts to mobilize people, schools, and communities around the idea of educational volunteerism.

Created in 2001, “Faça Parte” has developed a notable collection of publications and has also succeeded in bringing together many experiences of educational volunteerism.

Ok, but why the school?

There is no important social evolution in the world without an essential role of education in this process.

To educate is to transform, to develop people, and to open horizons. In the Brazilian reality experienced today, more than ever the educator's role is primordial.

At school, all the ingredients of this transformation match: knowledge, human hope, and the desire of doing something.

"Faça Parte" was born from the absolute trust in the schools potential, in the teachers' involvement and, especially, in the capacity of young people to be the protagonists of their own history and of the world transformation.

When the Institute started its work, this was its purpose, its hope. Currently, it is a certainty confirmed by the involvement of millions of young people spread out in the whole country.

Some educators say there is a silent revolution in education. Therefore, for "Faça Parte", the revolution is not silent. Its effects are heard more, more often and it is spreading to other areas.

To know more:

Websites:

www.objetivosdomilenio.org.br (in Portuguese)
www.undp.org

Publications:

8 ways to change the world at School
(Faça Parte and Fundação Educar)

8 tips of volunteerism
(Faça Parte and Fundação Educar)

What is the UN and what are its purposes?

Anyone who reads newspapers or watches television has already heard about the United Nations Organization (UN), about its conferences, resolutions and proposals. A lot has been said about the role of this international institution in periods of armed conflicts, but few people understand the real dimension of its importance. Therefore, it is time to revive it.

The UN was created by 191 signatory countries when the 2nd World War ended in 1945. Its mission is to balance the power of nations, their relations, aspirations and dilemmas.

The UN does not exist only to mediate conflicts, but also has an important and positive role: to attempt to settle international goals through its agencies and programs; to involve leaderships and to engage people in the solution of problems that concern all humankind.

The creation of the UN is an important moment in the evolution of civilization. To bring this theme to the classroom means to be part of this history.

According to Kofi Annan (former UN Secretary-General), in the past, the UN worked only with governments. Now, it is known that peace and prosperity cannot be reached without a partnership among governments, international organizations, private initiative and civil society. In the current world, we depend on each other.

(Economic World Forum, 1999)

Can I make a campaign for raising and donating food and clothes?

Yes, but it is possible to do more.

Ok. Your school worries about the misery drama and often organizes campaigns for raising non-perishable food, clothes and toys.

Literally, this is the basic form of volunteerism. However, other ingredients are necessary in order to allow us to give more steps.


One of them is the vitamin of **sustainability**, of individual and collectivity transformation of reality.

It is worth remembering the old oriental proverb: "it is essential to give someone a fishing rod, but it is vital to teach him how to fish".

Campaigns can go on, because emergent actions are necessary many times.

Yet the school and its students succeed if they understand that a simple donation of food, clothes, and other products is a remedy to attenuate the symptom, but it does not heal the disease.

Therefore, there is much more to be done. We have plenty of ideas, examples, and references.



The concept of sustainability implies in searching for a balanced and permanent human development.

"It is this never-ending hunger that eats and nothing is ever enough.

Every hunger is so needy, it eats the love we feel.

Hunger eats incessantly, in the past and in the present.

Hunger is never satisfied."

Paulo Tatit and Sandra Peres/Luis Tatit

Why did the UN launch this program?

As an organization whose efforts are focus on solving problems that challenge humanity, the UN develops large programs and settles goals. The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not the first proposal in this sense. There were others.

These MDGs, however, has a special meaning: the possibility of having a new boundary and reach all the targets by the date of 2015.

After high expectations, especially with the technological advance of the 20th century, the entrance into the third millennium brought a mixture of hope, but also frustration, due to social inequality, environmental problems and the intensification of wars.

Based on the conclusions of serious international conferences about population, environment, human rights and other themes, the UN gathered a set of proposals, adding the efforts of all nations to solve the main problems of human quality of life.

Thus, the 8 MDGs, 18 targets and more other 40 indicators were published to set bounds for actions and obtain great advance up to 2015.

"We must spare no effort to free all humankind, and above all our children and grandchildren, from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoilt by human activities, and whose resources would no longer be sufficient for their needs".

United Nations Millennium Declaration - 2000

Hunger for information

Prejudice originated by misinformation is a wall that blocks progress to refrain misery and hunger.

One prejudice is to think hunger is only lack of food. As serious as the physical sensation of hunger is the malnutrition caused by the insufficient or unbalanced alimentation, which does not retribute to the organism the basic elements for its good operation.

Technically, malnutrition is a cellular unbalance between the provision of nutrients and energy, and demand of nutrients that assure the growth process, the maintenance and other specific functions of the body. However, malnutrition is also very easy to treat.

In this context, your school can make a difference by fighting one of the main components of malnutrition, the misinformation, by developing the following actions:

- Create a campaign to spread knowledge and produce informative materials about the concept of malnutrition and the ideal alimentation for students, parents or community;
- Make public culinary receipts on how to take the best advantage of all kinds of food. There are several publications about the best advantages of food that can be consulted;
- Get to know about the feeding habits at school and community, and discuss results in the classroom and publicize them;
- Organize a science fair about nutrition and invite the whole community to this mobilization event.

A person needs 1.900 calories per day to survive. The numbers show food produced in Brazil can offer 2.960 calories per day. In other words, yes, it is possible to stop hunger.

To know more:

Website: www.undp.org

Publication: Abramonay, Ricardo. "O que é fome" (What is hunger?), Editora Brasiliense: São Paulo, 1984.

Challenge number 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger



The UN proposal is not to decrease misery in a general way. From the UN's perspective, this question is structurally linked to poverty reduction, and can be attenuated by education, food supplementation, improvement of life quality, and women education, among other factors.

There is a set of technical parameters, which makes the pursued goals real. The references were based on the 1990 statistics. Below, you see the description of the first millennium goal:

1) *To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people in the world whose income is less than one dollar a day.*

If this goal is reached, in 2015 the world will still have 890 million of people living in extreme poverty conditions.

2) *To halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.*

The projections, however, indicate that this goal will probably not be reached, because by this time, 550 million people will still be suffering from malnutrition.

There are many standards to define the number of people in a situation of extreme poverty. It is stipulated that between 8 to 17 million people - a bigger population than many countries - fit this miserable situation.

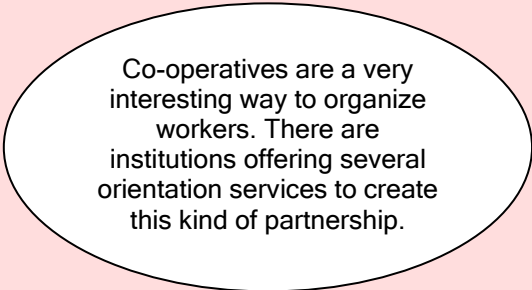
Hunger for social support, job and income

The problem of misery is complex, and in order to solve it more than a government or only one institution is necessary.

That is why it is important, when developing educational volunteerism projects, to keep connected to reality and to search always for the utmost effort and for the achievement of partnerships.

For example, there are several services of social protection, thus students at your school can:

- Make a database of the existing social services that are often available to the community, these may be popular restaurants, mother's milk banks or "familyship" (a Brazilian federal program that transfers income to families in situation of poverty or extreme poverty, as a national effort to eliminate hunger in Brazil);
- Find information about credit; about projects that offer support to community work and to co-operative creation (such as people who collect paper and metal cans on streets), and about other actions of social inclusion;
- Make a survey about the existent faults in available services to your community and communicate them to the local newspapers, as well as to the authorities in charge;
- Mobilize local politicians and the media to attract social protection services or create viable alternatives.



Co-operatives are a very interesting way to organize workers. There are institutions offering several orientation services to create this kind of partnership.

Brazil is making progress, but still needs your help

Both optimistic and pessimistic things can be said about the discussion on how to eliminate poverty in Brazil. Therefore, the best way is to be realistic.

For example, it is true that Brazil is about to reach several UN goals, including the first one. And good news always bring us encouragement to go on and try harder.

In 1990, 8.8% of Brazilians lived with less than 1 dollar per day. In 2000, the proportion decreased to 4.7%. However, this percentage should be reduced to 4.4% by the year 2015 to Brazil attains this goal.

Nevertheless, 4.4% in a population of 180 million people is still a lot of people living with so little. Thus, to guarantee the citizenship to this people it is necessary a permanent effort.

It is also worth remembering that the 8 MDGs are not the first UN initiative therein. Other global proposals were also very successful.

Despite the positive trend of income rise in Brazil, the equal distribution of its benefits grows very slowly. In 1992, according to the UNDP report (United Nations Development Programme), the 20% poorest people had only 3% of the national income. In 2002, this percentage increased to 4.2%, which is really very little. Therefore, Brazil keeps being one of the most unequal countries in the world with a huge disparity in income distribution.

Hunger for care to childhood

One of the most serious form of malnutrition is caused by insufficient time of maternal breast-feeding, as well as the lack of essential nutrients for the child's development.

Malnutrition can endanger the child's potential and predispose them to diseases.

That is why it is vital for mothers to be aware of the importance of breast-feeding their children since conception.

Thus, in your school, the students can:

- Help in the local nursery school in order to stimulate mothers to keep breast-feeding for at least six months, which is the minimum time recommended by the World Health Organization of the UN;
- Create posters, newspapers, videos about childhood, showing how crucial this phase is for the child's development later;
- Produce campaigns about the importance of prenatal tests, eating healthy food and the dangers of smoking, ingesting alcohol and drugs during the pregnancy.

Malnutrition equals imperfect growth: malnourished children are smaller, weight less and are more vulnerable to illnesses.

To know more:

Websites (in Portuguese):

Pastoral da Criança: www.pastoraldacrianca.org.br

Care Brazil: www.care.org.br

Cren: www.cren.org.br

Publication:

Fighting Malnutrition, edited by Cren (Recovery Center and Nutritional Education).

Creating a Volunteer Project

All voluntary action is certainly welcome. However, it is important to remember that successful volunteer project depends on how you use pedagogical possibilities and how consistent your project is.

The “Faça Parte Institute” suggests the following stages to prepare a volunteer project:

Convocation/Invitation

Invite, call, inform, integrate and engage the participants in the same project, by conquering their interest and support.

Diagnostic

Identify what the real necessities of the project's target-public are, as well as the students' motivation to participate in this project.

Planning

Why to do it? What to do? How and when to do it? What are the expected results?

Action

Put into practice what was defined in the former stages and to bond yourself to the planning that was made.

Thought

Evaluate each stage of the project and, if necessary, redirect it.

Record

In order to make the experience public, amplify it and use it as example.

Recognition and celebration

This stage cannot be forgotten: strengthen the teamwork and stimulate new actions.

To know more:

Publication in Portuguese:

Construindo um Projeto de Voluntariado
(Creating a Volunteer Project)

www.facaparte.org.br

Starve for a life in community

The solution to any problem connected to citizenship and life quality is connected with the organization of the community.

Non-organized communities are not effective to mobilize its members and solve community problems.

Make use of the youth enthusiasm and capacity to enter upon an activity, for example:

- Stimulate the formation of a municipal board, neighborhood associations and other representative entities;
- Organize collective projects, such as a communitarian vegetable-garden, as it occurs in many other places in Brazil.
- Create an active student's union, which can turn the school into a meeting point for the debate of local problems;
- Search for partnerships that may help to improve school lunch.

"Poverty is pain, it hurts like a disease. It attacks people not only materially, but also morally. It eats people's dignity and guides them to despair".

(from a woman of Moldovia - excerpt from the book "Vencendo a desnutrição" - Overcoming malnutrition)

Poverty and human development

Hunger is certainly the most dramatic human need, but it is not the only one. It is part of a complex set of deprivations, which affect the dignity of human existence.

In order to understand it more fully, it is worth to know the UN's "Human Development Index" (HDI), a comparative measure of life expectancy, literacy, education and standards of living for countries worldwide.

Brazil is in the 70th position among 175 countries according to the HDI published on November 27, 2007. Nevertheless, it is one of the countries that showed more progress since the index started to be used in 1990.

This is an excellent topic to be discussed in class, because it allows a multidisciplinary approach of the problem of misery.

To know more:

Read the report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) about human development. It can be found at: www.undp.org. There are also other interesting texts about the 8 Millennium Goals in this website.

Brazil and HDI - 2007

Ranking	Country
1	Iceland
2	Norway
3	Australia
4	Canada
--	--
8	Japan
--	--
12	United States
13	Spain
--	--
16	United Kingdom
--	--
20	Italy
--	--
29	Portugal
--	--
38	Argentina
--	--
40	Chile
--	--
46	Uruguay
--	--
51	Cuba
52	Mexico
--	--
67	Russia
--	--
70	Brazil
71	Dominica

Starve for education

Education is one of the most efficient remedy in the battle against misery.

The problem of illiteracy is certainly connected with hunger and extreme misery. Moreover, this is the school field of activity par excellence. Thus, there is a lot to be done.

For example:

- Organize technical courses for adults or courses to improve other skills, which could allow a professional relocation;
- Open vacancies for illiterate adults to learn how to read and write, having students and teachers as volunteers. If there is not a proper methodology in your institution, encourage the students to look for other places, which already have ABC courses;
- Offer the students the possibility to act as monitors of children with learning difficulties. Oftentimes, the young may be a connection between adults and children, which allows an effective pedagogical support;
- Turn the school into an information center about adult education, continuing education and technical courses to your community.

Illiteracy is not only about not recognizing words.
Today, to be considered a literate person, any citizen needs to know how to use the language on a daily basis communication - for example: writing letters or reading (and understanding) a new equipment manual.

A change in the way to look ... at society

It is important for educators to realize that in order to fight misery and hunger it is necessary, first of, to change the way you look at society.

We are as old as our prejudices, said a philosopher. The same goes for misery and hunger.

You can see that despite regular periodical information about hunger tragedies around the world, the changes are very slow.

For misery and hunger to disappear, it is essential that both become impossible for all of us to bear, and not just for those who are their victims.

It is possible. You must believe it, want it and do your part.

There are several kinds of inequality. In 2002, the situation of extreme poverty reached 5.2% of all residents in the southeast of Brazil. In the northeast, the proportion is five times bigger: 25.2 %. Among 1% of the richest Brazilian population, 86% were white in 2002; and among the 10% of the poorest, 65% were black or dark.

A change in the way to look . . . at school

In order to stimulate the young to develop a critical attitude and to be sensitized by the reality lived by other people, first of all, it is necessary to put them in touch with these situations.

Poverty and hunger bring serious psychological consequences, causing physical, emotional and moral pain.

Therefore, encourage:

- The creation of a newspaper or activities to make the students write profiles, take pictures, make interviews, talk to the needy people;
- The creation of a support group, so that students can make presentations, activities or games to cheer up the life of people in hospitals, nursery school, institutions and other places. These actions help the poor.

There you are. There are no reasons for you not to roll up your sleeves and work. To start with, you can discuss some of the topics showed in this text with your students.

For example:

- Hunger and its consequences;
- How it works the Poverty index - DHI;
- The role of the UN;
- Standards for a healthy alimentation, among others.

You can be sure that everything you suggest will certainly make a difference.

The UN goals: a history of successes



Some people may think that the goals proposed by the UN are unrealistic and it meant to be merely informative. It is not so. For quite sometime, the UN has launched several goals supported by technical basis and effective actions that were fully reached.

There are lots of meaningful examples, such as the decrease of infant mortality in developing countries, as well as the number of deaths caused by diarrhea that dropped in the period settled.

Here there are other examples:

- The last case of variola in the whole world was registered in 1977, 11 years after the UN decided that its eradication was a global goal.
- Because of the UN effort, the access to drinkable water increased a lot in the last decade of the 20th century. In 1990, 71% of the world population had access to drinkable water. In 2000, this percentage went to 78%
- Mass immunization, one of the bigger successes of the public health issue, is also a result of this organization effort. The number of vaccinated children rose from 30% in 1980 to almost 80% in 2000.

These facts show that the 8 Millennium Development Goals are fully reachable. For that to happen, it is necessary for people like you to get involved and take these challenges forward. It cannot go wrong.

Solidary School Seal



The Faça Parte Institute's main project is "Selo Escola Solidária" (Solidary School Seal) contributes to the national debate on service learning at schools to enhance their role of a community center of citizenship.

The certification program - now in its third edition (2003, 2005 e 2007) - is composed of a three-step research cycle: it identifies the schools, certifies them, promotes their best experiences in the media, and develops publications with outstanding experiences from public and private schools.

The Institute is linked to the Ministry of Education, companies, the national press, NGOs, and several UN agencies. It also has a strong partnership with the National Council of Education Secretaries and the National Union of Municipal Education Directors. Every year, both organizations nominate a state coordinator to be capacitated by the Faça Parte Institute.

Nowadays, the Faça Parte's site hosts its *Solidary Schools Network*, broadening information about more than 7 thousand Brazilian educational volunteerism actions/projects. Up to now, "Faça Parte" has reached 20.548 schools with its targets.

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