

THE POVERTY PROBLEM

Suitable for a younger group

A basic intro to poverty and justice

We know it can be hard to explain the complexities of poverty to your youth group, and even trickier to suggest how they can help solve the problem. But this resource makes it simple!

Start with the introduction ① before picking a case study ②, Bible study ③ and action ④ to create a simple session, or mix and match sections to suit your group.

Big group? Split into two groups, each discuss a different case study ② and Bible study ③ then share your thoughts together.

Short of time? Use a Takeaway Action ⑤ at the end of the session, instead of an Action-Packed Action ④.

1



Set the scene...

Introduction

Play the Spaghetti Game with your group (instructions on page 6), then ask everyone to say if they thought it was fair.

Explain that it was unfair because one group had more and others had less. This is a bit like the world that we live in. **The richest 1% of the world's people own almost half of the entire world's money.¹ But approximately 1 person in 8 doesn't have enough food to eat each day.²**

We often assume the word 'poverty' means how much money someone has. But Christian Aid thinks that poverty is also about the opportunities that people have to change their situation.

Ask your group how they felt during the game. Most of us are probably a bit like the people with more, but many others around the world are like those with less.

To make the world fairer, we need to start by learning how the poverty problem affects people just like us...

Pick one or more of these case studies to help explain the problems poverty causes.

If you use the Bible in your group, explore what it says about poverty and justice. Pick one or more!

Taking action is the best way to start solving the poverty problem. Use one or more!

2

What does the poverty problem look like? (Flick to page 2)

- When **fighting** makes life harder
- When **natural disasters** make life poorer
- When limited **food and water** make life difficult

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3

Bible Bits (Hop to page 3)

- Who is my neighbour?
- No more needy people?
- Acting justly and loving mercy?

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4

Action-Packed Actions (Whizz to page 4)

- Artsy and crafty
- Up for a challenge?
- Prayer warriors
- Film stars

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5

Takeaway Actions (Go to page 5)

Get your group members to complete one of these quick challenges before you next meet.

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For tips to help your session go smoothly, pop to page 6!

¹ oxfam.org/sites/oxfam.org/files/bp-working-for-few-political-capture-economic-inequality-200114-summ-en.pdf

² un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml

What does the poverty problem look like?

When fighting makes life harder



Get thinking

If you could live anywhere, where would it be and why?



Working together

Imagine you're in charge of creating a village in Iraq. You have five minutes to draw your village and to list the essential things it would have.

Meet Rojan...

Rojan, 15, lives in Iraq, where there has been fighting for decades. Rojan's village was destroyed by conflict, but with Christian Aid's help, her community rebuilt everything.

Now, the community has a reservoir that provides water for crops. Rojan helps with her family's fish farm and ploughs crops with her dad. The village is more peaceful now, but there is still no secondary school or hospital nearby. In spite of this, Rojan is optimistic: 'I hope life will continue to get better.'

War and fighting can make life harder – for Rojan's family it meant starting from scratch. Did your village look like Rojan's?

When limited food and water make life difficult



Get thinking

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?



Working together

Imagine you live in Zimbabwe, and you've been asked to provide your community with five foods to improve their diet. What would you choose? Why?

Meet Brighton...

Brighton, 11, lives in Zimbabwe. Changing weather there has meant the 'dry' season now lasts longer. This means that people's crops can run out, leaving them with no food.

Christian Aid has helped Brighton's village to establish a processing centre to preserve their food for longer.

Brighton helps his parents grow crops. When the family have eaten what they need, they sell the rest to the processing centre, where they can also buy more nutritious foods.

One of Brighton's favourite foods is kale, a healthy vegetable!

Food and water shortages meant Brighton's family didn't have a nutritious diet. How does Brighton's favourite food compare to yours?

When natural disasters make life poorer



Get thinking

If you had to choose one item to save from a burning building, what would it be and why?



Working together

Imagine that you live in the Philippines and your community has been warned that a storm is coming. You have five minutes to make a list of possessions to take.

Meet Raven...

Raven, 16, lives in the Philippines. In 2013, a typhoon hit, destroying Raven's family home and fishing boat, which his dad needed for his job.

More than half of all Filipinos live in areas prone to natural disaster, and when these strike, communities struggle to recover. Christian Aid provides emergency help so that people can rebuild their homes. Raven says: 'I pray every night that we can continue living and that my family are safe.'

Natural disasters can make people poorer – for Raven's family, it meant losing their home and possessions. How would you feel if you lost everything?

Bible Bits



Who is my neighbour?

You'll need: some willing actors and a couple of Bibles.

Turn to **Luke 10:25-37** and pick people to play: Jesus, a legal expert, two robbers, an injured man, a priest and Levite, a Good Samaritan.

Act out the story of the Good Samaritan, using the Bibles if you need to.

Who is our neighbour? This passage shows that it's not just someone from the same place as us; the Samaritan was from a different tribe. Today, being a 'good Samaritan' might mean caring for someone in need in a different country.

But Christian Aid doesn't just help those in need. It looks at the reasons why they are in need. So for the Good Samaritan story, it would mean asking why the man was attacked in the first place. Similarly, we need to ask why our world is unequal, as well as helping people who have less.



No more needy people?

You'll need: each of the verses from **Acts 4:32-35** on separate pieces of paper, four people to read them out loudly, some pens.

Encourage your group to read out their verses individually, then challenge them to put them in order. When they've finished, underline all the actions that the first group of Christians took.

This passage explains that because the Christians were so generous with their stuff, it meant that there were no needy people in their community. Christian Aid believes we should be generous to everyone, and love our community around the world as well as the one that surrounds us.

Being generous isn't always about money. We can also be generous with our time, using it to take actions to create a fairer world and pray for the work of charities such as Christian Aid.



Acting justly and loving mercy?

You'll need: a Bible and your thinking caps!

Ask your group to list the main things that they think God wants us to do in life. Then flick to Micah 6:8 and read this verse aloud together a couple of times. Say it quietly the first time, then get progressively louder!

Ask the group:

- How does this compare to the list that you wrote?
- Micah was a prophet. What comes into your head when you hear the word 'prophet'?

Explain that a prophet is someone sent by God to speak the truth. This verse demonstrates that God sees showing justice (or fairness) and kindness to others as two of the most important things we can do. Christian Aid thinks that this verse shows the way we should behave towards everyone in the world.

Speaking out about unfair things is hard. Often when we first try this, we can be shy (a bit like saying the verse quietly at the start). But with practice, we get better at being louder and more confident. Christian Aid talks to the Government to fight for justice all over the world – this is called **campaigning** and anyone can get involved.

Action-Packed Actions

Artsy and crafty

You'll need: newspapers or magazines, paper, paint.

Make a poster to help solve the poverty problem. Use some of the facts you've learned about Christian Aid and get creative by cutting and painting a masterpiece. Make sure there's a strong message, and once everyone's finished, stick the posters up somewhere people will notice them!

Then, take photos and email them to **collective@christian-aid.org** with 'solving the poverty problem through CRAFT' in the title.



Prayer warriors

You'll need: a quiet corner, newspapers, Bibles.

Construct a prayer-warrior prayer station. We think setting aside a quiet corner of your youth centre or church is super inspiring. Pray individually using the Bible studies and case studies we've provided, or find some newspapers and pray together for what's happening in the world. Don't feel like you need to pray for ages, but do be confident in praying for justice!

Take photos of your prayer station, and email to **collective@christian-aid.org** with 'solving the poverty problem through PRAYER' in the title.



Up for a challenge?

You'll need: lots of creativity, a big piece of paper and some pens.

Sit down together and think of things your group could do that would raise money for Christian Aid. The crazier the better – how about a sponsored stay-awake? Or a pyjama day? Or wearing clown make-up to church? Come up with an action plan and think about how much money you're going to raise.

Take photos during your fundraiser and email to **collective@christian-aid.org**. Let us know how much money you made, and include 'solving the poverty problem through FUNDRAISING' in the title.



Film stars

You'll need: a camera that can take videos or a video recorder, and some willing actors!

Create a poverty problem awareness video that encourages people to get thinking. Come up with a plan, get creative with props and make your script witty and funny. Film on location and explain your message confidently!

Send us your video if you're happy for us to show it to the world! Email a link to **collective@christian-aid.org** with 'solving the poverty problem through FILM' in the title.



Takeaway Actions

Think Fairtrade

This week, buy a Fairtrade product that you wouldn't normally buy. You could try a new snack or persuade your parents to purchase something.



Inform yourself

Christian Aid has a youth website with lots of exciting facts. This week, go to **christianaidcollective.org** and learn something new.

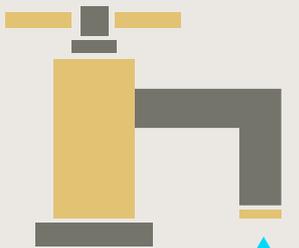
1%

Share a fact

Raise awareness of poverty, and inspire others by sharing this fact: **the richest 1% of the world's people own almost half of the entire world's money.**

Sacrifice a snack

Usually, we don't need all the food we eat! This week, give up one of your snacks and think about the privilege of having enough to eat.



Be water aware

Not everyone has access to clean water. This week, think about how much water you use. Switch off the tap when cleaning your teeth, or be thankful for the privilege of water.

Create a charity change box

This week, turn an old tub into a charity change box and encourage all of your family to put in their loose change. When it's full, donate to a charity (such as Christian Aid!).



Helpful leader info

The Spaghetti Game

You'll need: 10-20 sticks of spaghetti per group, sticky tape, string and a marshmallow for each group.

Instructions

- Split your group into smaller groups of two to four people. At the beginning, give each group the same amount of spaghetti, a limited number of tape pieces and a small amount of string.
- Explain that groups have five minutes to build the biggest structure they can out of spaghetti. At the end, a marshmallow will be balanced on the top.
- When groups have started planning and building, give one group extra pieces of tape and string (you could also offer help or hints), and then take things away from another group so that they have less than everyone else. Do this subtly at first, and then make it more obvious as time goes on.
- Just before the end of the game, hinder the group with fewer resources by breaking part of their structure (if you're feeling really mean, you could kick the whole thing over and pretend it was an accident!).
- When the groups have finished, keep pretending that it was a fair game until you come to the explanation!

Handy tips

You could split this resource into three sessions if your group are really keen. Spend three sessions looking at each case study and Bible passage, before taking action together each time, perhaps using the different Action-Packed Actions on page 4!

- The Christian Aid Collective is especially for young people who want to support the work of Christian Aid. We've created a page especially for group leaders to see what it's all about. Find out more by going to: **christianaidcollective.org/group-leader**
- Got questions? Need an extra hand with something tricky? Drop us an email at **collective@christian-aid.org** and we'll do our best to solve your problem, however big or small.
- Interested in our campaigns? There's plenty of information on our main website. Go to **christianaid.org.uk/actnow** to find out more!
- Have you raised some money? Pay it in by writing a cheque and sending it to:



Youth Fundraising
Christian Aid
PO Box 100
London
SE1 7RT

Please make sure you write the reference **A021562** on the back of your cheque.



Or pay it in over the phone by calling: 020 7523 2493.

Please make sure you quote the reference **A021562** when paying by phone.