

Tackling Global Poverty Together

Oxfam Active Global Citizenship Conferences 2010

Pre-Conference Lesson Plan

Introduction

This lesson plan introduces the main themes and issues students will explore in greater detail at the Oxfam Active Global Citizenship Conferences 2010. Students should have the opportunity to work through the activities in this lesson as necessary preparation for the conference.



UN MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1

'Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice.'
Nelson Mandela

To reduce poverty ... by 2015

This game is from *Change the World in a Day*.
A set of games and activities for 7-14 year olds investigating the UN Millennium Development Goals.
www.oxfam.org.uk


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About 1.2 billion people around the world live on less than US\$1.00 (£0.65) per day. In 2000 the global community agreed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The first MDG commits countries to halve the proportion of poor people living on US\$1 by the year 2015. However in many countries progress towards this goal is uneven and slow.

What does it mean to be poor? What are the causes of poverty? The conference will pose these questions and challenge young people to be part of their solution.

This issue is made more complex by the impact climate change is having on the world's poorest people. Climate change is estimated to affect 4 billion people around the world and its impacts cost US\$125 billion per year. This is more than the world's total aid budget.¹

Therefore this lesson plan asks students to evaluate the impact of climate change alongside other causes of poverty

Aims

- To provide a basic introduction to the themes and issues to be developed in the Oxfam Active Global Citizenship Conferences.
- To define 'poverty' and consider the impact poverty has on poor people's lives
- To enable students to make links between the impact of climate change and other causes of poverty

Learners

- Consider what it means to be 'poor'
- Use a case study from Peru to evaluate the vulnerability and difficult choices faced by poor people
- Demonstrate that poverty is complex, with many connected causes and effects, and suggest some appropriate solutions to poverty

What to do

The activities in this lesson should take around 60 minutes to complete. Guidance notes for each activity and resources follow

Activity 1 – Introduction: What is poverty?

Activity 2 – Living on US\$1 per day

Activity 3 – Poverty Connections

Activity 4 – Plenary: Poverty Solutions

Further Resources

The online pack Change The World In Eight Steps includes further information and activities related to the Millennium Development Goals. It can be downloaded [here](#)

Online resources about the impact of climate change on communities in Peru and other countries are [here](#)

¹ Global Humanitarian Forum – 'The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis' (2009)

Lesson Plan

Activity 1 – Introduction: What is poverty?

(Suggested Time: 10 minutes)

Show the group the poster of Lucas Riquelme playing near his home (see above). A pdf of the poster may be downloaded [here](#)

Ask the students

- If they believe Lucas is 'poor'
- What they can see in the photo to help them reach a conclusion
- The questions they would ask about Lucas and his community to reach a firmer conclusion (eg: the things they can't see in the photo that would be useful to know)

Conclude the activity by writing up a list of factors the students think can be used to define 'poverty'

Useful questions to ask as prompts

- Is poverty always to do with money?
- Is there a connection between poverty and having control over your life?
- Is there a connection between poverty and feeling safe and secure?
- Is there a connection between poverty and the environment you live in?

Activity 2 – Living on US\$1 per day

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)

The following case study describes life in Lucas Riquelme's community in greater detail.

Alpaca farming in Peru

Lucas Riquelme is seven years old and lives in Macusani, a small town high up in the Andes in Peru. His father owns a herd of alpacas, which he farms for their wool. Although Lucas's family is relatively well-off, most alpaca farmers are very poor, earning less than US\$2 (£1.30) a day on average, and cannot meet their basic needs. They live in small shacks with no heating and barely enough to eat.



Macusani is on the side of on a mountain called Allinccapac, which is topped by a glacier. The whole of the mountain-top used to be white with snow, but nowadays great expanses of bare mountain are visible. The glacier is melting away because of climate change. This worries the people very much, because their water supply comes from the melted snow and ice that flow down in the warmer season of the year. Lucas's teacher, Carlos Enriquez, says 'Our students are aware that there is a possible water crisis coming if nothing is done.' Climate change could cause many people to have to leave their homes, abandon their way of life and find another way of supporting themselves.

Meeting the MDGs will help lift people like the alpaca farmers of Macusani out of poverty. However, the challenge of climate change also needs to be addressed – rich countries should pay to help poor countries cope with its effects, so that people like those in Macusani will be better able to adapt to the changes that are being forced upon them.

A poor person in Lucas' community earns US\$1 (65p) per day.

US\$4 (£2.60) is just enough to buy food for a family of five for one day: one kilo of chicken, two kilos of potatoes, and enough bread for breakfast and an evening meal. However the price of food has been going up. It may soon rise again.

- Read the list of basic needs below and ask the students to think about those things families in Lucas' community need and rank them – with 1 being the most important and so on.
- Cross out any items from the list that the students don't think people in Lucas' community need.
- The five members of the family include one young child and two teenagers. Therefore having a regular income of US\$4 per day means that the children are working instead of attending school.

Basic Needs

- Money for rent or mortgage (if they are renting or buying a house)
- Money to pay off existing debts (if they have any)
- Clothes for the family. (Apart from protection from the weather and decency, people need proper clothes for work)
- Repairs to the house or to things in it. (The house might leak when it rains)
- Gas, electricity or fuel for cooking and heating. (Most food needs to be cooked. People living in cooler climates need to keep warm)
- Medicines, doctors, clinics and hospitals. (Most countries do not provide these for free)
- Transport. (People might need to take goods to the market or travel to other towns to work)
- Money for school fees. (In some countries there is no free state education)
- Water. (Most people have to pay water companies for providing water)
- Savings (People need extra cash in case severe weather destroys their crops or the price of food goes up)

Conclude the activity by thinking about the amount of money the family has to meet their basic needs.

After buying food the family has US\$1 per day to cover these needs

- What choices do you think the family should make about how to spend their income?
- Does this activity help you to understand the meaning of 'poverty' more clearly? How?
- Does being 'poor' increase the family's vulnerability to shocks? (eg: bad weather, water shortages, illness etc). How?
- Does being 'poor' act as a trap keeping the family in poverty? (eg: through lack of education, illness, lack of money to invest in farming etc). How?

Activity 3 – Poverty Connections

(Suggested Time: 20 minutes)

- Ask students to read through the following cards together and discuss in groups how each card is connected to others
- Ask students to put the 'Poverty' card at the top of their large sheet of paper and to arrange the other cards underneath it to show how each condition is connected to or caused by another.

When they agree on where to put the cards they can glue them down. They should now draw arrows from the 'Poverty' card and from one card to another to show how they are all related.

- What are some of the factors that contribute to poverty? (eg: lack of jobs, poor access to land, people unable to sell their produce for a fair price, extreme weather conditions, caused by climate change, lack of services such as health care, poor transport, etc)
- Discuss what steps would have to be taken to break the cycle of poverty (eg: programmes of free healthcare, funding for education, helping communities to adapt to climate change)
- Ask one or two groups to feed back on their discussions.

Poverty Connections

SCHOOL

Some children may miss school because their parents cannot afford the fees, because they work or because they are too ill to attend.

GIRLS' EDUCATION

Girls are often prevented from going to school, as they may be needed to help at home. Sometimes their parents do not think education is important for girls.

NOT ENOUGH MONEY

People who have no work, and people who are unable to sell what they grow for a fair price, cannot earn enough to pay for their basic needs – food, clothing and shelter.

ENVIRONMENT

Climate change means floods and droughts are becoming more frequent and severe. Poor people are becoming more vulnerable to their impact because they cannot grow the crops they need to survive.

POVERTY

1.2 billion people have an income of less than US\$1 (65p) per day

ILLNESSES

Many people have illnesses, such as diarrhoea and malaria, which could easily be prevented or be less serious if they had better medicines and healthcare.

DEATH IN CHILDHOOD

Young children who do not have proper food and healthcare are more likely to die before they grow up.

THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS

Pregnant women who do not have good medical care, food and health education will be more likely to die in childbirth.

Activity 4 – Plenary: Poverty Solutions

(Suggested time: 10 minutes)

In the previous activity students began to suggest solutions for poverty. The plenary asks them to group together and evaluate these ideas.

- Ask the students to think about their poverty solutions under two headings

Providing poor people with basic services such as health and education, and guaranteeing a fair price for their produce

(The MDGs)

Helping poor people to cope with the impact of climate change

(Adaptation)

- The students should go through the poverty solutions they suggested in activity three and place them under the appropriate heading.
- If students think some solutions fit either (or neither) heading they can create a third 'not sure' category.
- Students should be asked to think about which solutions they think are most important.
- One way of going about this is to ask if any solutions are 'magic bullets' – in other words does implementing any particular solutions help create solutions to other problems? One frequently cited 'magic bullet' is girls' education as educating girls is linked to improvements in the health of the whole family.
- Students should also weigh up how implementing the MDGs and adapting to climate change are linked. To what extent does finding a solution to poverty involve tackling both these challenges? Alternatively can we tackle poverty by just following one of these two approaches?
- Some groups should be asked to feed back their ideas to the class.