

# CRISIS IN YEMEN

Age range: 11 - 18 years

Time: approximately 30 minutes

## Outline

This learning workshop uses an **opinion continuum** activity which asks young people to work through their views about a controversial issue such as the crisis in Yemen. The activity could be easily adapted to discuss other conflicts around the world or conflict in general.

An **opinion continuum** is a helpful way to explore complex issues and diverse viewpoints. For example, how do we make sense of the facts that Britain both provides humanitarian aid to Yemen *and* sells weapons to Saudi Arabia, a country deeply involved in the conflict?

Just how should young people respond to this puzzling situation? The **opinion continuum** activity will help them to think critically, question their assumptions and reach conclusions.

How to run an **opinion continuum activity** is explained in full in this Oxfam guide Oxfam (2015) – [Global Citizenship in the Classroom](#) (page 16)

## Learning objectives

- Participants apply prior learning to deepen their understanding of the Yemen (and similar crises) through discussion and questioning each other's opinions.
- Participants articulate their opinions clearly and review them in the light of the opinions of others

## Outcomes

- Participants develop a deeper understanding of a complex emergency such as the Yemen crisis
- Participants critically analyse the best way to respond to the Yemen and/or similar crises as active global citizens

## Key questions

- What are the relationships between conflicts and humanitarian crises?
- What are the roles of the British government and public during a crisis like the one in Yemen?

## Resources

- PowerPoint presentation: Crisis in Yemen
- Action Guide: Crisis in Yemen
- Oxfam (2015) – Global Citizenship in the Classroom (page 16)

## Curriculum links

### England

KS3 & KS4 Citizenship (2014) – Purpose of study, aims, subject content.

### Wales

ESDGC (Choices and Decisions) and PSE (Active Citizenship) – National Curriculum for Wales.

### Scotland

Social Studies – Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

## Session outline

### 1. Before you begin

Young people should have a basic knowledge of the Yemen crisis.

- View and discuss the PowerPoint presentation in this resource.
- If there is time, share and discuss media reports of the Yemen crisis.

### 2. The Opinion Continuum (30 mins)

This activity requires space for a continuous line (real or imagined) from one side of the classroom to the other.

In the activity participants are invited to stand or move along the line depending on their level of agreement (from totally agree to totally disagree) with a number of statements. The statements may be adapted depending on the age of the participants and the length of time available.

One end of the line represents total agreement with a statement while the opposite end of the line represents total disagreement. All the points in-between represent different degrees of agreement and disagreement. Therefore everyone's view will fall somewhere on the line. There are no right or wrong answers.



*From Oxfam (2015) – Global Citizenship in the Classroom (page 16)*

Begin with the young people standing along the line, explain the activity and read out the first statement. Ask the young people to move to the position on the line that best represents their opinion. Then ask volunteers at different points on the line to briefly explain why they have taken their position. In the light of the opinions expressed, ask if any participants would wish to change their position and ask them to explain why.

Repeat the process by reading and reviewing the remaining statements.

At the end of the activity debrief the young people

- How many changed their positions after hearing others' opinions?
- What led them to change their minds?
- What have they learned from the activity?

Alternatively, to encourage the young people to practise negotiation skills you could divide them into groups and ask them to come to a group decision about each statement.

### **Possible Statements**

These may be adapted depending on the age of the participants and the length of time available. However, aim to discuss Q13 and Q14 about young people's responses to the crisis.

1. I already knew something about the Yemen crisis before today.
2. Yemen's people need peace more urgently than food and water.
3. Countries at peace do not have famines.
4. It's not possible to provide effective humanitarian aid during a conflict.
5. Poverty and inequality cause conflict.
6. Conflict causes poverty and inequality.
7. It's important for people to know about what's happening in Yemen.
8. The main responsibility for the crisis in Yemen lies with the government and people of Yemen.
8. The main responsibility for the crisis in Yemen lies with the government and people of other countries.
10. Crises like Yemen can be solved.
11. If the conflict in Yemen ended tomorrow, it would be quite easy to end the humanitarian crisis.
12. It's important for a country like Britain to have a strong weapons industry.
13. Countries should be free to sell weapons to whichever other countries they want.
14. The most effective thing young people can do is to fundraise for the Yemen crisis appeal.
15. The most effective thing young people can do is take part in the red line action asking the British government to do its utmost to push for an immediate ceasefire in Yemen.

### **Differentiation**

*Make it easier:* Reduce the number of statements and simplify the language

*Make it harder:* Add additional statements and discuss participants' responses more fully

## What to do next

- Move on to the Action Guide.  
Young people are asked to fundraise for the Yemen crisis appeal and/or participate in a campaign action
- The link to Oxfam's Yemen crisis appeal: <http://bit.ly/2LRsOLd>

## Terms of use

Copyright © Oxfam GB

You may use photographs and associated information in this resource for educational purposes at your educational institution. With each use, you must credit the photographer named for that image and Oxfam. You may not use images and associated information for commercial purposes or outside your educational institution. All information associated with these images relates to the date and time the project work took place.