



Be More Challenge Guide

'A guide to setting your own challenges and taking action to bring lasting change.'



1. Introduction

Welcome to Caritas Australia's Be More Challenge Guide!

This guide has been created to assist you in setting and completing your challenges. As this is a guide, please feel free to adapt or modify the activities outlined to suit your situation.

We would love to receive your feedback regarding this resource. If you have comments or suggestions please send them to bemore@caritas.org.au

We hope that this guide will assist you as you set out to 'Be More' and make your dream for a better world a reality!

1.1 Overview of the Be More Challenge

Do you see things happening in your community – locally, nationally or maybe even globally – that you wish you could change? Maybe it is the lack of respect people have for your local park by leaving rubbish everywhere, or the injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples in Australia, or maybe it is the impact of global climate change on the poor...

Do you want to do something to make a difference, but are not really sure what? You're not alone! Lots of people have a desire to make a difference but are not really sure where to start or how to go about it. The best way to start to make a difference is to change ourselves and the way in which each of us lives in the world.

The Caritas Australia Be More Challenge, inspired by the words of El Salvadorean Archbishop Oscar Romero '*Aspire not to have more, but to be more*', invites people of all ages to take up the challenge to be more in their daily lives and take action for social and environmental justice.

By setting yourself five challenges – personal, family, local, national and global – you will, through your own actions, be tackling the structures of poverty and bringing about personal and global transformation.

The experience of taking up the challenge and using the Be More website as a tool for social action will change not only the way in which you view the world, but the way in which you live in it.

2. Before getting started – be reflective, passionate, inspired, self-aware and informed!

The following 5 activities have been created to assist you in:

- reflecting on the issues that concern you,
- identifying issues that motivate you to act,
- becoming more aware of your own skills and talents, and
- deepening your knowledge of the areas in which you will take action.

If you are taking the Be More Challenge as a group it is also good to start with these reflective activities as it will help each member of the group to become aware of the others' concerns, desire for change and the skills and talents you each bring to the group.

2.1 Be reflective.

Take a moment to reflect on what is happening in the world around you. In the light of what you see, think about your dream for a better world. We all have different hopes relating to our different experiences of life. Working this out will help guide you in setting your challenges and planning your actions.

What do you see happening in the world? What makes you angry at injustice? What change do you want to see?

What's your dream for a better world? What do you want to see more of?

In order for the world to become that better place, what would need to change in the following areas?

Personal?



Family?



Local?



Nationally?



Globally?



2.2 Be passionate.

There are lots of things that require change and lots of areas where you can make a difference, but to be effective it is important to set your priorities.

Revisit your reflections on the things that you would like to change in the world .

Identify the issues that you are most passionate about as they will motivate you to act.

Try putting them in order of priority for you personally.

For example:

I am passionate about...

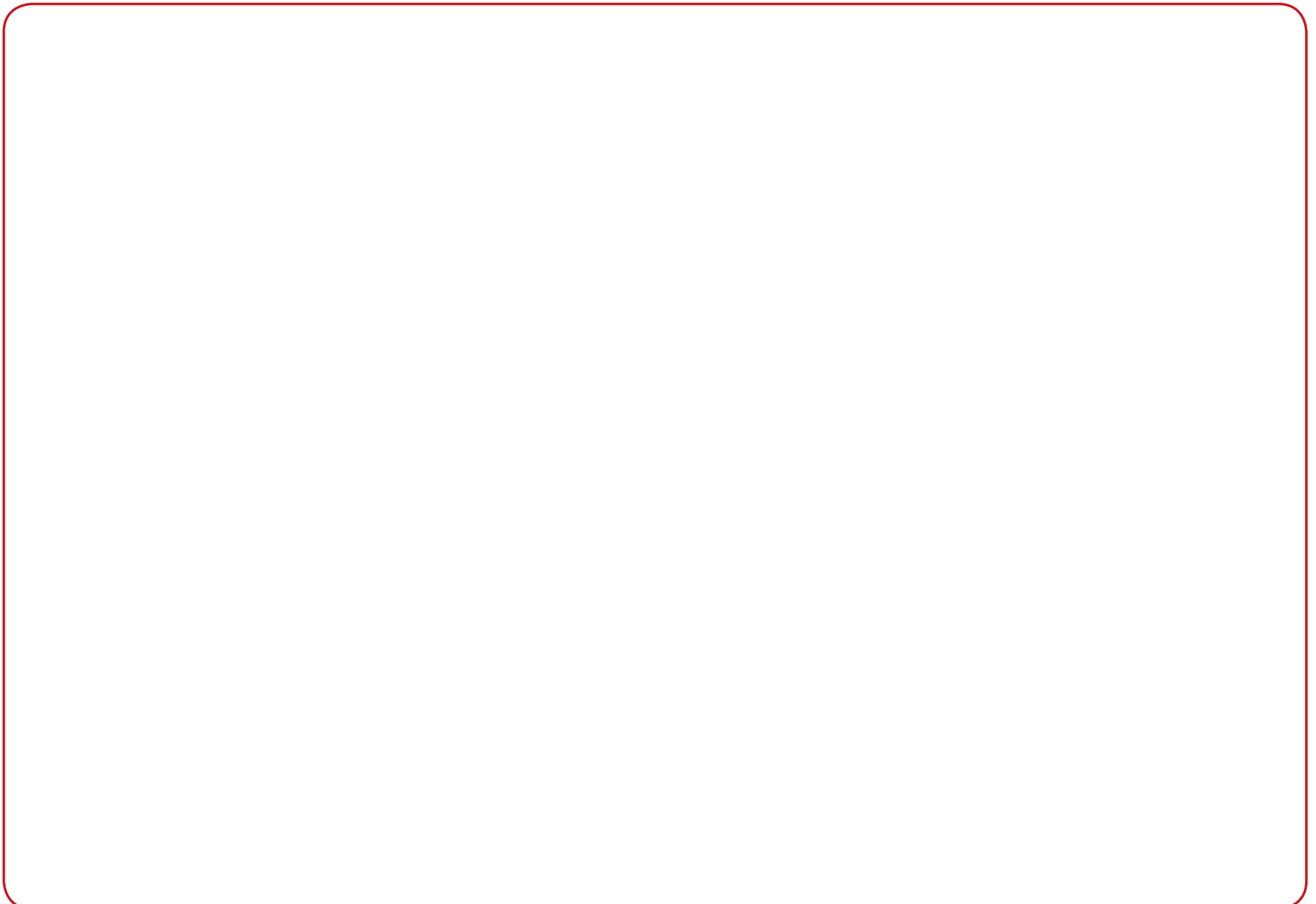
1. Climate Change
 2. Indigenous rights
 3. Education
 4. Consumerism
 5. Disability rights
- etc.



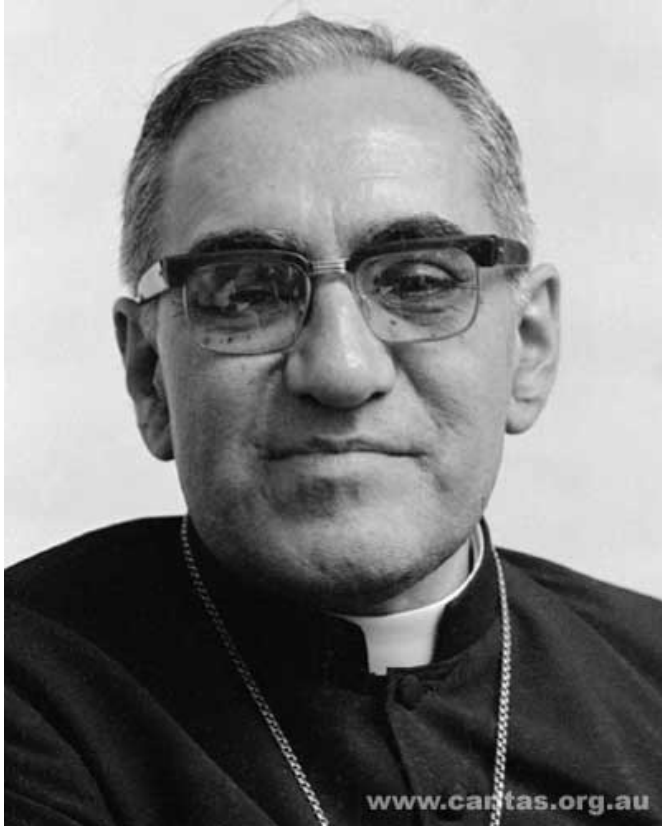
2.3 Be inspired.

Take a moment to reflect on who or what inspires you to Be More and why. Do you have a hero or a mentor – someone that you look up to, someone that has said, written or done something which encourages and inspires you to be more? Is there someone or something in your life that you really respect or that represents to you what you want to be? It could be someone that you know personally, or someone engaged in the community as a leader, author, or activist – it could also be an image, song or poem?

Write here the names of a few people or things and why, exactly they have inspired you to be more.



Some of the people that inspired the Be More Challenge



Oscar Romero 1917-1980

An uncompromising determination to do what is right, true, and just became a guiding principle for Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. In his actions and words, he demanded peace, a peace that could only be found in human rights and assurances of basic dignities. He raised awareness globally about all the people in his country, El Salvador, who had been tortured or slaughtered, and of those who had “disappeared”.

He told the truth, but like many great leaders who have fought for truth, Romero was assassinated. A single bullet transformed him into a martyr. His life was taken, but his voice could not be silenced. Romero became a symbol of hope in a country ravaged by poverty, injustice, and sorrow.

In his book *The Harvest of Justice* (1993), Daniel Santiago writes about Romero: “But hope is not resignation; it is a commitment to continue to struggle even when things seem to warrant surrender, when hope flares, it allows human beings to overcome monstrous difficulties. It allows people to defy common sense and confound strategists. Hope experienced in the extreme, like faith and love, is miraculous.”

As with many Central American countries, El Salvador was a national security state, a country where the military was accountable to no one and the people were defenceless against tyranny and oppression. There was no peace. In the face of this injustice, Romero took it upon himself to use the Church as a light of hope and to challenge the oppressors.

Romero made many profound speeches about poverty, injustice, consumerism, the environment and the need for love, peace and solidarity. The following quotation is just one amongst the many that have inspired the Caritas Australia’s Be More Challenge.

“Giving up something frees the self from slavery to a civilisation that encourages us more and more to comfort and to consumerism without any concern for protecting our environment, the common patrimony of humanity.” Pay attention to these words which even serve for worldly matters! We are victims of a consumer society, of luxury. And we are buying consumer goods, because the advertising is overwhelming, and we buy things which are beyond our means. We want to live in luxury, we want to consume like everyone else does and we are becoming victims, slaves.’ March 4, 1979 [Note: Romero is quoting from Pope John I’s 1979 lenten message (*L’osservatore romano*, no, 9, March 4, 1979, 12).]



Teopista – Uganda

Five years ago Teopista's family lived with many hardships. Although she and her husband Fred worked hard to provide for their 7 children, she recalls: "My family ate one meal a day. Sometimes we went without food when we had no money and nothing to cook." Despite her efforts: "We couldn't afford school fees so sometimes the children were sent home from school." Like many subsistence farmer families in Kyampisi village and across rural Uganda, poor family nutrition and hygiene had also led to preventable diseases, particularly for the children. Subsistence farming provides a livelihood for over 80 percent of Ugandans.

Poor land management, environmental degradation and recent increases in extreme weather variations have impacted heavily on their fragile livelihoods. Pests and diseases have further threatened their staple food crops, cassava and the cooking banana, 'matoke'.

In 2003 Teopista's family felt new hope when they joined the Caritas Australia supported Sustainable Agriculture Project, run by Caritas Lugazi. The project supports 900 subsistence

farmer families with practical training to manage their land and resources sustainably, improve their household's food security and increase their income.

Teopista joined one of the project's small farmer groups, making a cardboard farm plan to maximise use of her small plot of land. The group began working together, meeting twice a week for practical on-farm training and to practise organic techniques to improve their crop yields. Teopista explains: "I learnt to keep my land fertile by making organic fertiliser, to grow organic pesticides and to look after crops and animals with food and medicine we can grow ourselves. We learnt to construct better storage to stop pests destroying our food."

Farmer groups also learn to harvest rainwater. For much of the year Teopista's water tank now saves her family the five hour journey to collect clean drinking water from the local bore each week. Caritas Australia provides the farmer groups with materials including wheelbarrows, hoes, maize, banana plantlets, cassava stems, cows and goats on a 'revolving fund' scheme. Teopista will soon repay her cow with its first calf, to be given to another farmer in her group.

Farmers also receive training in basic nutrition and hygiene. Teopista's training has enabled her family to construct a foot-operated 'tippy-tap' to wash their hands, a drying rack to keep dishes off the ground and a mud-walled toilet and bathroom. By encouraging the participation of men, women and children as a family unit, the project is developing women's leadership. Teopista is now one of the farmer trainers in Kayunga Parish.

"I was sent to learn to make energy saving stoves and now I help others make them. I can also teach farmers to start tree nurseries for firewood and animal fodder," she said. With less wood needed for the stoves, women and children now spend less time searching for firewood. The reduced smoke has also decreased eye and respiratory infections. Caritas Australia's support is transforming the lives of farming families. Having gained trust and confidence in themselves through team work and cooperation, the farmers are in turn supporting their wider communities. Each farmer voluntarily trains two others; they share their knowledge at farmer field days. They have also established Good Samaritan Clubs, working in group gardens to provide vegetables and supporting those in the community with HIV/AIDS.

Like many participants, Teopista's family now eats three meals a day and can make better plans for periods of scarcity. Family nutrition has improved: "We can now eat vegetables and rice and eggs from our chickens," says Teopista, who is also able to sell some vegetables. The increased income has allowed her family to adopt young twins, who had been abandoned. Their health is improving and they are now able to go to school. Teopista was only able to finish primary school, so providing her own children with education is very important to her. "We are now able to save a little money each week for the school fees," said Teopista. "One day I would like to return to school too."

2.4 Be self-aware

In order to be more and to make a real impact, you have to make the most out of your skills and talents. All of us have them, and by being aware of them and using them, we can make a difference.

What are your skills and talents? List them here. Ask for advice from your family and friends, or a teacher. They might have noticed that you are good at talking to people or that you are good at analysing problems.

What skills would you like to develop or enhance? Think especially in relation to the issues that you would like to address and any special skills that may be required.

What do you require to develop these skills?

Be aware of what you enjoy doing so that you can incorporate it into your actions. If you're having fun then you will stay interested and motivated to continue until the end.

What things stop you from doing something about the issues you want to change?

How will you overcome or deal with these?

Remember what you have listed here when you decide on your challenges and develop your action plan. For example, if you're a great writer, but not so good at public speaking, set yourself actions where you can influence people through written expression. If you enjoy music, choose an action that allows you to express your musical talents such as organising a concert.

2.5 Be informed.

Take some time to deepen your knowledge by becoming more informed about the issues that concern you. This will assist you in being more effective and have a greater impact as you carry out the challenges you have set yourself.

Based on the issue/s you have identified, ask yourself the following questions...

What more can I learn about the issue that concerns me?

What makes this issue unique and important?

What is the cause of the issue and why?

Who is most affected by the issue and why?

How does this issue differ locally, nationally, and globally?

What approaches have already been taken to understand and tackle the issue?

What groups are currently working on addressing the issue and how? (think about different sectors such as government, corporations, non-profit organizations, youth groups, United Nations agencies, etc.)

Write a list of further questions that you would like to seek the answers to.

How can you access more information?

- Library – check out books, magazines, films, and more
- Internet – visit websites of interesting organizations, government sites, on-line newspapers and magazines. But make sure you evaluate the accuracy of the information you find on the Internet.
- Family, friends and teachers – you may be surprised by what they know!

List here websites, books and resources related to the issues that you want to address:

3. Setting and implementing your challenges.

3.1 Setting your challenges

Now that you have identified issues you are passionate about, learnt more about them, and identified your skills, it is time to set your challenges, develop an action plan and implement it!

Keeping in mind the issue/s you identified, how are you going to be more? What goal will you work towards in your action plan?

The Be More Challenge encourages people to set 5 challenges – personal, family, local, national and global. You may do one challenge at a time or choose to focus on all of your challenges on the same issue.

e.g. Climate Change

personal – walk to school;

family – convert to green power;

local – organise with neighbours a community garden;

national – join a local climate change action group ;

global – raise awareness about the impacts of climate change.

What's your goal?

Brainstorm some possible challenges related to it:

Personal



Family



Local



National



Global



Make your Challenges SMART!

Specific – Be clear and concrete about what you want to achieve.

Measurable – Is your challenge written in a way that will let you know in the end if you have completed it or not?

Ask questions like ‘how much?’, ‘how many?’, ‘how long?’ and ‘how will I know when it is accomplished?’

For example, you may aim for 200 signatures for a petition.

Achievable – Make sure you will be able to complete your challenge considering the time, skills and resources you have.

Making your challenges achievable will help you stay motivated.

Don’t forget, however, that one person can do amazing things if they put their heart and mind to it!

Realistic – Do you truly believe that you can complete your challenge?

If you do that’s fantastic; your challenge is realistic. If you don’t maybe you need to change something about it to make it more realistic.

Time-bound – When do you want the challenge to end?

Maybe by a certain date or maybe after you have raised a certain amount of money or maybe once you have done a specific number of things.

3.2 Developing your action plan

Each decision that we make has an impact. Whether it is the way we treat others or what we buy, everything we decide to do has an effect. By choosing to take on the Be More Challenge, you are deciding /committing yourself to set goals and work towards them in order to ensure that you are making a positive impact.

When setting your actions remember to be realistic, and to be as creative as you like. If your action plan is based not only on something you are passionate about, but on something you enjoy doing than you are more likely to remain committed to it!

If your action is to raise money, combine this with something you think is fun, like cooking or painting. This way you can sell what you created and donate the profit. Or if you care about the environment and enjoy being outdoors and doing things with others, why not plant a community garden!

Just remember Rome wasn’t built in a day – so you don’t have to save the world in one action!

Run your action ideas by some friends and get their advice and feedback. It doesn’t matter if they know nothing about the issue; in fact this can help you as they may ask questions or give reactions which will make you rethink or confirm your plan.

Use the following table as a guide for setting your actions and taking the steps required to bringing about positive change.

	Personal	Family	Local	National	Global
Challenge/goal					
Action/s					
Timeframe					
Resources required					
How you will know you are successful?					
Who else could you involve?					
Possible Obstacles					
What help might be needed/ solutions to obstacles?					

3.3 Networking – identifying your sphere of influence

What is a sphere of influence?

Think of a smooth surface of water and imagine throwing a stone into it, you see ripples encircling where the stone splashed in. You are like that stone – the relationships you have with people that are close to you, that you meet in passing or that you only know from international news, will experience the vibrations of your actions.

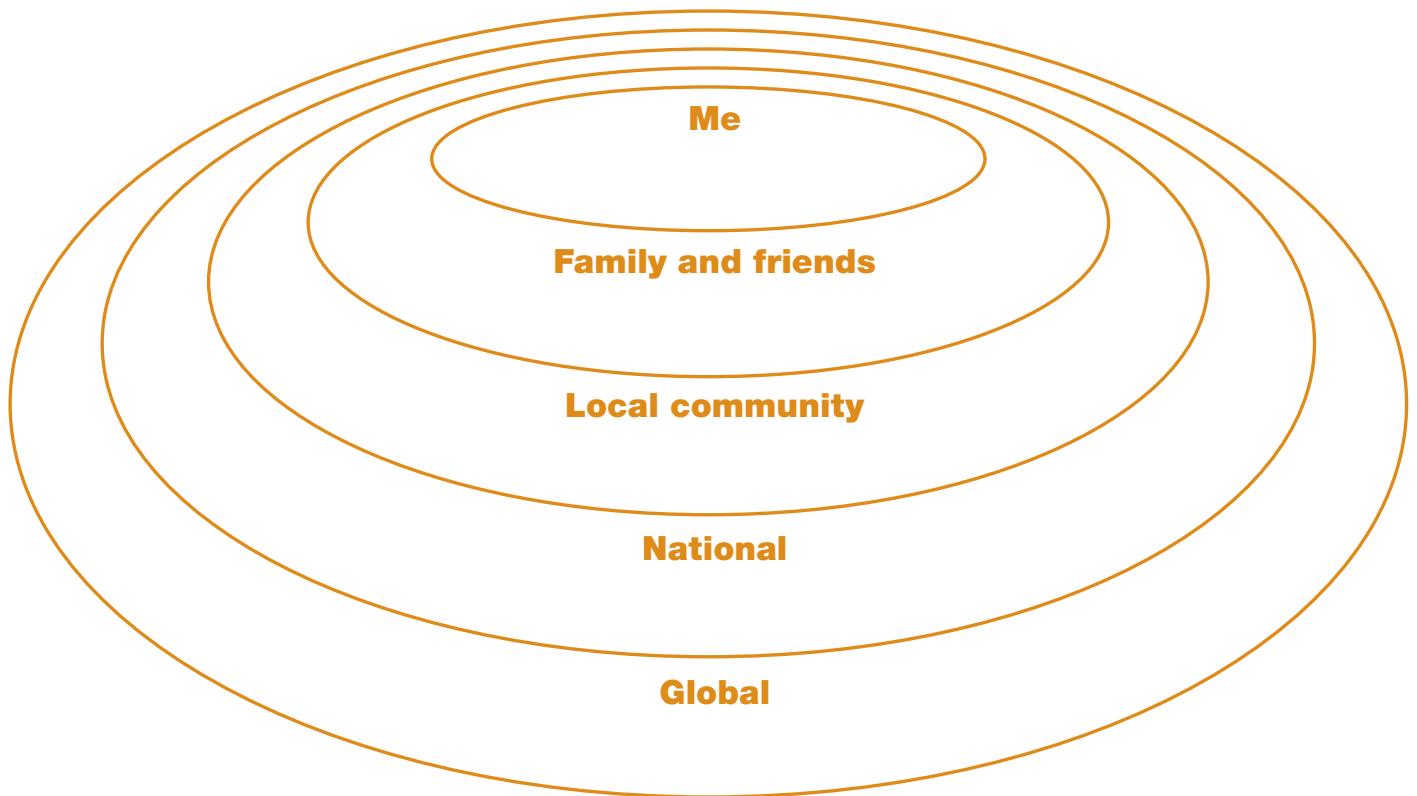
What is a network?

A network is a group of people or resources that can assist in making information and opportunities more accessible to each other.

How can your sphere of influence and networks help you to take action?

Being conscious of your sphere of influence will help you identify the people that you can approach for support and those that are not within your direct reach. Similarly, networking can give you ideas, give you access to knowledge and experience and help you gain support for your actions.

In each of the following circles write the names of people you know who could assist you in achieving your challenges and people that you require a connection with in order to be successful in your actions.



In each of the following circles, write the names of people you require a connection with in order to be successful in your action and identify who you already know who may be able to help you make this connection.

Raise awareness

It can also be helpful to get publicity and let people know about what you are doing! Word of mouth is one of the strongest marketing tools. Let others know how and why they should get involved! Inspire them to Be More

3.4 Now do it!

Congratulations! You are on your way to Being More!

Warning: it is inevitable that you will stumble across a few hurdles and obstacles along the way. (That's ok – go back, re-think, re-new, re-start!)

How are you going to get over these and stay on track?

How will you stay motivated?

Take a moment to think about what you've done, and how much you've changed since you decided "I'm going to BE more".

Seek help when you're faced with challenges. You'll be surprised at how eager people will be to give you support and advice.

Persist! You are doing a great job. You are not just sitting back whinging about all the problems in the world, you are challenging yourself to bring about change. You're putting your beliefs into practice, so be proud of yourself and see just how many people will be inspired to do something because they've seen you work so hard. Actions speak louder than words.

Tips for completing your challenges

We hope that completing your challenges will be exciting, fun and fulfilling.

Here are a couple of tips to help complete your challenges successfully.






1. Stay safe. If you're going somewhere you don't normally go or speaking to someone you don't normally speak to, tell an adult where you are going. Or even better take an adult with you. Even if you are old enough to do this yourself invite a friend to go with you.
2. Tell everyone you know about your challenges and your profile page. It is great to get encouragement and support whilst completing your challenges. You never know what ideas and resources your friends and family might have to help you make your challenges a success.
3. If you're organising an event make sure you have it in a safe, contained area. If it is going to be really big think about what sort of security and first aid you'll need.
4. Remember to "aspire not to have more but to be more". Part of this means doing your challenges as cheaply as possible. Here are some ways to save money: ask people to volunteer their time and resources; research different options; use recycled materials; make things yourself instead of buying new things; be creative.
5. If you've decided to clean up a local area remember to wear sunscreen, gloves and appropriate footwear.
6. If you're planning on volunteering with an organisation, do some research to make sure they are official and that they will look after you whilst you are with them.
7. Respect other people's ideas and work. If you're going to use something someone else has made or done (songs, artwork, films, slogan, etc.) make sure you follow the appropriate copyright laws.

3.5 Monitoring and evaluating your actions

Monitoring

Monitoring your challenges at each stage will help you to respond to changes that occur along the way. It is helpful to set out milestones or measures of success to make sure you stay on track. The more specific your “milestone,” the easier it will be to evaluate your achievements.

Create your own list of milestones based on your challenges:

Personal 
Family 
Local 
National 
Global 

Evaluation

In the process of meeting each challenge, and when you have completed it, it is important to reflect on the experience, thank those who assisted/supported you in completing your action and ask yourself whether there is another challenge that has evolved from the first one. Taking time to reflect on what you have learned throughout each stage of your action is an essential part of ensuring that your efforts have a lasting impact.

The following are some questions to guide you in evaluating your experience:

- What motivated you to act?
- Did you enjoy completing the challenge?
- How did you feel during and after completing the challenge?
- What were your most useful resources?
- Did you meet any obstacles in completing your challenge? How did you overcome them? How did you resolve any problems?
- Would you change anything about your experience? How and why?
- What have you discovered about yourself?
- What skills have you developed by taking action? What skills do you need to improve on?
- How did you stay motivated?
- Were you surprised by any of your successes?
- Was there anything that you didn't achieve? How can you achieve these in the future?
- What outcome are you most proud of?
- What outcome do you wish you had approached differently? Why? How?
- What have you learnt and how are you going to use this in the future?
- What advice would you give to others who take up the Be More Challenge?



4. Setting group challenges – be together... be united for change!

4.1 Identify skills within the group

Teamwork means having a group of people who work together towards a common goal, with a shared sense of purpose. It is important to realise that everyone in your group has different passions, skills and talents.

Have an open discussion with your group to allow all team members to share some of the skills that they would like to develop and improve upon at the individual and group level. To do this all team members could complete section 2 of this resource or the table below and share their reflections with the group. By doing this you will also be able to identify common issues of interest which will help you set your group challenges (local, national and global).

Name	Things I like to do	My skills	Issues that I am passionate about

Great teams are those that allow for:

- A sense of trust and belonging
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Respect for diversity
- A space for ongoing learning and growth
- A shared sense of ownership
- Effective and ongoing communication
- A sense of fun, creativity and openness

4.2 Developing a group plan – distributing tasks and responsibilities

Hopefully, you now feel ready to develop a group action project!

From the issues which group members shared as those they feel most passionate about, decide together which one you will focus on, what exactly you want to achieve (remember SMART) and possible actions for achieving this.

	Challenge	Possible actions
Local		
National		
Challenge		

Share tasks and responsibilities

Now that you have agreed upon your challenges and your actions, share together the tasks and responsibilities so that everyone can contribute to achieving your goals.

	Activity	Resources	Responsibilities	Deadline
Local				
National				
Challenge				

Caritas Australia

Caritas Australia is the Catholic agency for international aid and development in Australia.

Caritas Australia belongs to an international confederation called Caritas Internationalis, a network of 162 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations working to build a better world, especially for the poor and oppressed, in over 200 countries and territories.

Caritas is one of the largest international humanitarian networks, working with people regardless of their religion, race, gender or ethnicity.

Caritas provides a beacon of hope for tens of millions of women, men and children in times of hardship and contributes to the development of social justice in times of peace. Caritas' mandate includes integral development, emergency relief, advocacy, peace building, respect for human rights and support for proper stewardship of the planet's environment and resources.

The Caritas approach is based on Catholic Social Teaching, which focuses on the dignity of the human person.

Caritas Australia's work is focused in three areas: promoting sustainable development so communities can help themselves out of poverty, responding to emergencies by providing shelter, nutrition and healthcare and also working in Australia to change the structures which perpetuate poverty.

Encourage self-reliance via development programs

Caritas Australia supports communities through long-term development programs in Africa, Asia, East Timor, Latin America, the Pacific and in Indigenous Australia. Our focus is on providing integrated development through health and hygiene, water supply and sanitation, housing, education and literacy, programs for women's rights, teaching of job skills for income generation, assistance after natural disasters and environmental awareness.

Disaster response

Caritas Australia is part of one of the world's largest and most effective emergency response networks – Caritas Internationalis. Whenever or wherever disaster occurs, Caritas Australia can respond almost immediately. Caritas works through local partners to provide emergency relief including food supplies, clothing, housing and medical attention to those who need it most.

Change attitudes in Australia

Caritas Australia aims to promote a just and compassionate society at home and abroad. We work in schools, universities, parishes and community groups around Australia to raise awareness of the reality and causes of poverty, hunger, oppression and injustice and the interdependence of poverty and affluence.

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