



The Lambeth Conference 2008 and the Millennium Development Goals: A Botswana Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The Bishops of the Anglican Communion met on the campus of the University of Kent at Canterbury, England, for the Lambeth Conference in July 2008. The Conference took place at a time when the Anglican Communion was going through turbulence over the issue of human sexuality. Accordingly, there was much expectation that the Conference would *inter alia* discuss and come up with the way forward on the issue of homosexuality. Prudently, the Conference's focus rested on the *real* Mission of the Church, epitomized by the Walk of Witness on July 24, 2009 from Whitehall and Westminster to Lambeth Palace. There, Archbishop Rowan Williams spoke of the Communion's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is within this context that this article seeks to discuss the issue of the MDGs in the context of the Lambeth Conference, from the perspective of Botswana. It is my intention to show that the Anglican Communion should be focused on the life and death issues of eradicating abject poverty, HIV and AIDS, malaria, bad governance, unjust trade policies and environment, rather than wasting valuable spiritual energy on the 'luxury' of human sexuality which is a non-issue for the poor.

KEYWORDS: AIDS, Anglican, Botswana, Lambeth Conference, Millennium Development Goals, poverty

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Introduction

The Bishops' finest hour at the Lambeth Conference 2008 was marching through Whitehall and Westminster in solidarity with the world's poorest peoples, with spouses and ecumenical partners more than doubling their number. The Daily Telegraph in its lead comment wrote that this,

must have elicited a collective sigh of relief among those who count themselves members of almost any Christian congregation. Here, at last, were the Church's leaders doing not only what they should be doing, but also what they do best: holding the world's political and commercial powers to account in a visible act of Christian witness.

It was welcome evidence that the worldwide Anglican Communion, currently gathered at the Lambeth Conference in Canterbury, is not obsessed solely with the sexuality and gender of its episcopacy, to the exclusion of its sacramental mission to the world. Time and again on yesterday's march, bishops spoke of this being what their servant ministry was really about. The sense of humility with which they greeted friends from places such as Zimbabwe and the Sudan, where there are issues rather more pressing than an openly homosexual bishop being consecrated in the United States, was uplifting.

Politics aside, the Anglican Communion served its world well yesterday by showing that, while the poor are always with us, we are never absolved of our responsibility to them.²

Mahatma Gandhi captured the soul of his philosophy of non-violence with his Salt March to Dandi; likewise the Lambeth March captured the soul of the Lambeth Conference 2008. The March demonstrated love, empathy and service for the poor. It pointed where the priority of God's Mission lay and where indeed the Bishops of the Anglican Communion should be focusing their energies and attention.

The Lambeth Conference 2008 employing an *Indaba* style, provided more time for the Bishops' spiritual reflection, learning, sharing of experiences, and a time for discerning more fully the Bishops' particular role in God's mission.³ *Indaba* is a Zulu word for a gathering for purposeful discussion. It is both a process and method of engagement, as people listen to one another concerning challenges that face the community. This approach enabled the Bishops to focus.

2. The Daily Telegraph, July 25, 2008, Comment.

3. Welcome Message from the Chairperson of the Lambeth Conference Design Group, Archbishop Ellison Pogo.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, in his welcome address to the gathering, suggested that the Conference had three main aims, namely⁴

- Encourage bishops to become more confident in their Anglican identity, by deepening their awareness of how they are responsible to and for each other;
- Encourage bishops to grow in energy and enthusiasm for their task of leading in the work in the Anglican Communion;
- Encourage bishops in attendance through the *Indaba* Groups, to give voice to their aspirations and concerns.

The *Indaba* Groups certainly provided space for this to happen. The Bishops listened to one another and shared the concerns of the Anglican Communion. Although there was a plethora of concerns, such as terrorism, poverty, HIV and AIDS, human sexuality, bad governance, environment, Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and so on, affecting the Anglican Communion at the time of this conference, it was apparent that the elephant at the Conference was the issue of human sexuality.

To use Harold Lewis' insight on this issue of human sexuality, it has become an 'iconic' issue rather than a 'burning issue', because it has become emblematic of deeper issues that affect the Anglican Communion.⁵ It is a fact that the Anglican Communion has always come across challenges and will always do, but in this period it seems all attention has been shifted to one challenge, which is human sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. When one considers this issue seriously one will realize that there are certainly serious challenges, such as poverty, which are affecting millions of people in the world and yet all the energy in the Anglican Communion seems to be expended on the issue of homosexuality. Because of this, some people feel that the whole discussion surrounding this debate is a deliberate ploy, by one section of our Communion to force others to fight their own wars. In Africa particularly, there are heavier and more serious challenges that the Church should be expending its energies on other than human sexuality. It is in Africa that millions of children are dying of malnutrition every day. It is in Africa that there is a problem of child soldiers. It is in Africa that many children of school-going age are failing to go to school. It is in Africa that millions of women are dying in childbirth. It is in Africa that HIV and AIDS is devastating the continent. The litany of woes affecting Africa's people

4. <http://www.lambethconference.org/vault/program.pdf>

5. Harold T. Lewis, *A Church for the Future: South Africa as the Crucible for Anglicanism in a New Century* (New York, NY: Church Publishing, 2007).

stretch to bad governance and the case of Zimbabwe is a glaring example. It is seen in the unjust exploitation of Africa's rich resources by foreign multinationals and governments, which sinks Africa in abject poverty.

Human sexuality does not pose a threat to millions of lives in the world. The Anglican Communion will have to contend with the fact that the *sitz im leben*, 'context in life', will have to be considered when issues are brought to the table for discussion.

The Anglican Communion is not a homogenous conglomeration of believers. People from different traditions gather not as angels but as sinners to seek God's grace. In this setting, there is need to understand each other and celebrate our differences. There are some African Bishops who argue that there are no homosexuals in Africa, but the reality is that they do exist. Africans have, over centuries, evolved methods of managing and containing it.⁶ The local context has always determined how it was dealt with.

It is within this purview that we should shift the attention of Christian believers, especially in the Anglican Communion, to the realization that there are life and death issues to which the Church should be giving precedence. The MDGs are apt for the Anglican Communion to pour its energy into, in making better the lives of millions of poor people.

The MDGs is a rare kind of global agreement signed in 2000 by 189 governments around the world, whose aim is to achieve greater justice and reduce poverty.

The goals are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empowerment of women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Reduce maternal mortality;
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability;
8. Develop a global partnership for development.⁷

Most governments are already working towards ensuring that by the year 2015 these goals will have been achieved.

The MDGs echo something of the Biblical prophets and of the mission of Jesus Christ. For example, Mic. 6.8 urges us to 'act justly

6. Archford Musodza, 'Rewriting' the Bible: Its Canonical Implications and Meaning for Anglicans in the City of Harare (unpublished MPhl Arts manuscript, 2003).

7. <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God'. On the other hand, Isa. 58.6-8, urges us 'to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke...share food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked to clothe him...then your righteousness will go before you and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard'. Amos 5.24 sums it all by saying 'let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream'. Jesus also expressed in his life and words that he had come to bring good news to the poor.⁸ In all these biblical references it becomes clear that the aims of the MDGs fall within the ambit of the mission of the Church. Consequently, the Church should be putting its weight behind this global agreement and ensure that through its believers every effort is made to realize these goals in the set time frame. Let us now consider the MDGs from the Botswana context.

Millennium Development Goals: A Botswana Perspective

We should note that though the United Nations came up with a concerted effort at reducing poverty and alleviating injustice in the world, Botswana had earlier on come up with its own vision document entitled 'Vision 2016' or 'Long Term Vision for Botswana: Towards Prosperity for All'. 'Vision 2016' was launched in 1995, as Botswana's strategy to propel its socio-economic and political development into a competitive, winning and prosperous nation. Seven key goals were identified to achieve these goals:

1. An open democratic and accountable nation;
2. A prosperous, productive and innovative nation;
3. An educated and informed nation;
4. A moral and tolerant nation;
5. A united and proud nation;
6. A compassionate, just and caring nation;
7. A safe and secure nation.⁹

A cursory comparison of the above goals and the MDGs will show that there are two that are common to both groups, namely the ones with regard to education and on being a compassionate, just and caring nation. In this context, the MDGs were superimposed on Botswana's Vision 2016, thereby creating targets that are tougher than the MDGs.

8. Lk. 4.18-19.

9. <http://www.vision2016.co.bw/>

Let us focus on the MDGs from a Botswana context and see what has been done so far, what needs to be done and how the Anglican Church can participate in the whole undertaking. We shall look at each of the eight MDGs and evaluate the current situation.

Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

It is estimated that some one billion people live on less than one US Dollar per day. In addition to that, it is also estimated that some 850 million people – mostly women and children – suffer from chronic hunger or malnutrition. Every three seconds, a child dies because of extreme poverty and disease.¹⁰ Despite its macroeconomic success, Botswana has a serious problem of poverty compared to countries of similar economic stature. In Botswana, poverty is fundamentally a structural problem. It is a consequence of a narrow economic base, which limits opportunities for gainful employment; a poor endowment of agro resources; a small and sparsely distributed population of about 1.7 million people; and as a result of the population distribution, a small and fragmented market. Collectively, these attributes translate into limited capacity for sustainable employment creation and poverty reduction.

In this situation, unemployment and underemployment is one of the causes of extreme poverty in Botswana. The poverty is higher in rural areas because opportunities for formal sector employment are fewer. This poverty also tends to have a gender bias towards female-headed homes. On a large scale, extreme poverty is also exacerbated by HIV/AIDS, which takes people out of work, destroys accumulated wealth and creates new groups of vulnerable people.

We should, however, note that Botswana has made modest progress against unemployment in the last decade, although the global credit crunch is now reversing that progress. Several people, especially from the mining sector, have lost their jobs or are working for few days at a lower salary. This has further complicated matters in the effort to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

The Government of Botswana has tried its best to ensure that all its citizens are fed. For example, there is a school feeding program, a range of welfare/development programs – the Remote Area Development Program (RADP), the Old Age Pension, World War II Veterans Grants, Destitution Policy, Orphan Care Program, Home Based Care – and many other initiatives to ensure that no one will

10. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&lpos=lft_txt_goal-8

experience extreme hunger. The physical availability of food is assured through the national food security policy and strategy that recognizes Botswana's limitations in food production. This policy seeks to increase domestic production and provides for adequate capacity to import and store food supplies to supplement local domestic production. The Botswana government continues to ensure that there is food security in the country. The New National Master Plan for Arable Agriculture and Dairy Development is an undertaking that seeks to raise agricultural productivity and output through commercialization, modern crop and animal husbandry techniques, and improved infrastructure and extension services.

Whilst the Botswana government needs to be commended for its efforts in ensuring that extreme hunger and poverty is eradicated, the Church in Botswana has not done much. Other than a few Kitchen Soups, dotted across the country, there is no broad sustainable program in place to assist in the efforts towards the eradication of poverty and hunger. What the Church seems to concentrate on is dealing with symptoms of extreme hunger and poverty instead of dealing with the causes. Soup Kitchens are a noble undertaking but one needs to ask why they are children and women on the streets whom the Church ends up caring for.

The major challenges in the eradication of extreme hunger and poverty include the ever-rising unemployment, the global credit crunch, HIV and AIDS, as well as the adverse climatic conditions in Botswana. This is a semi-arid country whose climatic conditions are influenced mostly by the Kalahari Desert, which covers the greater part of the country. In this context, the Church in Botswana, especially the Anglican Church, needs to adopt a vigorous policy to ensure that it plays a significant part in the alleviation of extreme poverty and hunger in Botswana.

Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

More than 115 million children of primary-school age do not receive an elementary education. In the same vein, worldwide, 774 million adults lack basic literacy skills and more than three quarters of that live in 15 countries belonging to the African Continent.¹¹ This is also a very shocking revelation. Recent studies have shown that education reduces poverty. This is because the majority of people who suffer the consequences of extreme hunger and poverty are those who have little or no education at all. For many people, education is certainly the only hope to

11. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&Ipos=lft_txt_goal-8

rise above poverty and reach their God-given potential. But this is not possible in most cases, as most parents are poor and some communities do not have buildings as well as qualified teachers needed.

In Botswana, education has been taken as a key development priority since its attainment of independence in 1966. Botswana's primary education goal is to produce a competent and productive workforce. It also gives priority to universal access to basic education, equity and quality. Botswana has built schools in almost every settlement. Although the provision of qualified teaching staff is still a challenge, Botswana has continued to hire qualified teachers from other countries. The government continues to take education seriously, as shown by its investment in basic education. To show its commitment to education, the Government of Botswana deliberately ensures that education gets the largest allocation of funds in its fiscal budget, averaging more than a fifth of its budget. This has enabled Botswana to offer free education in all public schools, thus eliminating direct costs as a constraint on access.¹² More schools have been built, reducing the distance that a child should travel to school to just 5 km for primary schools and 10 km for secondary schools. The government also supports its citizens who qualify to attain higher levels of education by providing scholarships to them to study at the local university or in other universities in the world. We should point out that in all these initiatives Botswana has managed to achieve gender equity in education, with both boys and girls being afforded equal opportunity in schools.

The Anglican Church in Botswana used to own schools that provided basic primary education to the nation. However, with the return of missionaries who were manning those schools the financial support for these schools also dried up. This posed a huge challenge to the Church, which was left with no choice but to give up these schools to the government. Consequently, the Anglican Church at present is not involved at all in primary education other than pre-school education. Notwithstanding, the Anglican Church in Botswana has come up with an ambitious program of building two International Schools – one in Francistown and another in Palapye. It is intended that these two schools will assist government efforts in ensuring that everyone manages to get primary education in Botswana.

Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Research has shown that more than 40% of women in Africa do not have access to education; some 584 million women are illiterate. It is

12. <http://www.indexmundi.com/botswana/millennium-development-goals.html>

also shown that more than 80% of farmers in Africa are women and that women earn 10% of the world's income, yet they work two out of three of all labor hours worldwide. Another picture is that two million children, mostly girls, are enslaved in the global sex trade.¹³ In many cultures, especially in Africa, a girl is devalued from birth and denied access to education and other human rights. Girls are also given exhausting chores and exposed to domestic violence.

Botswana has made significant progress in this regard. For example, discriminatory clauses in its legislation have been removed to allow everyone to achieve their full potential. Because of this development, women are now able to assume decision-making positions in the political arena, and in both the private and public sectors. However, in some churches like the Anglican Church, this is still not the case, as women cannot be ordained to the priesthood. The Anglican Church in Botswana is a part of the Church of the Province of Central Africa, which at present does not ordain women. Only when a decision is reached at Provincial level for allowing the ordination of women will the Anglican Church in Botswana ordain women. However, some denominations in Botswana have women clergy.

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Every day, on average, more than 26,000 children under 5 years of age die around the world, mostly from preventable causes. Nearly all of them live in the developing regions. Amongst some of the causes of these deaths, diarrhea accounts for almost two million deaths per year among children under the age of 5 years, and undernutrition is associated with up to 50% of child deaths.¹⁴ This is despite that there is enough food to feed everyone in this world. In his impassioned address after the 'Walk of Witness', Prime Minister Gordon Brown, reminded the gathered Bishops that they had 'marched to stand up for the ten million children in this world who because of our failure to act collectively will die from unnecessary and avoidable deaths from tuberculosis, from polio, from diphtheria, from malaria, all diseases we know we have it in our power to eradicate'.¹⁵ The point the Prime

13. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&Ipos=left_txt_goal-8

14. <http://www.indexmundi.com/botswana/millennium-development-goals.html>

15. <http://www.lambethconference.org/daily/news.cfm/2008/7/25/ACNS4468>

Minister was making in his speech is that these diseases can be contained only if the world 'acts collectively'.

It is noteworthy in regard to this goal that Botswana was on track to reduce child mortality significantly until HIV and AIDS made its impact felt in the mid-1990s. Until then, fewer babies were dying at birth or within five years of their birth than at the end of that decade. From the mid-1990s, child-mortality rate increased significantly primarily because of the HIV prevalence. However, with the use of antiretroviral medication (ARVs), the child-mortality rate has now been contained. Botswana's primary child immunization objective is full immunization coverage for all vaccine-preventable diseases. The government has also embarked on a rigorous program of providing Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy to its citizens who test positive for HIV/AIDS. This has helped to prolong life.

Goal 5: Reduce Maternal Mortality

Every minute, somewhere, a woman dies in pregnancy or childbirth. This adds up to 1400 women dying each day — an estimated 529,000 each year from pregnancy related causes. It is also known that almost half of the births in developing countries take place without the help of a skilled birth attendant. In this situation, risk factors include poor health, poverty, low levels of education, mothers who are malnourished, mothers who are too young or too old, and pregnancies too close together.¹⁶ This is a very disturbing scenario. The death of a mother creates havoc for the surviving child, thereby causing a vicious circle in the fight against poverty because the surviving child may find it difficult to go to school, ending up having their own child when they are still young.

Childbirth is a serious health risk for women in Botswana. This risk is more serious for young mothers because they are more prone towards unsafe and illegal abortions and a higher risk of complications at birth due to physical underdevelopment. About 300 in every 100,000 pregnant women die during delivery.¹⁷ Despite the availability of health facilities in Botswana and that an overwhelming majority of expectant mothers use preventive health services such as prenatal care and are assisted by trained professionals during

16. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&lpos=lft_txt_goal-8

17. <http://www.indexmundi.com/botswana/millennium-development-goals.html>

delivery, it seems the maternal death rate is still high. This has been ascribed to various reasons to do with lack of capacity in dealing with emergencies and lack of facilities and personnel to handle obstetric emergencies. There is, therefore, need to improve and manage maternal health.

The Anglican Church does not have hospitals and it is naturally difficult for it to provide any significant help in this area. What the Church can do, however, is to provide education to women – through organizations like the Mothers' Union – so that they can make informed decisions when to have children and also be empowered to take care of their reproductive health.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

This is a big challenge across the globe. The facts provided by World Vision suggest that:

- At the end of 2007, more than 33 million people were living with AIDS.
- Some 25 million people have died as a result of AIDS since the disease was identified.
- Africa remains the region hardest hit by AIDS; 68% of all people living with HIV and 76% of AIDS deaths in the world are in sub-Saharan Africa, even though the region only accounts for 12% of the world's population.¹⁸

AIDS, malaria and other diseases are killing people at a terrifying and growing rate, resulting in the reversal of the positive effects of more than 50 years of development gains in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since Botswana's first case of HIV/AIDS was reported in 1985, this epidemic has progressed rapidly causing the death of many Batswana. However, this situation is now being reversed because of political will by government to fight this disease. The government has put substantial amounts of resources in the fight against HIV/AIDS but a lot still has to be done in the area of behavioral change. Although ARVs are available free for those who need them, the major problem is that some people still do not want to go for testing to know their status. The national program of Mother to Child Treatment is aimed to reduce the transmission of the virus and it has been working very well. From a transmission level of 20% in 2006, it has gone down to

18. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&Ipos=lft_txt_goal-8

10% in 2009.¹⁹ This is a marked improvement. However, other diseases that cause havoc in Botswana are tuberculosis and malaria and the government has programs to deal with these.

The Church's response has been gradual given the complexity of a disease like HIV and AIDS. There has been a huge struggle in teaching people to use condoms, for example, because of the Church's stance on chastity outside marriage and fidelity in marriage; as well the cultural reserve to discuss matters of sexuality openly.

The Anglican Church's response to the threat posed by the HIV and AIDS pandemic has been to establish numerous Day Care Centers to help the affected and infected children. Three centers at Mahalapye Mothers' Union Centre, St Peter's Church, Mogoditshane in Gaborone, the Holy Cross Hospice Day Care Center in Gaborone exist at present. The Anglican Church also founded in 1995 the Holy Cross Hospice to provide palliative care, psycho-social support and spiritual care. In regard to combating malaria, the Anglican Church is presently engaged in the Netforlife program funded by the Episcopal Relief and Development. From the beginning of the year the NETS program has been able to distribute over 17,747.

Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

In many parts of the world it is clear that forests are disappearing at unprecedented rates, displacing indigenous people from their native homes and uprooting their livelihoods. On the other hand, the collapse of fisheries around the world is threatening to exacerbate hunger and poverty among poor coastal communities throughout the developing world. In addition to that, it is also noted that more than one billion people lack access to safe water and 2.6 billion people lack access to proper sanitation. It is also a well-known health fact that lack of safe water, sanitation, and adequate hygiene contribute to the leading killers of children below 5 years of age, including diarrhea, pneumonia, neonatal disorders, and undernutrition.²⁰ Environmental care is not an option but mandatory for all of God's people. To destroy the environment is suicidal for humankind.

In Botswana, the natural resources include land, minerals, water, flora and fauna, and they form the backbone of its economy and

19. <http://www.indexmundi.com/botswana/millennium-development-goals.html>

20. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&Ipos=lft_txt_goal-8

livelihoods. Thus they have to be preserved and protected. In fact, the basic principle of the governing and management of these resources is to integrate the conservation of natural resources into the national development process. Botswana has therefore put in place some national environmental legislation and strategy to ensure that the environment is protected. Accordingly, there is equitable access to land resources in Botswana, such as water and land. Although water is a scarce resource in Botswana, the country is on the course to ensure that almost everyone now has access to safe drinking water, as evidenced by the availability of piped water in the entire country. Added to this reality, most households in Botswana have some form of sanitation on site, which helps in the prevention of diseases that thrive in poor sanitation. Slum conditions are a rare phenomenon in Botswana.

Although Botswana is a huge country with a land surface of 582,000 km², only 5% of this is available and less than 1% is tilled.²¹ This is so because the bulk of the land in Botswana is desert and some of it is used for reserved forest and vegetation whereas the other is used for National Parks and Game Reserves.

The major challenge is the ever-increasing demand for water. This calls for projects to protect surface and underground water resources to meet the demand. This means ensuring that when it rains, the water is captured and stored in clean places ready for domestic or industrial use.

In this regard, the Church should be found to be championing issues of environmental preservation. The Church must also come up with programs to ensure that the land that is under its care is protected and that it is not only protected but also utilized productively. The key in working towards this goal is to ensure that people do not cut trees wantonly; instead, people need to be encouraged to plant trees. People also need to be educated on the importance of water and how it can be preserved.

Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

We need each other. This need of working together means we have to network and work together. This also calls for honesty in our obligations and keeping promises. According to World Vision, 'we can end extreme poverty if the world's 22 industrialized countries keep their promises to devote 0.7% of their gross national product to humanitarian

21. <http://www.indexmundi.com/botswana/millennium-development-goals.html>

assistance'.²² On the other hand, the poor nations also need to play their part, in fighting corruption and promoting good governance to ensure that there is cooperation and partnership for development.

Botswana is a land-locked country that could not survive without global partners. Botswana has benefited from international development, cooperation, trade and investment. Because of its good governance and stable political environment, it has managed to sustain good relations with developed and developing countries across the world.

The Church should likewise explore connections with others parts of the world to ensure this global partnership for development. The Anglican Church in Botswana has such relations through Link Dioceses with the Dioceses of New Castle in England, West Missouri, and North Carolina in America. There are also plans to connect with some dioceses in Asia and Africa so that through Mutual Corporation and partnership we may play a productive role in the spiritual, social and economic development of our communities.

Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to discuss the MDGs from the context of Botswana. In this vein it is apparent that there are important matters presented by the MDGs that the Anglican Communion should be involved in, which will greatly benefit the rest of the world. In light of such pressing issues of life and death, haranguing each other on issues of human sexuality is insane behavior. The sane thing is to recognize the many challenges that we face in Africa and the world, on which we have not made any significant progress in dealing with: issues of democracy and good governance, HIV/AIDS, malaria, poverty, gender, the environment. We ignore these and waste much time and energy on homosexuality.

We must rededicate ourselves to God's Mission, which the Lambeth March clearly demonstrated, blowing as a fresh breath of the Holy Spirit and clothing us in 'our rightful minds'. The Mission of the Church is always to enhance and make better the lives of all God's children. This we can do if there is a collective effort towards meeting the MDGs. For us in Botswana, a blend of the MDGs and the Vision 2016, will make this country a '*compassionate, just and caring nation*'. What more can one ask for the rest of the world but that through the Mission of the Church, our world too become a compassionate, just and caring world. This is what really matters, not human sexuality.

22. http://www.worldvision.org/content.nsf/learn/g8-good-8?open&Ipos=lft_txt_goal-8