

COUNTED OUT

CHALLENGING POVERTY & SOCIAL EXCLUSION



A RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS BY SANDRA GOWRAN

Combat Poverty Agency
working for the prevention
and elimination of poverty



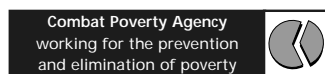
CITY OF DUBLIN VEC
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COUNTED OUT

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Poverty remains a serious issue for Irish society. The most up to date figures (2000) show that 4.4% of the population have an income below €172.50 per week and are deprived of at least one of eight basic necessities; 28.3% of the population live on weekly incomes below €172.50; just over a fifth, 20.9%, live on weekly incomes below €143.80.

Both the CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit and the Combat Poverty Agency reject the acceptability of poverty as an essential condition of society. On the contrary, this resource is an attempt to develop an understanding of poverty and exclusion as being social constructs. Embedded in the development of understanding is the message that it is our individual and collective decisions and actions that shape and mould our social systems and structures. Therefore, poverty is not inevitable. The power to transform and affect social change for a more equal society is possible through education. Poverty awareness education attempts to bring into focus a picture of poverty and exclusion that highlights groups that are all too often excluded from both the overt and covert curriculum. In so doing, poverty awareness education attempts to give voice to groups at risk of poverty and contribute to providing a more authentic picture of society and its injustices.

The fact that relative poverty is actually increasing in an Ireland that boasts of its greatest period of economic prosperity seems to be something about which we as a society are complacent. Including poverty awareness education in our schools is a statement of the unacceptability of this avoidance and gives voice to some of the experiences of injustice of our time.

There are a number of challenges implied here. These include a challenge to the status quo; a challenge to the underlying values of the curriculum; a breaking of the silence and a giving of voice to make sense of what many students experience in their everyday lives. Poverty awareness education, which includes opportunities to learn about and experience initiatives aimed at its redress, can challenge damaging stereotypes and images of hopelessness and dependence through portraying positive images of people affected by poverty.

For students not directly affected by poverty its inclusion provides an alternative analysis of society and equips them to understand better the complexity of Irish society. For all students involved in poverty awareness education skills of communication, listening, working collaboratively and co-operating are developed as well as those involved in analysing and processing facts, information, values and attitudes. As with other controversial issues the measure of success in raising an issue lies in the student's ability to question either their own or other peoples' assumptions and points of view.

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CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit / Combat Poverty Agency
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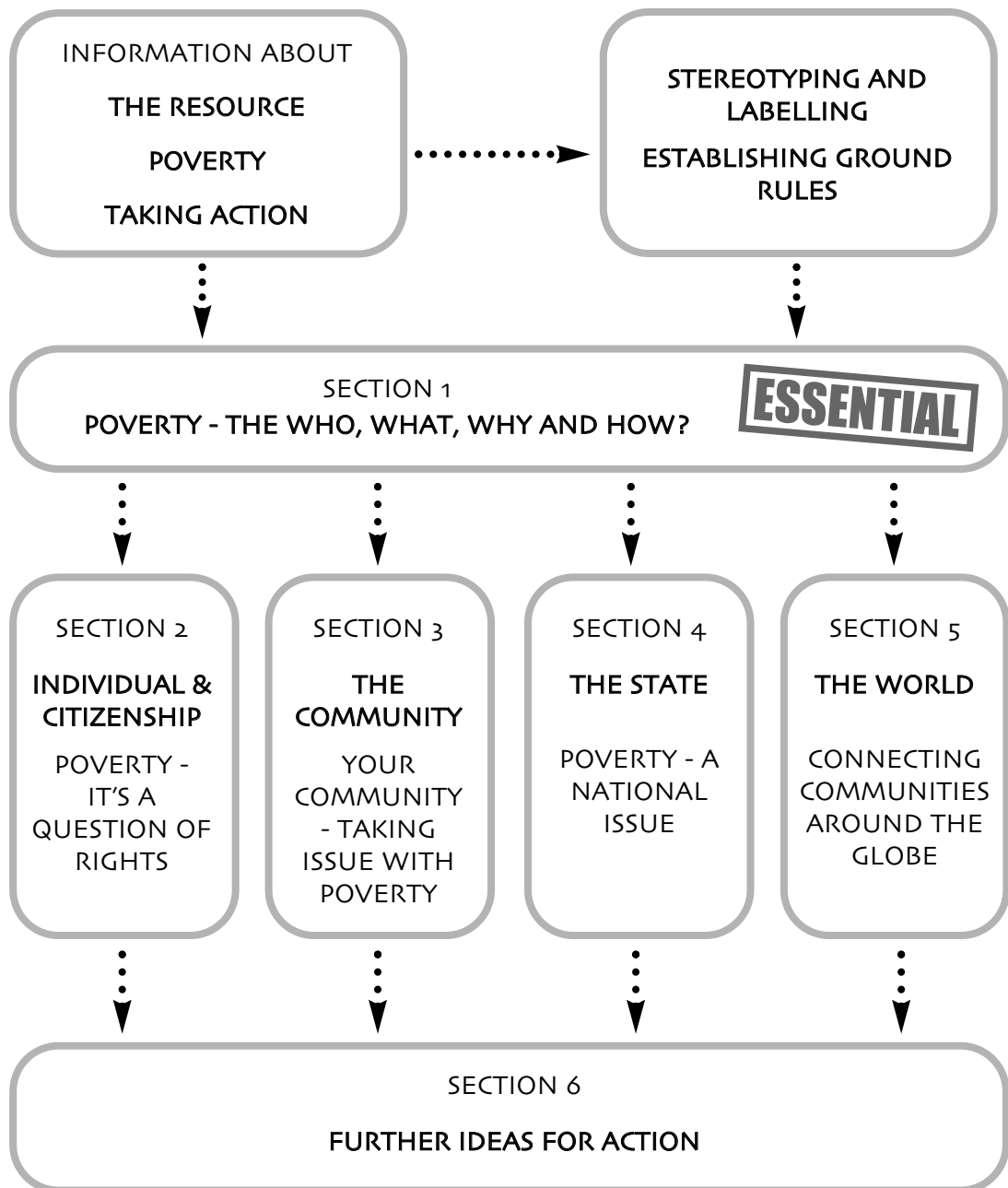
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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is designed for use primarily in Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE). However, it can be easily adapted for use in other subjects either at junior or senior cycle. In piloting this resource teachers have used it successfully in various subjects adapting the suggested methods and content to the particular curricular needs of the subject.

Therefore, cross-curricular use of this resource is strongly encouraged. It is particularly suitable for use in Religious Education, senior cycle Home Economics, Social Education in Leaving Certificate Applied, and Transition Year amongst other subjects and programmes.

Intended for use as part of a series of classes the resource is structured as follows:



USING THIS RESOURCE

USING THIS RESOURCE

The resource is in five main sections. Each section describes the aims, concepts, attitudes, knowledge and skills involved in the particular section and recommends certain activities. It is not expected that a teacher will work through the resource with their students from beginning to end, although it is possible to use it throughout the three years of the CSPE programme. It is expected however, that teachers will carry out some or all activities from Section 1 prior to any of the other sections. These activities are designed to develop students' understanding of the concept of poverty as it manifests itself in Ireland today. Each of Sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 relate to the four units of CSPE, namely The Individual & Citizenship; Into the Community; Ireland – The State; Ireland and the Wider World.

Teachers should note that the materials presented are resources which ideally should be adapted to individual class groups and situations. It is hoped that this resource will be used both by those who do not have a deep understanding of poverty and by those who have personal experience of poverty. The outcome for the former will hopefully be an awareness of, and commitment to, poverty alleviation. For the latter the resource offers an acknowledgement of their situation and a means to analyse it and work towards changing it.

It is left to the discretion of the teacher to choose and adapt the activities as necessary, taking into account the circumstances and sensitivities of the students.

THE RESOURCE AIMS TO:

- develop transferable skills to other subjects and areas of life, including analytical, communication, identification, and action skills
- increase understanding of the nature and extent of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland
- increase students understanding of the causes of poverty in Ireland today and to engage them in analysing responses to poverty
- foster attitudes of respect, understanding, and empathy towards people experiencing poverty, and/or social exclusion
- develop awareness of actions taking place to combat poverty
- explore ways in which students might be involved in a process of change by engaging with anti-poverty/community development initiatives in the community of the school
- develop in students a sense of belonging and an understanding of active citizenship in terms of its importance for a just and equal society.

¹ The Combat Poverty Agency is a state agency working for the prevention and elimination of poverty and social exclusion.

WHAT IS POVERTY?

Posing this question to any group of people will inevitably produce a varied response. However, the Combat Poverty Agency¹ (www.combatpoverty.ie) believes that poverty is caused by an unequal distribution of power and resources in society, and that eliminating poverty requires a shift in public policy to actively promote the inclusion of all. This resource is presented in keeping with this belief.

In defining poverty one must look at how it is measured. Poverty is usually measured in two ways:

1 Absolute Poverty

When people do not have the physical necessities of life such as food, housing or clothing to survive in the world, they are said to be living in absolute poverty. This term describes outright destitution, struggling to survive and to stay alive. It is used mostly in relation to developing countries (although there are people in Ireland who live in situations of absolute poverty).

2 Relative Poverty

In developed countries like Ireland, poverty is more often defined in relative terms, in other words it is understood in the context of the general standard of living that is accepted as the norm for a society. In Ireland The National Anti-Poverty Strategy, which was launched by the Irish Government in April 1997 says that;

People are living in poverty if their income and resources (material, cultural and social) are so inadequate as to preclude them from having a standard of living that is regarded as acceptable by Irish society generally. As a result of inadequate income and resources people may be excluded and marginalised from participating in activities that are considered the norm for other people.

This definition means that poverty is not just about money. It is also about not having the resources to participate fully in Irish society. Not having enough money is often compounded by being marginalised and isolated, discriminated against and feeling powerless.

The concept of **social exclusion** broadens our understanding of poverty, its causes and consequences. Social exclusion is a process which pushes people out to the edge of society and distances them further and further from the chance of a job or an adequate income, from social and educational opportunities, from social and community networks, and from power and decision-making.

POVERTY IN IRELAND²

The Living in Ireland Survey carried out by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) shows the groups most at risk of being in poverty in Irish society. The following list is based on that survey and information from other research in recent years:

- Households headed by an **unemployed** person are one of the biggest groups in poverty

¹ The Combat Poverty Agency is a state agency working for the prevention and elimination of poverty and social exclusion.

² Facts and Figures on Poverty. Combat Poverty Agency, 1999.

POVERTY IN IRELAND

- Households headed by someone **working full time in the home** (most of whom are women, and many of whom are elderly women living alone), or by someone who is ill or with a disability also make up a significant number of those in poverty
- **Children** face a much higher risk of poverty in Ireland than adults. Amongst a list of the worlds wealthiest nations Ireland ranks highly in terms of child poverty rates
- **Lone parent families** and larger families face a high risk of income poverty and lone parent families are also at risk of social isolation or discrimination
- **Travellers** face high risks of poverty and higher infant and adult mortality rates than the settled community
- **Homeless people** are exposed to high risks of poverty and other disadvantages
- People living in **public housing estates** and **remote rural areas** often experience multiple forms of deprivation e.g. income poverty, poor housing and lack of access to services like health or transport
- Poverty among **lesbians and gay men** is worsened by fear of prejudice and the experience of discrimination in employment, educational opportunities and access to services
- The **low paid**, particularly households or individuals who are reliant on that low pay and where there are children, are at risk of falling into poverty. Low pay may put a family just over an income poverty line at a particular point in time, but in the longer term it may not be possible to save or accumulate earnings to make expensive purchases like furniture or household appliances or for times of greater expense, like during illness, bereavement in the family or even Christmas and birthdays. People in low paid jobs may be vulnerable to unemployment and are less likely to have occupational pension or sick pay schemes.

Factors which influence the likelihood of being in poverty include the following, many of which are inter-related:

- Social class
- Employment status
- Educational experience
- Family size and type
- Ill health or disability
- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Household tenure
- Sexual orientation.

Poverty for individuals and families often means:

- Struggling to make ends meet on an inadequate income
- Being out of a job
- Living in poor housing
- Getting into debt
- Feeling discriminated against
- Suffering from poor health; physical or psychological
- Having fewer educational opportunities
- Surviving on an inadequate diet
- Having few social, cultural or recreational opportunities.

LEARNING ABOUT POVERTY

Like a multitude of social and political issues the subject of poverty is both complex and potentially sensitive. Therefore, it stands to reason that introducing poverty issues into the classroom requires a teacher to adopt a sensitive approach whilst dealing competently with controversy that may occur. It is important that the teacher reflects personally on their own attitudes to the issue of poverty, disadvantage and equality in general. Teachers need to be aware of the facts that relate to poverty in Ireland today. It is important to note that much debate and controversy can be settled by bearing in mind the following when dealing with poverty issues in the classroom:

- Clarifying definitions, for example how poverty is defined
- Emphasising social exclusion
- Emphasising denial of rights/full citizenship
- Emphasising the social, economic and political structures and systems that underpin poverty
- Examining wealth and its relation to poverty
- Challenging and discussing damaging stereotypes
- Challenging and discussing discriminatory attitudes and actions
- Not seeing people experiencing poverty as the problem
- Emphasising that many people experiencing poverty are actively engaged in trying to improve their situation
- Encouraging students to explore different responses to poverty, in particular empowerment approaches compared to charitable responses
- Being aware of different groups/geographical areas which experience poverty
- Emphasising the need for responses at different levels e.g. individual, groups/organisations, community, government, local, national and EU
- Ensuring that the study of poverty doesn't simply become an academic one but that students realise that poverty deeply affects peoples' lives.

Bassett, M. 1995. Poverty In Focus. Combat Poverty Agency

STEREOTYPING & LABELLING

It is strongly suggested that students address the issue of stereotyping and labelling prior to doing any of the activities in this resource, or prior to tackling any sensitive issue. The experience of being labelled should support students in understanding the impact of negative stereotypes on people who experience poverty.

Additionally, an important consideration when stereotypes arise is not to stop students expressing 'unacceptable views'. To do so, would only serve to hinder the examination of attitudes. Rather, it is crucial that stereotypes are challenged and 'unpacked' to the extent that their source is identified; it is then possible to move beyond the stereotype. An added advantage to this approach is that students are equipped with the skills to challenge stereotypical views when expressed by others. There are introductory activities on stereotyping and labelling included on pages 23-25 .

CSPE AND POVERTY AWARENESS

*"The content of this [CSPE] course has been written in the form of unit descriptions ...this format allows teachers and pupils enough scope and flexibility to select and deal with issues such as...**development, work and unemployment, poverty and homelessness...**"*

(CSPE Syllabus, page 3).

Poverty awareness education is intended to lead students to a commitment to action against poverty. The methods suggested in this resource, as is the case in CPSE and many subjects, are mainly participative or active learning methods. CSPE and poverty awareness education are aimed at:

- making students aware of the importance of active, participative citizenship;
- encouraging and developing practical skills which enable students to engage in active, participatory social interaction;
- encouraging students to apply positive attitudes and empathy towards other people.

In this regard active learning methods are designed to give students the opportunity to explore their own thinking on the topics and to develop a range of skills including communication, presentation and critical-thinking skills that utilise and develop the pragmatic (doing), cognitive (knowing) and affective (feeling) domains.

CORE CONCEPTS

The activities within this resource relate to many of the core concepts within CSPE, namely, Rights and Responsibilities, Human Dignity, Interdependence, Development, Democracy.

ATTITUDES AND VALUES

The development of poverty awareness as a component of citizenship education depends on fostering attitudes and values such as recognition, respect, awareness and empathy.

ACTIVITIES

Through the use of case studies, role-play, simulation games and discussion, amongst other methods, it is envisaged that development of poverty awareness will occur.

TAKING ACTION

What is an action project?

Throughout the resource ideas for actions are highlighted. These are intended to provide a springboard from which an action project could emerge. Ideally an action project should arise in class and be about something that is of concern or interest to students. If your students decide they would like to do an action project in the area of poverty awareness there are some points that you should consider both in relation to the CSPE programme requirements and the area of poverty.

Action Projects and CSPE

Within CSPE a valid action project should:

- Be based on one or more of the seven course concepts (Rights & Responsibilities, Democracy, Development, Stewardship, Law, Human Dignity and Interdependence);
- Have a genuine action component - there must be engagement/communication with a person or people;
- Be consistent with the human rights and/or social responsibilities perspective of civic, social and political education.

Action Projects and Poverty Awareness

In carrying out an action project on an issue related to poverty or social exclusion the following points are very important to bear in mind:

- In order that students become sensitised to the issues involved they should have completed some or all of Section 1 prior to undertaking an action. This is particularly important if the action project directly involves students with people experiencing the issues being studied, as may be the case if the action involves a local community development group. In this regard it is vital to avoid being patronising/condescending; viewing people as victims; intruding on people's privacy and generally being uninformed and insensitive.
- It is worth preparing the students for doing an action project by assessing differing responses to poverty. One means of doing this is by discussing the advantages and disadvantages of three types of actions students might undertake:
 - 1) Raising money for a registered charity (charity)
 - 2) Participating in a protest, petition, lobbying (solidarity)
 - 3) Exercising their own power to change or improve their situation or circumstances (empowerment).

Most community development groups operate from an empowerment approach, which emphasises the provision of resources and support to enable people experiencing poverty to develop the confidence and skills to become involved in tackling the issues that affect them. This can be done in different ways, including leadership training, community development work and improving local facilities.

- Of equal importance is the need to adequately prepare students to ensure that they are not exposed to situations, which may raise feelings of guilt, anger, hopelessness or helplessness, etc. Taking action is a good way of ensuring this as students have a sense of feeling empowered to change something. An action project that is carried out during the completion of a course of work as opposed to being 'added on' at the end is an even better way of guarding against these feelings.
- When your students are planning an action project it is worth reminding them of the skills involved. It will be helpful in the write-up of the action projects if the relevant skills have been identified during the process of doing the action. You may wish to use the 'Planning to Act' (★iii) worksheet on page 22 as a planning tool. A detailed description of these skills and examples of their application are provided here (CSPE Syllabus, page 13).

TAKING ACTION

Skill	Explanation	Examples
Identification/ Awareness Skills	Skills which enable students to acquire information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter writing, telephone calls, sending faxes • Using computers and the internet, sending and receiving e-mail • Surveying, asking questions, interviewing
Analysis/ Evaluation Skills	Skills that enable students to analyse, interpret and evaluate inputs that they receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collating, sorting • Analysis of data and images, discussion • Evaluating information inputs from guest speakers
Communication Skills	Students should practice and develop skills of communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal & interpersonal reflection • Group participation, discussion, debating • Designing, planning, presenting, publishing, reporting • Role play, acting, mime • Listening
Action Skills	Students should develop their skills in the ability to act, to apply the results of experience, analysis, reflection and communication in a practical way to a chosen situation or issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and political skills of organisation, procedure, decision-making, voting, planning, prioritising, hosting, liaising, negotiating, leadership, implementing, and reviewing.

TAKING ACTION INTO THE COMMUNITY

WHY?

There is enormous potential for action projects to be carried out under the broad heading of poverty awareness. However, the challenge is to make them as meaningful and relevant for students as possible. One means of doing this is to provide students with the opportunity to take action on an issue within the local community of the school. Engaging with a community development group can be a valuable and worthwhile exercise not least because learning about poverty is applied to local circumstances and does not become an academic pursuit. In addition, many community development groups are often the experts in the area of poverty and disadvantage and developing links with these groups can mean that teachers, students and the school community in general can benefit from the expertise and knowledge

of community personnel in this area. For community workers developing a link with the local school can benefit their work as they work with young people and adults experiencing social exclusion. Therefore, it has the possibility of directly helping to improve the effectiveness of this work. In short, developing a link between the school and the community benefits all concerned, in particular the students.

WHO AND HOW?

For many teachers linking with a community development group may seem like an onerous task. This section of the resource is designed to give teachers concise information about a number of national programmes/initiatives that are targeted at alleviating disadvantage and social exclusion and includes examples of specific groups where possible.

Community Groups don't always receive a lot of publicity, largely due to the nature of their work, but rest assured there is one working close to the area of your school. The following outlines some key programmes and organisations under which they work and operate. By contacting one of these (see contacts list) they should be able to tell you which programme is operational in the area of your school and from that you should get a contact telephone number/address.

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES/INITIATIVES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME ³

The Community Development Programme (CDP) was established in 1990 by the Department of Social Welfare in recognition of the role of community development in tackling poverty and disadvantage. Now known as the Community Development and Support Programme, the CDSP core funds community development resource centres / projects in communities experiencing social and economic disadvantage. These projects (numbering approximately 130) provide a range of supports, development opportunities and services to community groups and individuals within their areas.

The aim of the CDSP is to develop a network of community development resource centres and projects in communities affected by high unemployment, poverty and disadvantage. The Programme also includes groups that act as a resource for community development work with particular interest groups e.g. Travellers and women, in recognition of the specific needs of certain groups that experience poverty and social exclusion in Irish society.

Essential core characteristics of groups supported by the CDSP

- Have an anti-poverty focus
- Work from community development principles
- Provide support and act as a catalyst for community development activity
- Act as a resource in the communities of which they are part
- Promote co-ordination and co-operation between community, voluntary and statutory groups in their areas
- Involve representatives of groups which experience poverty and social exclusion within their management structures.

³ Adapted from *The National Community Development Programme: United Against Poverty: National Handbook*. The Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. Page 3

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES / INITIATIVES

What does the CDSP hope to achieve?

- Encourage greater participation in public decision-making which leads to more effective policies and programmes
- Influence change in structures and policies
- Develop a collective response to community needs
- Improve the quality of life within disadvantaged communities
- Ensure equality of opportunity and challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Seek an equitable distribution of power and resources
- Enhance skills and self-confidence of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion
- Foster and maintain strong social and community support structures
- Promote integrated and holistic responses to the needs of individuals and communities
- Develop alternative methods and models, which seek to directly involve and empower groups and individuals within the community.

The projects of the CDSP are based in disadvantaged communities within:

- inner city areas
- rural areas
- small towns
- housing estates in suburban areas

EXAMPLE: Knockanrawley Community Development Project, Tipperary town



Knockanrawley Resource Centre (KRC) was set up in 1988 at the instigation of a local authority housing estate - Pearse Park Community Association. Since then the building has been extended and KRC became part of the CDP in 1996. KRC has a management committee of fifteen people, the majority of whom are local people from the area. It has a number of sub-groups: childcare; women’s issues; men’s issues; unemployment.

The main activities of the centre include:

Adult education/Multi-media training; Counselling; Family therapy; Quarterly newsletter; Employment agency; Playschool; Women’s & Men’s groups; Information services; South Tipperary Traveller’s group; Training in information technology and organic gardening; Organise summer arts activities; Promote networking and lobbying at local, regional and national levels.

AREA DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT



Area Development Management Limited (ADM Ltd.)⁴ is a private company established in 1992 by the Irish Government in agreement with the European Commission. The main role of ADM is to support integrated local economic and social development through managing programmes targeted at countering disadvantage and exclusion, and promoting reconciliation and equality. ADM manages a number of

programmes including the provision of support to 38 area based Partnerships, 33 Community Groups and a number of selected organisations (examples of each are shown below). Area based Partnerships operate in areas that have been designated ‘disadvantaged’ while the community groups can be found in areas that have mixed socio-economic groupings.

Integrated Local Development Programme - Area Based Partnerships

Area Based Partnership Companies were established to support economic and social development at local level. Each company is independent and managed by a Board of Directors.

⁴ Adapted from INSIGHTS -Community Groups Series. “No. 2 Community development a review of some primary local initiatives”. Area Development Management Ltd. Page 2

The Directors are drawn from three areas – the State, the Social Partners (business, trade unions and farmers) and the Local Community. Partnership companies are located throughout the country in both urban and rural areas in designated disadvantaged areas. An area is designated disadvantaged if there are large numbers of people unemployed in the area or if large numbers are dependent on Social Welfare Payments or support of one kind or another.

The overall focus of area based partnership is to:

- help individuals and local communities in developing their own communities
- help local organisations and state agencies in supporting development in local areas
- support the long term unemployed in getting back into the work force.

EXAMPLE: Kimmage, Walkinstown, Crumlin, Drimnagh Partnership (KWCD) ⁵



The KWCD Partnership is one of 38 Partnerships nationally which are non-governmental agencies dedicated to the development of specific geographical areas. The four main areas of activity are, Childcare; Enterprise & Employment, Community Development (including infrastructure; environment; capacity building of local groups and networks); and Education & Training.

One example of an activity under the heading of Education & Training is the Stay in School Initiative. KWCD works with the Dublin 12 Drugs Task Force to support the project, which works with second and third year students in six local post-primary schools. The project selects students in their first year who are finding it difficult to cope with the education system and who look as if they will opt out before completing the junior cycle. Each group is made up of no more than 12 students who spend one day a week with qualified tutors and counsellors. The main aim of the project is that the participants 'stay in school' until they complete their Junior Certificate. The experiences to date show that many have progressed to further qualifications or Youthreach training.

Community Groups (under the ADM Ltd.)

Outside designated disadvantaged areas thirty-three Community Groups operate with the support of ADM. The focus of these groups is on enterprise creation and development, environment and infrastructural works, services for unemployed people, education and training and community development.

EXAMPLE: Action South Kildare (ASK) ⁶



ASK is a Community Group established in 1995 to address the needs of the community in the South Kildare area.

SATURDAY COMPUTER CLUB

ASK funded the opening of a Community Computer Laboratory based in St. Brigid's secondary school in Athy. One of the activities it runs there is the Saturday Computer Club to provide computer training for schoolchildren. Each student is trained in WORD, EXCELL, ACCESS and the Internet. The idea behind the initiative is to provide computer training for children from outlying rural areas who do not have computer facilities or expertise at home. ASK funded the teaching element in the course and paid some of the hardware costs. The school provide the classroom and that all important ingredient - dedicated staff. ASK run the course for groups of forty over a four week period. So far hundreds of students from numerous national schools in the area have done the course. ASK is about to start a duplicate course in Kildare town.

National Organisations (under ADM Ltd.)

ADM also funds a number of organisations, which operate on a national rather than a local basis. Pavee Point is one of these organisations. Pavee Point is a non-governmental agency, which is committed to human rights for Irish Travellers. The group consists of Travellers and

⁵ Community Matters: The Newsletter of the Kimmage, Walkinstown, Crumlin and Drimnagh (KWCD) Partnership Ltd. March 2000, Vol. 3

⁶ Information Sourced in Area Development Management website www.adm.ie

NATIONAL PROGRAMMES / INITIATIVES

members of the settled community working in co-operation to address the issues relating to exclusion and marginalisation of Travellers.

Pavee Point acts primarily as a resource for Partnerships and Community Groups, helping them to access the Travelling community in their area and providing advice on projects and activities to include Travellers within the Programme. Pavee Point have also supported the Partnerships with a wide range of publications including:

- a resource pack for teachers of Traveller children
- a report on childcare issues for Travellers
- a number of reports on Traveller training
- a study on recycling in the Traveller economy
- a regular newsletter on Traveller issues
- a directory on Traveller trading

NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY NETWORKS PROGRAMME

The Networks are national representative and co-ordinating organisations made up of independent member groups and/or individuals who make links with each other on common or shared issues. Although each of the networks have developed independently, with different structures, they all have the following common characteristics:

- An anti-poverty focus
- National membership bases that can act as a voice for disadvantaged, marginalised groups in local, regional and national fora
- Mechanisms to ensure that members are informed and consulted about the activities and policies of their national representatives
- An ability to inform policy at a national level
- A willingness to work in partnership with other networks and groups on issues of common concern
- Are committed to resourcing and supporting their members in anti-poverty work.

Current members of the National Anti-Poverty Programme are as follows:

Community Workers Co-operative	A national network that works to promote community work as a means of intervention for social change.
Irish Travellers Movement	A network of over 80 local groups, as well as individuals, working within the Traveller community.
Forum of People with Disabilities	A rights-based organisation, which seeks to promote the choices, rights and identities of people with disabilities.
One Parent Exchange Network	OPEN is a national network of lone parent self-help groups that have come together to represent lone parents living in poverty and social exclusion.
Irish Refugee Council	The Council aims to ensure that all aspects of Ireland’s asylum and refugee policy and practice fully respect international human rights law.
Irish Rural Link	A network of 300 rural community groups whose aim is to influence national and EU development policies in favour of those who are marginalised as a result of poverty and social exclusion in rural areas.
Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed	The INOU is a federation of unemployed people and over 200 groups throughout the country working at local, national and European level on issues affecting unemployed people.

Children's Rights Alliance

The Alliance is a coalition of 68 non-governmental organisations concerned with the rights and welfare of children.

Older Women's Network

OWN makes links between older women through newsletters, campaigns of action and gatherings on issues of concern.

European Anti-Poverty Network - Ireland

EAPN Ireland – works to put the fight against poverty on top of the Irish and European Union agendas.

County Development Boards

New structures, known as County or City Development Boards (CDBs), have been established in every county and city in Ireland. As CDBs bring together the key players at local level to engage in a process of long-term planning, they are a useful starting point for gaining information about local community development organisations. The Boards are representative of local government, local development bodies (Area Partnerships, LEADER groups, and county/city enterprise boards) and the state agencies and social partners (employers and business, farming, trade union and community and voluntary sectors) operating locally. Each CDB has a Strategy for Economic, Social and Cultural Development. These strategies are templates guiding all locally delivered public services and local development activities. There is an emphasis on counteracting social exclusion as well as a clear focus on economic and cultural development.

Youth Services



According to the National Youth Federation, the youth service is defined as a planned systematic educational process, complementary to the formal education system, which assists and enhances the personal and social development of young people.

Although youth service initiatives target and benefit all young people across the social spectrum, such initiatives are deemed to be a particularly vital part of government policy in promoting social and educational inclusion. They facilitate active participation by members of local communities in the processes of policy development and implementation. Much of the youth service is thus closely intertwined with community regeneration. This locally based youth service is primarily delivered by a variety of voluntary youth groups and organisations.

The Department of Education and Science Youth Affairs Section administers a Youth Services Grant Scheme, which supports 35 voluntary youth groups and organisations. In general these organisations provide or facilitate practical youth education programmes in youth centres countrywide. Such programmes are delivered by both paid youth workers and trained volunteers and at all times are characterised by voluntary involvement of the participating young people.

Leader + Programme



The Leader + Programme is an EU initiative under the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. It is aimed at encouraging and supporting high quality and ambitious integrated strategies for local rural development. The aim of the programme is to encourage and assist people living in rural areas to think and plan for the longer-term potential of their area. It seeks to facilitate the implementation of integrated, high quality, original proposals for sustainable development, designed to encourage experimenting with new ways of:

- Enhancing the natural and cultural environment
- Reinforcing the economic environment, in order to contribute to job creation

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

- Improving the organisational abilities of their communities.

Offaly is just one of 34 Irish regions to benefit from the EU Leader Programme. The Offaly LEADER Company was formed in 1995. Its mission is to support people and implement innovative projects that will enhance Offaly's rural economy. The Company supports many tourism, agricultural, environmental, research and community development projects. One such community development project is that of the development of a Community Centre in Rhode, Co. Offaly. The project was the inspiration of the local community group – Rhode Parish Enterprise Association. In working towards their objectives the group undertook a local resource audit, which identified the need for a community centre to act as a focal point for community activity in the area. The new centre includes a large meeting room, office facilities and a kitchen. The project was built from funds received under the LEADER Programme in addition to funding received from OAK Partnership and the Midland Health Board.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

Pages 20-22 contain supporting worksheets for use all the way through this resource. You may wish to photocopy and bind multiple copies of worksheets ★i 'Keywords' and ★ii 'Thinking Back' as these may be used more frequently. It will be useful to return to them after the completion of a section to reflect on the learning or revise some of the work. Suggestions for using all three worksheets are made below.

WORKSHEET i: KEYWORDS

The concept of poverty is complex, as indeed is the language relating to the subject. Every attempt has been made to simplify the language used in this resource, however this is not always possible. A glossary is included at the rear to clarify concepts and terms used and ★i 'Keywords' tool is included for use by students. It is recommended that teachers use this at the beginning of a new section with students who have reading or writing difficulties. Prior to starting a section, key concepts and difficult words within the section should be written in by students in order to ensure familiarity and build confidence.

WORKSHEET ii: REFLECTIVE LEARNING

Within active learning it is very important that students are encouraged to reflect upon what they have learned during the active learning process. To this end a learning tool ★ii 'Thinking Back' has been included. As suggested this should be photocopied and distributed for use at any stage and on completion of any activity in the resource. Students should be encouraged to keep each sheet and to review them at the end of a series of classes. They will provide a good means of assessing the development of understanding and attitudes in relation to the issues.

WORKSHEET iii: PLANNING TO ACT

You may wish to use ★iii 'Planning to Act' as a planning tool for developing an action. It is designed to support students in reflecting upon why they chose a particular course of action and what they think they will learn from it. Completed worksheets may be useful when students are ready to report on their action project for assessment purposes; for this reason they should be encouraged to keep them safely for use at a later date.

KEYWORDS⁷

DATE _____ TOPIC _____

IMPORTANT WORDS

1 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

WORDS I NEED TO KNOW

1 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

5 _____ 6 _____

7 _____ 8 _____

WORDS I NEED TO WRITE

1 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

5 _____ 6 _____

7 _____ 8 _____

⁷ Adapted for use from Junior Certificate School Programme Literary Strategy



THINKING BACK

DATE _____

Think back over class today and write your thoughts below. As you fill in these sheets after each class keep them and look over them in a few weeks. You may be surprised at how much you have learned, or how your thinking has changed.

TODAY'S CLASS WAS ABOUT

IN CLASS TODAY I LEARNED THAT

HOW DID I PARTICIPATE
(TAKE PART) IN TODAY'S CLASS?

DID I MAKE IT EASY FOR
OTHER PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE
(TAKE PART) IN CLASS TODAY?

ONE THING I FEEL
STRONGLY ABOUT

WHAT I COULD DO TO
CHANGE THINGS (BY MYSELF
OR WITH OTHERS)



PLANNING TO ACT⁸

DATE _____

WE WOULD LIKE TO DO AN ACTION PROJECT ABOUT:

THE REASONS WE WOULD LIKE TO DO THIS ACTION PROJECT ARE:

WHAT I THINK I WILL LEARN BY DOING THIS ACTION PROJECT:

I THINK I WILL USE OR DEVELOP THESE SKILLS BY DOING THIS ACTION PROJECT:

⁸ Adapted from *A Human Rights Action Project: A Module for 2nd Year CSPE*. CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit. 1999.

STEREOTYPING & LABELLING



AIMS

- 1 To highlight that stereotypes are based upon generalisations that are often inaccurate.
- 2 To challenge pre-existing stereotypes held by students, either directly or indirectly, by encouraging other students to put forward counter-views.
- 3 To develop within students an understanding of the powerful and often harmful nature of stereotyping and labelling.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★iv 'Labelling' for each student.

METHOD

- Distribute the sheet ★iv and ask the students to fill it out. Begin the feedback with the following:
 - ✎ Which words were circled the most?
 - ✎ Who uses these words/labels about young people?
 - ✎ Are some people mentioned often in 'who uses the labels'?
 - ✎ Focus on why these people may use these labels
 - ✎ How does it feel to be labelled, particularly when a label is unfairly used?

During the discussion emphasis should be placed on the fairness of labelling a person because of their group membership, and the need to consider each person as an individual.

- Follow with a brainstorm of stereotypes that are held about people who live in poverty, or wealth. Write these on the

board and discuss their validity in light of the previous activity. Are they fair? Are they true? It is important to ask students where they think they received these messages. Where possible, present a statement that refutes the stereotype - examples are provided in *i 'Stereotype & Reality' (page 25).

IDEA FOR ACTION

- Contact the Combat Poverty Agency www.combatpoverty.ie or visit their website to investigate the validity of statements such as those on *i.
- Construct a display to illustrate the findings to the school community at large.

FURTHER INFO

- The most recent studies of poverty are:
 - Layte, R. et al. (2001). *Monitoring Poverty Trends and Exploring Poverty Dynamics in Ireland*. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
 - Nolan, B. et al. (2002). *Monitoring Poverty Trends in Ireland. Results from the 2000 Living in Ireland Survey*. Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute.
- For more information on refugees and asylum seekers see:
 - Comhlamh (2001). *Refugee Lives: The Failure of Direct Provision as a Social Response to the Needs of Asylum Seekers in Ireland*.
 - Cullen, Paul (2000). *Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ireland*. Cork: Cork University Press.

LABELLING⁹

Think about the words that are sometimes used to describe young people. Circle any of the words below that are used about young people.

- With a red pen write the name of the person who uses this word
- With a blue pen write a few words that you think explain why they use this word
- With a black pen or pencil write in words to describe how this word makes you feel.

There is one example done to show you how to do this.

Teachers
(red pen)

LAZY

Angry
(black pen)

not interested in school
or the same things
(blue pen)

WASTEFUL

LIVELY

SELFISH

LOUD

MOODY

CHEEKY

DON'T CONSIDER OTHERS

SENSITIVE

IRRESPONSIBLE

ROUGH

SULKY

EXPENSIVE TASTES

CARING

UNTIMIDY

NO RESPECT

WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT WHAT OTHERS THINK

⁹ Adapted from Bassett, M. 1995. *Poverty in Focus*. Combat Poverty Agency & ASTI



STEREOTYPE & REALITY



Stereotype	Reality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All farmers are rich • People who are poor waste their money on drink and cigarettes • Poor people don't know how to manage their money properly • Travellers are all loaded. They drive new vans and pay for them in cash. • Refugees get houses before Irish people who were on the waiting list first. • People who are on the dole could find work if they really wanted to. • There's no such thing as poverty • Refugees don't seem to be short of cash. They all have mobile phones and cars. 	<p>About 20% of farm households are well-off, the remainder have to earn a living from other jobs and receiving state payments.</p> <p>People affected by poverty spend no more of their money on drink and cigarettes than the average family. Sometimes they spend less. Not all drink alcohol or smoke cigarettes.</p> <p>A lot of people who experience poverty are very good at managing the little money that they have – the reality is that they often do not have enough money to manage or survive on.</p> <p>Some Travellers are well off, a lot are not and live in severe poverty. Some settled people are well off, a lot are not and also live in severe poverty.</p> <p>Refugees in need of social housing have to go through the same process to become housed as everyone else. They join the waiting list in the same way as other people.</p> <p>Many people on the dole have been unemployed for a long time and don't have the skills needed to keep a job. Many do find jobs but they are low-paid and insecure so they may end up on the dole.</p> <p>The most recent study of poverty shows that in 2000 one in five persons (21%) live below the income poverty line (that is, with incomes below 50% of relative income, €143.80 per week).</p> <p>Not all refugees are poor. People look for refugee status for various reasons including being under threat in their home countries, natural or man-made disasters, conflict or poverty.</p>



ESTABLISHING GROUND RULES



AIMS

- 1 To establish ground rules for group work and discussion.
- 2 To develop a sense of fairness and responsibility amongst students in relation to their own comfort and that of other students in the classroom and during activities.

METHOD

The teacher guides the class through the following activity:

- Imagine that you have to spend two months in the Big Brother household. You have more than enough food, water and other supplies to last. You need to find a way of living peacefully together as no one will leave the house until the two months are up.
- On your own, list five ways in which house members could make life difficult for one another. On your own, list five ways in which house members could make life more pleasant for one another.
- Divide the class into groups of four (approximately); ask the groups to draw up five rules using the lists. Stress that everyone must stick to the rules if the housemates are to live peacefully until their release. The group should also draw up the top five ways that life could be made unpleasant. Try to reach a consensus about the rules chosen.
- Take the feedback and list both rules and ways of making life unpleasant on the board for general discussion and clarification if necessary. Prioritise five rules.
- You may need to remind students of the following or to add one or two rules if necessary:
 - ✎ Respect for difference – we are all different but we are all equal; everyone has a right to their opinion as long as it doesn't affect other peoples rights
 - ✎ Everyone should be allowed to talk without being interrupted
 - ✎ Everyone should be given the same amount of time and space; no one should take up all the class time
 - ✎ Everyone has the right to be listened to
 - ✎ When you want to say something start with 'I think' and not 'Everyone says'; everybody can only talk for himself or herself
 - ✎ Everybody should be responsible for what they do, say, and feel; everyone is also responsible for what they don't say – if we see something wrong we should say it.
- Display the rules prominently in the classroom and refer back to them periodically. It may be useful to occasionally review how the class is doing in terms of observing the ground rules and whether they need to be revised in light of this.

1

POVERTY – THE WHO, WHAT, WHY & HOW?

AIMS

- 1 To increase understanding of the nature, extent and causes of poverty and social exclusion in Ireland.
- 2 To provide students with an opportunity to reflect upon their understanding and attitudes towards poverty and social exclusion in Ireland.
- 3 To develop empathy with people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.
- 4 To provide students with information about how poverty is defined.

CONCEPTS

- Human Dignity
- Rights and Responsibilities

ATTITUDES & VALUES

- Development of empathy with people affected by poverty and social exclusion
- Awareness of rights and responsibilities
- Respect for other opinions
- Develop a sense of the value of rational debate/discussion

KNOWLEDGE

- Groups and individuals at risk of experiencing poverty and social exclusion
- How poverty is defined
- Structural causes of poverty

SKILLS

- Analysis - of photographs, cartoons, case studies
- Reflection - of personal attitudes and knowledge
- Communication - discussion, debating, group work, listening

RECOMMENDED

- Do Section 1 before other sections
- Activity 1, 2 or 3, 4 and 5

IMAGES OF POVERTY AND WEALTH¹⁰



AIMS

- 1 To introduce students to the issue of poverty by exploring their current images and understandings of wealth and poverty in Ireland today.
- 2 To introduce the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and the diversity of groups and individuals who tend to experience it.



YOU WILL NEED

- A large selection of photographs from images pages 113-122 and/or from your own collection.
- A copy of sheet ★1 'Images' for each student in the class.
- For Follow-On Activity a copy of ★2 for each student.



METHOD

- Spread the photographs randomly in a place where students can view them easily and give a copy of sheet ★1 to each student.
- Divide the class in half - one half will look at images of poverty, the other at images of wealth; after viewing all the photographs each student should choose one that for them symbolises wealth/poverty.
- Students should then spend a few minutes reflecting on why they chose it by filling in ★1 [If space is scarce divide the class into groups and distribute a selection of photographs amongst each group. Each group should then choose one image of poverty and one image of wealth and fill out a worksheet for each image]
- Starting with the images of wealth, each person/group should show their chosen photo and briefly give reasons for their choice
- Have a general discussion on why people chose certain photographs. The following questions should form the basis of the discussion:

- ✎ Do the photos reflect positive/negative images of people?
- ✎ Are the images chosen related to either having, or not having money?
- ✎ Do any of the chosen photographs represent images of both poverty and wealth, if not, could any of those that remain?
- ✎ How do you think the people in the photograph would feel if they knew that they were chosen as an image of wealth/poverty?
- ✎ Have other people's choices made you change your opinion in any way?
- ✎ Are there other places in everyday life where you see images of wealth and poverty? Where? Are they like the images presented here?
- ✎ What do the chosen photographs tell us about stereotypes of poverty? If anything?



FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Give each student a copy of sheet ★2 which is designed to help students reflect upon the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. It should also aid the consolidation of ideas and images raised in the photo activity. Encourage the students to move out of a narrow picture of poverty as being just about money and to consider the relevance of the words suggested to a broader understanding of poverty. Invite the students to spend some time completing as many bubbles as possible. When complete take some feedback from a random selection of students and discuss with the whole class. It will be useful to keep this sheet safely and to review it after a number of sessions to assess whether there has been development in understanding. Alternatively, feedback from the sheet may be used to begin Activity 2 as suggested in the section on method (p31).

¹⁰ Adapted from *Fair Shares?*, Combat Poverty Agency. 1998.

IMAGES

After choosing your photograph spend a few minutes filling out this worksheet.

I CHOSE AN IMAGE OF

_____ (POVERTY / WEALTH)

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE IN THE PHOTOGRAPH

I THINK THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS ABOUT

_____ (POVERTY / WEALTH)

BECAUSE

POVERTY IS ?

Think about the images of poverty you made use of in class. Now try to fill in as many boxes as possible with words or sentences about poverty. Use the words below to help you if you need to.

Remember - try to think of poverty as being more than just about not having enough money.

Use these words to help you if you need to

- MONEY • HEALTH • HOME • FEELING HOPELESS • DESPAIR • FOOD • CLOTHES • HUMAN RIGHTS • HOPE • EDUCATION • SOCIAL LIFE • CHOICES • FRIENDS • HEATING • JOBS • HOLIDAYS • BELONGING • HAPPINESS**

DEFINING POVERTY



1

2

ACTIVITY



AIMS

- 1 To build on Activity 1 by introducing students to how poverty is defined and the concepts of relative and absolute poverty (see page 8 for a full explanation of these terms).
- 2 To engage students in thinking about how they perceive poverty.
- 3 To provide information on how poverty is defined.



YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of *A 'It's all Relative' for use with an OHP or as a handout.
- A copy of ★3 'Case Studies' for each student



METHOD

- Spend a couple of minutes brainstorming what is understood by the term poverty. Alternatively, invite feedback on worksheet ★2 in order to focus students on this activity. From the responses identify different types of poverty that may be apparent, for example '*not having enough money*' (relative poverty) compared with '*not having any money*' (absolute poverty). Using *A 'It's all Relative' explain the difference between these two types of poverty. Depending on the ability of the class you may choose to avoid using the terms 'absolute' and 'relative'. What is important is that students develop an understanding of different levels of poverty and that as a nation Ireland defines poverty partly by comparing standards of living.
- Discuss the type of poverty (relative) that is portrayed in the cartoons. The

following may prove useful for discussion:

- ✎ Which person in the cartoon may be experiencing poverty? Why?
 - ✎ Can you describe a situation where another person could be considered to be less well off than this?
- Ask the students to list what they feel are 'acceptable standards of living' in Ireland today. Using the case studies on ★3 discuss whether Jackie, Jessica, Angela and Mick are experiencing poverty, and why this is the case. Compare this to the acceptable standard of living the students have described.
 - Depending on the ability level of the students you may wish to give the definition of poverty decided by the Irish Government in 1997 (see page 8). Discuss this in light of the acceptable standards of living discussed earlier.

IT'S ALL RELATIVE



CASE STUDIES

**1** JACKIE'S CASE

Jackie is sixteen years of age and is homeless for 9 months. Some nights she gets a bed in a hostel or a squat, but most of the time she sleeps with her friends in the porch of the Corporation Buildings along Dublin's quays. She begs to get money because she's too young to get social welfare - there are very few days that Jackie eats three meals.

**2** ANGELA AND MICK'S CASE

Angela and Mick live on a small farm in Co. Mayo. They earn a very small income from the farm and this is added to by money they get from social welfare. Lately they've had to cut down on their heating. They don't heat the bedrooms anymore because it costs too much. They have also stopped going out and having friends over. They find that the cost of living is going up too quickly compared with their income. They had to tell their son, Conor that he couldn't go on the school trip this year - it would have meant that they'd have to borrow the money for it.

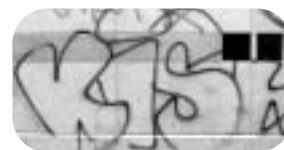
**3** JESSICA'S CASE

Jessica is 13 and started secondary school this year. Sometimes she is quiet and withdrawn because she doesn't feel as good as others in her class. There are two girls in her class who are always showing off, telling everyone where they're going on their holidays, or what expensive clothes or sports gear they got at the weekend. They even ask others how much pocket money they get - when this starts Jessica makes sure she stays out of the conversation. Pocket money is a luxury her Mother can't afford as well as holidays and expensive clothes. Jessica wouldn't mind so much only they make fun of her and another girl in her class who lives on her estate.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THESE CASES?

WALKING DEBATE

DEFINING POVERTY



AIMS

- 1 To deepen understanding of the concepts of absolute and relative poverty.
- 2 To provide an opportunity for students to experience a walking debate.
- 3 To encourage each student to form opinions based on rational argument.



YOU WILL NEED

- A large clear space either in a classroom or in a hall or yard
- Two signs with the words 'I agree strongly' / 'I disagree strongly' clearly displayed in large lettering for display on either side of the classroom/hall



METHOD

- Stand in the middle of the room with the group around you. Explain that you will read out some statements from *B 'Do You Agree?'. The statements are about poverty. Those who agree with the statement move towards the poster that says 'I agree strongly'; those who disagree move to the opposite end of the room; those who are unsure stay in the middle. Start the debate with a light hearted statement, something that students will respond to.
- Explain that the object of the game is to raise discussion and that everyone's position is important. During discussion ask the students to think again about the concepts of absolute and relative poverty and/or 'acceptable living standards in Ireland'. To raise discussion ask those who 'agree' to defend their position and those who disagree to defend theirs. People at either end of the room should try to

persuade those in the middle, or on the opposite side, to join them or even just to move a step or two closer. It is important that students realise that they may change their mind.

- Move to a new statement when the discussion dies down or after a set period. Bring students back into the middle of the room before moving on to a new statement.

























ALTERNATIVE METHODS

- 1 You may also do this activity in small groups. Photocopy the statements for each group and instruct each to discuss whether they agree or disagree. Each group must reach a consensus on whether the statement refers to absolute or relative poverty. Once the groups have worked through the sheet read aloud each statement and ask each group to explain what conclusions they reached about the statements.
- 2 If space is limited an alternative method is to get each student to write 'I agree' / 'I disagree' on either end of a blank sheet of paper. As each statement is called out students should mark with an x their position on the paper. Discuss each student's choice and encourage students to erase their initial x in light of the debate if this is relevant to them. Whilst this is a useful alternative to the walking debate it is not as active or challenging as doing an actual walking debate.

DO YOU AGREE?



Read these statements and shade the symbol that matches what you think.

BEING POOR IS...	 I AGREE	 I DISAGREE
1 If you are poor you can't afford to eat healthy food.		
2 Real poverty is only found in countries where people die because they don't have food to eat.		
3 If you are poor you shouldn't expect to be able to go on holiday even for a weekend break.		
4 All young people get the same education. Some people just don't want to learn and 'drop out' early.		
5 People who are poor shouldn't expect to be able to go to a disco or the cinema or other things like that.		
6 People who are well-off deserve all they have because they work hard for it.		
7 Poor people should be happy with what they are given. They don't deserve to have a choice, for example in the clothes they buy.		
8 School trips should only be there for those who can afford them.		
9 People who pay VHI or Bupa deserve better health treatment than those who don't.		
10 There wouldn't be as many poor people if they weren't given so much from social welfare.		

WHO DOES POVERTY AFFECT AND HOW?



AIMS

- 1 To provide students with an understanding of the multi - dimensional nature of poverty.
- 2 To illustrate diverse groups and individuals in Irish society who are **at risk**¹¹ of experiencing poverty.
- 3 To highlight the impact of poverty and social exclusion in terms of the effects it has on the individuals who experience it.

YOU WILL NEED

- Photocopies of the story cards (p38-40) cut into individual cards
- Six copies of sheet ★4 'Who and How?' or 1 per group
- A copy of sheet ★5 'What is Poverty?' for each student.

METHOD

- Divide the class into six groups. Allocate two stories to each group to read. Give a copy of the 'Who and How?' sheet ★4 to each group and appoint one person to fill in the sheet and one person to give feedback to the whole class. (See *C p37 for note on choosing the role cards).
 - The groups should spend some time reading the stories prior to filling in sheet ★4. The worksheet aids students in identifying what group the story refers to, and how this group or individual member of the group is affected by poverty. It is important to stress that these are groups that are **at risk** of experiencing poverty, and care should be taken against stereotyping.
 - Each group should provide a summary of their stories for the other groups indicating who it was about and how they are affected by poverty and social exclusion.
- In the whole class group discuss the stories drawing particular attention to the following points for discussion:
 - ↳ **Stereotyping** – it is important to point out that while the individuals represented in the role cards are members of groups at particular risk of experiencing poverty, not all members of those groups will be affected by poverty. Tease this point out by asking students to identify people or characters in public life who identify as members of these groups but who do not experience poverty.
 - ↳ **Similarities and differences between circumstances** – A number of story cards have a recurring theme of prejudice & discrimination. An important point for discussion is how this can lead to someone experiencing poverty. Chinedu, Anto, Aisling and Michael have all experienced prejudice or discrimination.
 - ↳ The **cyclical nature of poverty** is an important point for discussion. Consider the following quotations in this regard:
 - "How children live today powerfully influences how they will live tomorrow and the next generation" (Open your Eyes to Child Poverty Initiative, Irish Independent Supplement, June 1999.)
 - "Children from poor households are much more likely to have low educational achievement, to become teenage parents, to serve a prison sentence, to have less success in the labour market" (UNICEF, June 2000, A League Table of Child Poverty in Rich Nations)
 - Complete this activity by distributing a copy of sheet ★5 to each student or displaying a copy on an OHP. Instruct the students to fill in as many effects as possible arising from the activity using the story cards. Alternatively, draw a web on the board and ask for effects of poverty and write these in on the web. Finish by discussing the relevance of the spider's web image. The image of the web is used to portray the multiple effects of poverty and the complexity of the issue. This worksheet is designed to help students see the cyclical nature of poverty.

¹¹ The most recently published information on poverty in Ireland is derived from the Living in Ireland Survey, 2000. Some groups in Irish society are more at risk of being in poverty than others. It is important to note that while members of these groups are **at risk** of experiencing poverty, everyone who identifies as members of these groups will not experience poverty. In this regard it is important that students don't stereotype accordingly.

SUMMARY OF CASE STUDIES



There are twelve story cards (case studies) provided in this section. If you choose not to use some of the stories please consider the following in your choice.

When choosing case studies...

- It is important to select case studies that reflect the diversity of people affected by poverty in Ireland. Some people experience poverty and deprivation due in part to prejudice and discrimination. It is important that this point is realised in the class.
- Consider the background and experience of the students. Some case studies may be too sensitive to use and it is important that the teacher considers this in their choice. For students who have little direct experience of poverty or disadvantage non-stereotypical case studies are important.

NO.	NAME	SITUATION	CASE STUDY THEMES
1.	Noel	Long-term unemployed Married with 5 children	Debt / Lack of dignity / Depression
2.	Lynsey	Lone parent	Health / Poor housing / Prejudice
3.	Marie	Lone parent	Separation & Divorce / Debt / Deprivation e.g. relative poverty
4.	Michael	Disability	Unemployment / Dignity / Unfulfilled potential / Prejudice / Discrimination
5.	Aisling	Lesbian	Low income / Fear of discrimination / Prejudice – link with under achievement
6.	Jessica	Working class/ low income	Unemployment / Relative poverty / Deprivation
7.	Mick	Small Farmer Married with 4 children	Social welfare supplements / Inadequate income
8.	Jackie	Homeless	Absolute poverty / Hopelessness / Fear for security and personal safety
9.	Laura	Traveller	Early school leaver / Prejudice Discrimination / Dignity
10.	Mary	Older Person	Inadequate or inappropriate housing / Isolation / Fear / Deprivation
11.	Chinedu	Asylum seeker	Unemployment / Inequality / Prejudice / Discrimination
12.	Anto	Working Class/ Disadvantaged Area	Discrimination / Prejudice / Unfulfilled potential

WHO DOES POVERTY AFFECT?



1 NOEL'S STORY

I'm Noel. I'm married to Anne and we have five children. I lost my job a few years ago. I don't look for work anymore as I got sick of being told I was too old – I'm 43 not 73!! It gets me down a lot. You lose respect for yourself when you're on the dole all the time. My family now owe a lot of money because we had to borrow from a loan man to pay back rent and to pay for school books and uniforms. We don't have enough money to get by.



2 LYNSEY'S STORY

I'm Lynsey, I'm 24 and have two children. It really gets to me sometimes when I hear people giving out about single mothers, and saying that the only reason they get pregnant is to get a flat or a house. Those kinds of people really think they know it all! My youngest child has asthma. The damp in the house is so bad that the walls are wet. The child is always sick. I have to take what I'm given because after all I am only a single mum!



3 MARIE'S STORY

I'm Marie, I live with my five children. My husband left 8 years ago and doesn't help with money or anything anymore. We've had to live on social welfare, I hate feeling like I'm living on charity. I'd love to win the lotto then I'd burn the payment books. We never have enough to get by; we rob Peter to pay Paul. There's never enough money for proper food. We have often gone without heat on cold days. I feel under pressure all the time.



4 MICHAEL'S STORY

I'm Michael and I have a disability. The funny thing is I can do most things 'able-bodied' people do – even still I'm not treated equally. I realised when I was very young that I had to work harder than children who did not have a disability – just to be accepted. I'd love to get a job. People think I can't do the job because of my disability. They never give me a chance to show that I could be just as good or better than other people.



WHO DOES POVERTY AFFECT?



5 AISLING'S STORY

I'm Aisling, I'm 20 and I've been living in Dublin for 2 years. I come from a small town – a small town with small minds! Some people were very nasty to me when I was younger. It made it hard for me to work at school. I had to leave home because my parents were ashamed of me because I'm a lesbian. I got a job, so I can just about pay my rent and bills. I've made some good friends who give me a lot of support. My boss says that if I stick with this job I could work my way up. But from the things he says about gay people I don't think I'd be here for too long if he knew about me.



6 JESSICA'S STORY

I'm Jessica – some people in our school can have anything they want, holidays, fancy clothes, jewellery, sports gear, they are always showing off. In our family we don't have those things because my dad is out of work and my mam gets low wages doing her job as a cleaner.



7 MICK'S STORY

Hello, my name is Mick. I live with my wife Angela and our four children. All the kids are still going to school. Even though we have a small farm we still have to get money from social welfare to survive. It gets harder and harder to get by. Last month we got a grant for the farm, but as soon as the social welfare heard of it they cut our money so we were back to square one again. It's always the same – they give money to you with one hand and take it away with the other!



8 JACKIE'S STORY

Jackie here – I remember when I was a kid and I thought I'd live in a lovely house when I got older - have nice clothes and a car, and all. I must have been a fool – I'm 16 and at the stage where I don't even want to be alive! It wrecks your head being homeless. Anything can happen to you when you're on the streets.

WHO DOES POVERTY AFFECT?



9 LAURA'S STORY

I'm Laura; I'm 17 and left school when I was 11. I didn't like school because no one treated you right, no one treated ye with respect. Settled people call us names yeah, it's our culture and the way we talk. They think we've got diseases...I'd like to be treated equally – I'd like to stop the name-calling. I'm proud to be a Traveller.



10 MARY'S STORY

Mary here – I was supposed to be moved out of here long ago – I'm gone too old to live here with all these young ones and kids and all. I live on the 4th floor of a block of flats. I have been trapped twice in the lifts and now I'm terrified to use them. My home has become a prison, and I often stay in for days without seeing anyone or getting a fresh sup of milk or anything.



11 CHINEDU'S STORY

My name is Chinedu, I'm from Nigeria. My family came to Ireland to get away from the violence in our country. We came to Ireland because we heard it was a lovely country and that everyone was treated equally. We heard that there were lots of jobs and that you could have a good safe life. It hasn't been like that for us. My parents are not allowed to work.



12 ANTO'S STORY

Yeah, Anto here – I guess you could say I come from the wrong part of town, I'm nearly 17 and don't have much of a future by the looks of things. We're treated as the slobs who don't want to study but it's not like that...some people look down on us, employers won't give us jobs because of our address...because there is nothin' to do in the evenings we hang around the streets and then we get hassle from the guards 'cos they think we're up to no good – we're second class – I'd class myself as second class.

WHO AND HOW?

After you've read the stories try to fill in something about the people and their life in the space below:

STORY NO.	NAME	GROUP	HOW DOES POVERTY AFFECT THEIR LIVES?
7	Mick	Small Farmer	I think Mick is angry because money is tight and no-one seems to care. They find it hard to survive. People think they have a farm so they must be ok.

WHAT IS POVERTY?

On the spider's web write in words to describe how poverty affects people.

Tip! Use some of the words that you listed in class today and add some more.



DO YOU THINK THE SPIDER'S WEB IS A GOOD DRAWING FOR DESCRIBING WHAT POVERTY IS? WHY?

EXPLORING THE CAUSES OF POVERTY



1

ACTIVITY 5

AIMS

- 1 To explore the causes of poverty in Ireland today.
- 2 To illustrate that many of the causes are due to how society is structured and organised.
- 3 To initiate the process of thinking on the power of human agency in effecting change.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★6 'Possible Causes of Poverty' for each student
- A copy of ★7 'Against the Odds' for Follow-On Activity.

METHOD

- Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 and distribute copies of ★6 to each student. Ask the students to discuss what they consider to be the most significant causes of poverty. The group should agree on three. Each group should then feedback the three causes they agreed upon. List on the board or circle on an OHP copy of ★6. Similarities and differences between groups should be identified. It may not have been possible for the group to reach agreement. During the feedback discuss the difficulties that arose in reaching agreement. What do other groups think?

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- To facilitate a deeper understanding of poverty distribute sheet ★7 and ask two students to read Debbie's and John's stories. In small groups ask the students to discuss each story. The following may be useful as points for discussion:

- ✎ What are the perceived causes of poverty in the case of Debbie and John?
- ✎ What are the effects of poverty in each case? It is vital to distinguish between effects and causes, for example in John's case his experience of poverty and disadvantage in his upbringing led to him leaving school early which led to his drug addiction. Therefore, his drug addiction is a contributory factor in his experience of poverty. Early school leaving and employers prejudice about where he comes from can both be viewed as either a cause or an effect of poverty.
- ✎ Is there a link between poverty and the background of people in Irish prisons? What are the main causes of crime in Irish society? Are people, regardless of social background treated the same when they commit a crime?
- ✎ Take some feedback on what the group discussed in relation to Debbie's and John's stories. Finish the discussion by inviting suggestions on solutions to Debbie's and John's stories.

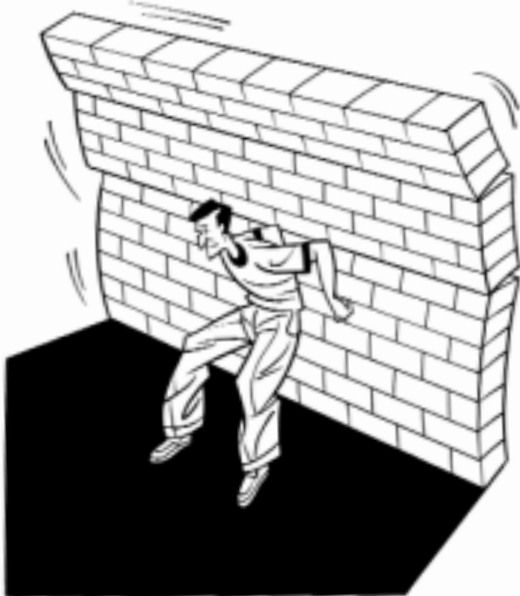
IDEA FOR ACTION

Contact the Irish Prisons Service in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to find out the socio-economic profile of prisoners. Assess whether there is a link between social background and crime. Report the findings to the wider school or community audience.

POSSIBLE CAUSES OF POVERTY

The bricks in this wall stand for things that cause poverty. Write in other causes if you can think of ones that are not here.

Discuss these with members of your class and your teacher. Do you agree with the causes that are listed here? Circle the 3 bricks that you think cause the most poverty.

FAMILY BACKGROUND (JOBS AND EDUCATION)		BEING ABLE TO READ AND WRITE		GOVERNMENT HELPING BETTER-OFF PEOPLE			
POWER AND WEALTH	BEING JUDGED ON WHERE YOU LIVE		FEELING THAT YOU HAVE NO POWER		HAVING NO JOB		
HAVING A BADLY PAID JOB		PEOPLE NOT BEING TREATED THE SAME (INEQUALITY)		NOT MANY JOBS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE			
BEING SICK	DISCRIMINATION		WELL-OFF PEOPLE DON'T CARE		LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY		
			OWING A LOT OF MONEY	PEOPLE GET TOO MANY HANDOUTS			
			WELL-OFF PEOPLE DON'T CARE		HAVING A DISABILITY		
			PREJUDICE	VALUING YOURSELF AND YOUR ABILITIES			
			NOT HAVING ENOUGH MONEY		POOR FARMING LAND		

AGAINST THE ODDS

1

7

STUDENTS

Read these stories and consider what the **causes** and **effects** of poverty are in each case. Who should be held responsible in each? Why?



1 DEBBIE'S STORY

Debbie is 21 and the oldest of five children. After years of hard work she got a place in college on a computer course. Her parents encouraged her to go to college even though it was hard for them to support her because they were living on social welfare.

Her Mam and Dad think education is very important and the only answer to getting a well-paid and secure job. They didn't get a chance to go to secondary school when they were young. Because of this they have spent their lives working in low-paid jobs that are the first to go if things get bad. They made a lot of sacrifices to try to make sure that their children get a good education so they have a better future.

Debbie got a grant to go to college. But the money she got wasn't enough to support her and she spent months waiting for it to be paid. Her family ended up having to pay her rent and food bills, which meant there was less to go around at home. It put them under a lot of stress. Debbie got a part-time job at nights, but her studies began to suffer because of it. She failed two subjects in her first year exams. She was put off by the costs and stress of repeating and decided to take an easier course closer to home to save on the rent.

Debbie feels certain that she would have passed her exams if money hadn't been such a problem. She has less chance now of getting a well-paid secure job.

(Adapted from Telling it Like It Is, Combat Poverty Agency 1992)



2 JOHN'S STORY

John is in court for a crime. Here is his solicitor to tell his story. "John did a crime for which he is truly sorry. He did a terrible thing by breaking into the home of the Byrne family and stealing some of their things. But you see, John – even though he knew what he was doing that night – couldn't help it.

He is a young person who has had a very hard life. He has been out of work since he left school at the age of 15. He lives in an area where most young people like him are out of work and very fed up with life. He has tried to get a job but he feels that employers don't want to give work to people from his area. There is a huge drug problem in John's community. Pushers pick on young people like him all the time. Three years ago John started taking drugs and today he is an addict. He did this crime so that he could feed his addiction. An addict will do anything to get more drugs but my client has sworn that he did not want to hurt anybody. He just wanted money to buy drugs.

John is sorry for his crime. He promises to try to kick the habit. Time in prison will do him no good at all. John is not the guilty party here. It is not John who should be on trial. Instead it should be our society – a society that left a 15 year old without education; that would not give a hardworking and hopeful 15 year old a job. How can John be guilty? He was left without hope and that is the first step to addiction. Society owes John. I ask you to make a decision that will help him and people like him. Please don't make the situation worse".

(Adapted from Living on the Edge. DEFY)

2

POVERTY – IT'S A QUESTION OF RIGHTS



AIMS

- 1 To develop awareness of the inter-relatedness of poverty and human rights and responsibilities.
- 2 To provide students with an opportunity to explore the importance they attach to particular human rights.
- 3 To provide students with an opportunity to apply their knowledge of Human Rights Conventions to situations of poverty and exclusion in Ireland.

CONCEPTS

- Rights and Responsibilities
- Human Dignity
- Interdependence

ATTITUDES & VALUES

- To develop an appreciation and respect for the rights of self and others including an acceptance of personal and social responsibility for protecting the rights of those who may be vulnerable to having their rights denied
- To develop an appreciation of a hierarchy in terms of basic human needs
- To understand the difference between needs and wants

KNOWLEDGE

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

SKILLS

- Analysis – media, case study
- Communication – discussion, group participation, role-play, listening, designing
- Awareness raising – posters

RECOMMENDED

Activity 6, 7 and/or 8, and 9.

Prior introduction of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

BASIC NEEDS



2

6

ACTIVITY

AIMS

- 1 To introduce students to the concept of basic human needs.
- 2 To develop ability to apply theory to real life situations.
- 3 To develop students capacity to distinguish between needs and wants.

IDEA FOR ACTION

Invite a local T.D. to discuss how and where basic human needs are provided for in the Irish Constitution.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★8 'Maslow's Pyramid of Needs' for each student

METHOD

- Distribute a copy of ★8 to each student. Read the contents of the information / worksheet before discussing the pyramid. Do they agree or disagree with Maslow's theory? Point out that Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of needs is only one of many and has many critics as with all theories. Ask the students to write the list of needs into the pyramid at the level they belong.
- Read Jackie and Jessica's stories and discuss their needs in light of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Refer back to the concepts of 'absolute' and 'relative' poverty, how do they relate to basic human needs?
- Brainstorm on what the class consider to be essential for their own survival. Write these on the board. Ask the students to rewrite this list dividing it into 'needs' and 'wants'.
- Discuss where students placed each item.

MASLOW'S PYRAMID OF NEEDS

Abraham Maslow was a psychologist who thought that people grew and developed when their needs were met. He believed that human beings do their best to reach their full potential. He set out his beliefs in the shape of a pyramid; each person starts at the bottom of the pyramid. When one type of need is met the person is motivated to reach the next highest level. For example if a person has no food to eat they are not concerned with whether they are loved or not. Not everyone agrees with Maslow, do you?

Write the needs listed to the left of the pyramid into the level of the pyramid to which you think they belong.

MASLOW'S PYRAMID OF NEEDS



Where on Maslow's pyramid of needs do you think Jackie and Jessica's stories lie?



JACKIE'S CASE

Jackie is sixteen years of age and has been homeless for 9 months. Some nights she gets a bed in a hostel or a squat, but most of the time she sleeps with her friends in the porch of the Corporation Buildings along Dublin's quays. She begs to get money because she's too young to get social welfare - there are very few days that Jackie eats three meals.



JESSICA'S CASE

Jessica is 13 and started secondary school this year. Sometimes she is quiet and withdrawn because she doesn't feel as good as others in her class. There are two girls in her class who are always showing off, telling everyone where they're going on their holidays, or what expensive clothes or sports gear they got at the weekend. They even ask others how much pocket money they get - when this starts Jessica makes sure she stays out of the conversation. Pocket money is a luxury her Mother can't afford as well as holidays and expensive clothes. Jessica wouldn't mind so much only they make fun of her and another girl in her class who lives on her estate.

INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS & POVERTY



2

7

ACTIVITY

AIMS

- 1 To increase students familiarity with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 2 To develop empathy with, and understanding of, the experience of poverty and social exclusion by young people **out of home** ¹².
- 3 To develop creative and writing skills.

YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of ★9 'Newsround: Young People Out of Home'
- Copies of ★10 'Human Rights' (This will be used again in the next activity)
Note: This activity may be done as an individual or group activity

METHOD

- Distribute a copy of ★9 and ★10 to each student or, depending on whether you approach this as an individual or group activity, a set of worksheets per group.
- Read and discuss the newspaper articles about young people out of home. Discuss the organisations involved in this work. Using sheet ★10 containing a summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ask students to identify the rights that are being denied to young people out of home. Discuss the link between these rights and basic needs. List

these rights on the board. Discuss the terms 'homeless' and 'out of home' in light of the note below.

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Ask the students to spend a few moments imagining themselves as a young person who is out of home. How would they **feel** if they were in that situation - physically, emotionally, and mentally? Allow some time for students to speak about how they imagine they would feel.
- Ask the students to write their own story of a young person who is out of home. They could refer back to earlier activities they have done on the effects and causes of poverty. Remind the students to avoid stereotyping and to keep in mind the human dignity of the person they are writing about. Students can exchange their stories and discuss them in small groups.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Investigate what services are available to young people who are out of home
- Invite a speaker from an organisation (e.g. Simon or Focus Ireland) working with people who are out of home
- Visit www.simoncommunity.com and www.focusireland.ie
- Contact the Children's Rights Alliance for more information about the Rights of the Child.

¹² People who are without a home find the label 'homeless' difficult to accept. They feel the stigma of homelessness very acutely and they feel that the word 'homeless' carries much of that stigma with it. The word they use themselves to describe that period of homelessness is 'out'. 'When I was out', 'we were out for nearly a year'. This expression is less offensive to the people undergoing the experience, and it suggests that the experience is not permanent, that they have a home somewhere that they eventually will be able to go back to, or that they have some chance of making a new home for themselves some day. It is difficult to avoid the word 'homeless' altogether, but in Focus Ireland they try to respect customers' feelings about this word and to use 'out-of-home' in preference to 'homeless' when they can. (Source: www.focusireland.ie)

NEWSROUND: YOUNG PEOPLE OUT OF HOME

Easier to sleep rough than face bureaucracy

By Eithne Donnellan
The Irish Times Thursday, March 23, 2000

Father Peter McVerry, a campaigner for the homeless, said yesterday the procedure children had to go through to get a bed was "so awful" that many did not bother. "They have to go to a Garda station at 8 p.m. but many of them don't want to have anything to do with the Gardaí. They could be there until 2 a.m. waiting to see an out of hours social worker who may have been called to see 10 children in 10 other Garda stations in the city. That puts people off and then if at 2 a.m. all the beds are full that stops them going back another night," he said.

Plight of the homeless fails to move those in power

By Sister Stanislaus Kennedy
The Irish Times Monday, June 26, 2000

Since the 1980s the face of homelessness has changed in Ireland. The most chilling fact is that small children are the fastest-growing section of our homeless population. Over a quarter of all homeless people in the Eastern Regional Health area are children and more than half of these are under five. Homelessness is a concern of all of us. If one family is homeless it is the concern of all of us as citizens and it is our obligation to ensure that the situation is changed. Need, not greed, must guide us in these decisions. These families are the same as you and me, but a gulf divides us; the gulf between families who have a home, however modest, and those who don't. Nobody would claim to want that gulf to exist, and these families certainly don't want the face of homelessness in the future to be their children. The challenge to change this situation is ours.



Singer Opens Women's Housing Unit

The Irish Times 19 June 2001

Irish singer Samantha Mumba opened an accommodation project for young women in Dublin yesterday. The Focus Ireland Young Women's Project provides four places for young women aged 18 to 20 who are leaving State care or who have been homeless. "It's great to see young, strong Irish women taking control of their lives", Ms. Mumba said. "I think if I had half their strength, I'd be doing very well."

Nearly two-thirds of those leaving Health Board care and one-third of those leaving special schools (for young offenders) experience homelessness within their first two years of leaving care.

Each woman in the project has her own apartment to live in and receives individual support from specially trained staff, which aims to help them identify and deal with their problems and address their individual needs. Staff also help the young women to develop and maintain family relationships and friendships which can provide them with vital support.

Homelessness is worse than ever despite Simon's Work

The Irish Times 29 July 2000

Homelessness is worse than it was 30 years ago. Thirty years since it made its first soup-run in Dublin, and opened the doors of its first emergency shelter in Limerick, the Simon Community perhaps has as much to regret as to celebrate. The National director says "I think we could safely estimate that there are about 10,000 homeless people in Ireland between those in hostels, on the streets and in bed and breakfasts".

Since then, volunteers have been dispensing soup, sandwiches and a few words of friendship to homeless people throughout the State nightly. For people such as Martin, the volunteers who crouched down to talk to him in early December last year, behind the Westbury Hotel in Dublin's city-centre, were "angels".

There were many like Martin that night. Many like the boy outside the Spar shop on Dame Street who with his shock of ginger hair and splash of freckles across his face looked more like 12 than the 15 years he claimed.








HUMAN RIGHTS



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In 1948 the governments of the world came together in Geneva and agreed to the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights'. The document sets out the rights to which everyone is entitled. It states that **all human beings whatever race, colour, nationality, sex, political or other beliefs, however much money or property they have are entitled to the same human rights.**

IT STATES THAT EVERYONE:









-  Is born free and equal;
-  Is free to think and say what they want;
-  Has the right to work, to health and to education;
-  Has the right to a decent standard of living, including basic needs such as housing and food, as well as the right to rest and leisure, and holidays from time to time;
-  Has a duty to support and serve his or her community;
-  Will not be held in slavery or be tortured or arrested illegally;
-  Is equal in the eyes of the law and has the right to be protected equally by the law.

The declaration also says that nothing in the declaration can be used as an excuse for any person or group to do things that might endanger the rights and freedoms of others.

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

In 1992 Ireland signed up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. By doing this, the Irish Government made a promise to all children in Ireland that our society will respect children's rights and make every effort to satisfy children's needs and nurture their potential.

The Convention says that every child under 18 years of age has the right to:

-  Be treated equally regardless of race, colour, sex or religion or any other reason;
-  Develop physically and mentally in a healthy manner;
-  A name and nationality;
-  Adequate food, housing, and medical services;
-  Special care if the child has a disability;
-  Loved, understood and protected;
-  Free education, to play and to recreation;
-  Protection from any form of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.

Adapted from CSPE Exemplar Materials Unit 1.

IT'S NOT RIGHT



AIMS

- 1 To provide students with an opportunity to apply the Human Rights Conventions to situations in Ireland where people do not enjoy the rights as laid out.
- 2 To provide an opportunity for students to work together in developing a poster awareness campaign highlighting the issue of human rights and poverty.
- 3 To encourage students to think about awareness-raising actions.



YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of ★10 'Human Rights' from Activity 7 for each group of students
- Copies of Laura's, Michael's, Chinedu's and Mary's story cards from pages 38-40 (One story per group of students)
- 4/5 Large sheets of poster size paper
- Markers/paints
- For Follow-On Activity, a copy of ★11 'Standing Up for their Rights!' for each student



METHOD

- Divide the class into 4/5 groups and distribute copies of sheet ★10, and one story card to each group.
- Instruct the groups to read the story cards and using sheet ★10 to identify the rights that are being denied to the character. Explain that they will be asked to feedback this information to the whole class later.
- Distribute large sheets of paper and markers to each group and ask them to design an awareness raising poster to highlight the denial of human rights to the particular group represented by the story card. (Groups represented are

Travellers, people with disabilities, refugees, and older people). As a means of generating ideas for the poster suggest that they consider what causes the denial of rights, for example, discrimination.

- Ask each group to report back by displaying and explaining their poster. They should identify who their story card was about, what rights were being denied them and the purpose of the message conveyed by their poster.



FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Give a copy of sheet ★11 to each student and ask them to read the stories about rights being upheld. They should answer the questions that follow. The nine grounds against discrimination are age, ethnic background, marital status, gender, membership of the Travelling community, disability, family status, sexual orientation and religion. Discuss the cases and the responses given to the question. Discuss other ways that people can be discriminated against because of their age, e.g. motor insurance. Are laws effective in stopping discrimination?



IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Display the posters around the school to raise the awareness of other students.
- Organise an awareness raising poster campaign on the theme of poverty and human rights. You could organise this as an art competition and request sponsorship for prizes from local businesses.
- Contact the Equality Authority to find out more about equality laws in Ireland.

STANDING UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS!

Read these stories about people standing up for their rights then answer the questions that follow:

STORY 1 RYANAIR

The Equality Authority took a case against Ryanair because of an advertisement they printed looking for staff. The Authority believed that the advert was unfair and discriminated against older or middle aged people because it had the word 'young' in it twice. It is against the law to discriminate on the basis of age in Ireland, this means that a company cannot look for old or young people. The Equality Authority won this case.

STORY 2 TESCO

Ann McDonagh won her case against Tesco Ireland Ltd. She took the case because the Manager of the supermarket asked her to leave the shop. She believed that the only reason this happened was because she is a Traveller. Tesco was unable to give a good reason why Ms. McDonagh was asked to leave the shop and they lost the case. In Ireland it is against the law to treat someone unfairly because they are a member of the Traveller community.

WHAT RIGHTS WERE IN QUESTION IN EACH STORY?

STORY 1 RYANAIR

STORY 2 TESCO

THE STORIES EXPLAIN THAT IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST PEOPLE FOR CERTAIN REASONS. WHAT ARE THE GROUNDS IN EACH STORY?

STORY 1 RYANAIR

STORY 2 TESCO

IN IRELAND IT IS ILLEGAL TO DISCRIMINATE AGAINST SOMEONE FOR THE FOLLOWING NINE GROUNDS. CAN YOU NAME THEM?

CHECK OUT THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY WEBSITE TO SEE IF YOU ARE RIGHT < www.equality.ie >

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____

4 _____ 5 _____ 6 _____

7 _____ 8 _____ 9 _____

RIGHTS AUCTION¹³



AIMS

- 1 To provide students with the opportunity to develop their thinking on the relationship between basic human needs and human rights.
- 2 To encourage students to reflect upon the importance they attach to particular rights.
- 3 To reinforce understanding of the relationship between poverty and human rights.



YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★12 'Rights Auction Scenario' for each group
- A copy of sheet ★10 for each student or displayed on OHP (page 51)
- Blank sheets of paper
- Large sheets of paper e.g. flipchart paper (1 per group)
- Markers
- 4 X Sets of money (€1,000 in each set i.e., 5x €100; 6x €50; 5x €20; 5x €10; 10x €5). Photocopy the money sheet onto cardboard in order that it may be used again.



METHOD

- Distribute a copy of sheet ★10 to each student or display on an OHP. Read the scenario (sheet ★12) aloud and ask students to identify which are the most important rights that are being denied to Jackie. Write these onto the poster paper and stick onto board/wall. These rights will later be sold at auction to the highest bidder.

- Divide the class into 4 groups and distribute a copy of the scenario to each group. Read and allow some time for the groups to discuss it. (5-10 mins)
- Choose one person to act as the auctioneer and one person to act as his/her assistant to collect the money. Instruct the auctioneer to sell the rights to the highest bidder. Each right is auctioned in whatever order the auctioneer decides. The groups pay for the rights as they buy them.
- When all the rights have been auctioned ask the groups to write up the rights that they bought on a large sheet. Each group should then explain what rights they bought and why they bought them.
- The class should then try to reach a consensus on which group secured the best possible future for Jackie. The following are some suggestions for discussion:
 - ✍ Which rights are the most important? Why?
 - ✍ Are there any really important rights missing? What are they?
 - ✍ How can we ensure that each child and young person in Ireland is afforded their rights?

¹³ Adapted from *The Rights Stuff*. DEFY/Amnesty International/Trócaire

€100

€100

€50

€50

€20

€20

€10

€10

€5

€5

€5

€5

Photocopy 3 copies of this sheet for each group. Deduct one €100 note and two €20 notes from each bundle to arrive at €1000 per group.



RIGHTS AUCTION SCENARIO

You are members of a group that gives advice to the Minister of Health and Children. Your aim is to get the best possible future for Jackie. You will reach this aim by buying the rights that you think will give Jackie a good future. For every right you get the Minister has promised it will be fulfilled in Jackie's case and in the case of all young people who are out of home.

With the members of your group you should discuss what human rights are most important for Jackie and in what order. You have 5-10 minutes to decide what rights you will bid for in the auction. You will have to bid against the other groups to try and buy these rights. You should decide now which rights you think are most important for Jackie.



JACKIE'S SITUATION

- Jackie is 16 and has been out of home for the past nine months.
- There were a lot of family problems when she was growing up and because of that she spent a lot of time in foster care.
- She can't read or write properly because she missed a lot of school due to all the disruption caused by her family's problems. She stopped going to school when she was 12.
- She abuses drugs and alcohol.
- She doesn't see how her life can get better.
- She doesn't think anyone cares what happens to her.
- She always feels unsafe and fears for her safety.

3

YOUR COMMUNITY TAKING ISSUE WITH POVERTY

AIMS

- 1 To enable students to identify and distinguish between different types of communities (i.e., geographical and special interest communities).
- 2 To develop students sense of belonging to communities to which they belong.
- 3 To highlight active citizenship in community involvement and participation.
- 4 To highlight individuals and communities taking action on issues of personal or local concern.
- 5 To challenge stereotypical images of people experiencing poverty as dependent by presenting examples of people being active in improving their own situations.

CONCEPTS

- Development
- Democracy
- Interdependence
- Human Dignity

ATTITUDES & VALUES

- It is hoped that students will develop a sense of respect and appreciation for the diversity of experience and background that exists in all communities. This section also aims to foster respect for empowerment and solidarity approaches and responses to social exclusion, poverty and other types of injustice

KNOWLEDGE

- Distinction between types of communities
- Impact of social exclusion
- Community Development Projects

SKILLS

- Analysis – photographs and media
- Communication – personal and interpersonal reflection, group work, simulation
- Action Skills

RECOMMENDED

- Activity 10, 11, 12.
- Activity 13 is recommended for students who may require support in reading.

TYPES OF COMMUNITY



AIMS

- 1 To identify different types of communities and to explore their needs.
- 2 To develop awareness of different communities that exist within the locality of the school and to become aware of their needs as members of the overall community.

YOU WILL NEED

- A selection of photographs from this resource, in addition to your own collection. The photographs should depict different types of communities. For example, residential, Traveller, farming, work, family, rural, urban, women's group, ethnic minority, older people, school, sports, special interest community (e.g. disability jobs protest).

METHOD

- Stick the photographs on the walls of the classroom, display in a communal area or distribute them to groups in the class.
- Ask the students to identify different types of communities represented by the photographs. Write these onto the board.
- Brainstorm other types of communities that may not be represented here, particularly ones that the students are involved in or are aware of in their communities.
- Using the definition provided (see Glossary page 109) explain how community is defined. Ask the students to separate the communities represented in the photographs into (1) geographical communities (2) special interest/common identity communities. They could do this by dividing a page into two columns and

listing them under the appropriate headings.

- Discuss the following:
 - ✎ What is common and what is distinctive about these communities and their needs?
 - ✎ Discuss other communities that may exist that are not outlined here.
 - ✎ Brainstorm and discuss what are the needs of particular types of communities. Use some of the following examples;
 - Traveller community
i.e. what are the accommodation, health, education, work needs of this community?
 - Ethnic community
(as for Travellers plus language, religious and cultural needs)
 - Residential community
(disadvantaged) i.e. education, work, leisure activities, childcare needs.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Investigate what facilities and services are available within your community. You may wish to confine your investigation to facilities and services specific to one group, for example older people or young people.
- Carry out a survey to identify what needs are not being met by current facilities and services.
- Carry out a media investigation into different types of communities that exist within your local area. Which communities get more media attention than others? Why?

GIANT STEPS¹⁴ – A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?



AIMS

- 1 To develop empathy and understanding amongst students in relation to social exclusion¹⁵ and poverty and the resultant effects on peoples participation in their communities and society in general.

YOU WILL NEED

- A large clear space
- Copies of the role cards (p 61-63) - one role card for each student/participant

METHOD

- Distribute a role card to each participant. (See p 37 for note on sensitivity in distributing role cards). Ask the students to read their role card and to enter into their roles by thinking about who they are, where they live, how many are in their family, what kind of life they have, whether they feel as though they belong in their community, school, family etc.
- Instruct participants to stand in character at one end of the room with their backs against the wall. Use the full length of the space.
- Explain that you are going to read out statements (*D). After each statement is read they must:
 - ✎ Take a **giant step** if they can do it quite easily or if the statement fully applies to them
 - ✎ Take a **baby step** if they can do it but with difficulty or if it applies to them a little bit
 - ✎ **Don't move** if they can't do it at all.
- Emphasise that the aim of the exercise is to try to experience what life is like for the character as a member of their community – it is not about reaching the end first, or even at all.
- Now call out the first statement. Once

everybody has responded, ask them to explain what they did and why. Choose more statements, read them out, and allow participants to make their move.

Alternatively, read all the statements out consecutively and ask participants at the end to explain who their character was and which statements they found applied to them more than others and vice versa. The latter method is useful if time is limited or if you are using this as an introductory activity during a class.

- When all the statements have been read begin the debriefing.

DE-BRIEFING

- Who got the furthest along? Why? Do you think this happens in real life?
- Who got left behind/out? Why? Do you think this happens in real life?
- How did you feel when you took a giant step/couldn't move?
- How did you feel when others were moving at a faster/slower pace than you?
- Do you think that there are people/groups in your community that feel left out (excluded)? Who are they? Why are they excluded?
- Choose one character e.g. Nicola, Jackie or Joe. Discuss what could be done so that he/she could feel more part of the community and could have more opportunities in life.
- Introduce the definition of social exclusion and discuss if it applies to the people in the roles.

NOTE TO TEACHER

It is important that you read the role cards carefully before assigning them to students. If space is limited select ten students to assume the characters.

However, empathy is more effectively generated when the student feels excluded (i.e when they are unable to move or to move quickly enough so involving all students in the activity is preferable).

¹⁴ Adapted from *The Rights Stuff*. DEFY/Amnesty International/Trócaire

¹⁵ See page 8 for an explanation of 'social exclusion'



GIANT STEPS – A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?

STATEMENTS

IT IS LIKELY THAT YOU WILL DO YOUR LEAVING CERTIFICATE

YOU COULD GO TO COLLEGE WHEN YOU FINISH SCHOOL

YOU CAN COMMUNICATE IN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

WHEN YOU ARE SICK YOU CAN GO YOUR DOCTOR

YOU CAN LIVE WITH YOUR FAMILY AT HOME

YOU CAN JOIN ANY GROUP YOU LIKE

YOU HAVE A SECURE HOME

YOU FEEL THAT YOU BELONG

YOU HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT AND DRINK

YOU GET PLENTY OF EXTRA HELP WHENEVER YOU NEED IT.

YOU GET INVOLVED IN THINGS HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

YOU LIKE LIVING WHERE YOU LIVE, IT'S A NICE, CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

YOU CAN BE YOURSELF WITHOUT BEING SLAGGED OR MADE FEEL DIFFERENT

YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR LIFE AHEAD AND YOUR FUTURE IS PRETTY SECURE

YOU ARE A MEMBER OF AT LEAST ONE LOCAL GROUP, SPORTS TEAM, ORGANISATION, ETC.

YOU CAN EASILY SOCIALISE WITH YOUR FRIENDS LIKE GOING TO DISCOS, THE CINEMA, ETC.

YOU GET MOST THINGS THAT YOU ASK FOR AT HOME, LIKE CLOTHES, SHOES, BOOKS, CDS, ETC.

YOU CAN PRACTICE YOUR RELIGION EASILY.

GIANT STEPS – A
LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?

ROLES

3

11

ACTIVITY

**1** MICHAEL, 14

You live in a trailer on a temporary halting site with your mother and father and four brothers and sisters. The site is not good. There are no toilet or washing facilities and only one tap between eleven families. There was supposed to be a permanent site built but the local people are objecting to it. You're always getting slagged at school because of your accent and some of the other students call you names. They say your Dad is a waster but it's not his fault he can't get a job. Nobody will give a job to a Traveller. You're in first year now but you don't go to school often because you don't feel that you fit in.

**2** JOE, 13

You have two brothers and one sister, they are aged between 16 and 7 years old. You live in a large county council estate in Waterford. Your father is 42 and has been unemployed for as long as you can remember. Your mother works as a cleaner, but doesn't get paid much. You plan on leaving school after your Junior Cert so that you can get a job. You already work part-time collecting shopping trolleys, you give three-quarters of what you earn to your mother.

**3** HELEN, 16

You have two sisters and a brother and you live in Galway in a nice big house overlooking the sea. Your mother is the accountant in the company that your father manages. You have your own room and because you are the oldest and going into 5th year you have your own computer in your room to help you in your studying. You are planning to go to university after your Leaving Cert and would like to study languages. You've gone on two summer exchanges to France and Italy to learn the languages and you're going to Irish College over the summer to brush up on your Irish. Your class is going to Switzerland on a skiing trip next term.

**4** JACKIE, 16

You spent a lot of your childhood in care due to family difficulties. You've been living on the street for the past nine months. You have a drug habit. You can't read or write properly because you missed a lot of school over the years due to all the family problems. You left school when you were 12. You don't see any hope for yourself out of your situation, you don't think anyone cares.



GIANT STEPS – A
LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?

ROLES



5 HASSAN, 15

You are living with your uncle and two brothers in Donegal. You came to Ireland from Algeria two years ago after your parents were killed. You are all waiting to see if the Irish Government will allow you to stay in Ireland as a refugee. You are Muslim and are living in a place that used to be a hotel and get all your meals supplied. You have to leave at 8.30 to be in for school at 8.50 which means that you miss breakfast because the kitchen staff only start at 8.30. There is usually no hot water in the mornings because its on a time switch.



6 KARL, 17

You live with your sister, brother and parents in Limerick. Rugby is really popular and you are a winger on the school team. You really only play it to keep your Dad happy and because it helps you fit in more. After your Junior Cert you kept on Home Economics because you love cooking. Your dream is to become a chef which doesn't go down too well with your Dad or the lads in your class. You get a hard time, they call you 'gay boy' and say that you should spell your name the girl's way, Carol instead of Karl. You can't wait to leave school to get as far away from there as possible.



7 SARAH, 14

You are Deaf. You have to go to a special school 70 miles from your home. You get home once a month to spend time with your family. All your family use sign language and a few times a year you all go to an event organised by members of the Deaf community. There's not much else for you to do in your spare time even though you love sports. Most people treat you as though there is something wrong with you, they don't understand that you just communicate in a different way. You would like to go to college when you leave school but you worry that you won't fit in.

Note to teacher: For information on Deaf Community see Glossary

GIANT STEPS – A
LEVEL PLAYING FIELD?

ROLES

3

11

ACTIVITY



8 NICOLA, 14

You live with your mother, brother Paul and sisters Serena and Stacy in a flat in Dublin's north side. Your mother would like to work but the cost of childcare is too high so she has to make do on the lone parents allowance. Your father doesn't live with you anymore but he does give €20 from his dole every week to help out. Money is always tight and there is never anything extra for nice clothes or shoes. You find it hard to get your homework done most of the time, not to mention study because you share a bedroom with your sisters and there just isn't enough room for all of you. Your teachers are always telling you that you could do very well if you studied more, but it's not as simple as that.



9 SHANE, 13

You live in Dublin with your parents and two sisters. You are in first year in a fee-paying school. You have to stay back most days for study period. You get extra help with your English two evenings a week because you find it difficult. You are a member of the local karate club and your Dad gets a special rate from his company for the family to be members of the leisure and sports centre. Your Mum works from home running her own interior design business. You love the holidays because then you get to help her. She says that when you're older you could take over the business.



10 CLARE, 15

You live in Roscommon with your parents and older brothers and sisters on a small farm. The farm is near a river that has flooded many times over the past few years. Your family have lost a lot of money due to the floods. Your parents regularly look worried and seem to talk a lot about money. You travel 10 miles to the nearest secondary school. You used to take music lessons after school but you had to give them up as they were too expensive. You would like to study law in college when you leave school – your parents are already worrying about where they are going to get the money to pay for you as your eldest brother is in college already.

COMMUNITIES TAKING ACTION



AIMS

- 1 To introduce the concept of community development (see page 109 for explanation).
- 2 To develop an understanding of the link between community development and active citizenship.
- 3 To provide positive examples of people experiencing poverty being proactive in improving their situations.

YOU WILL NEED

- One case study per group of four students from pages 65-67.
- One copy of ★13 'Communities Taking Action' for each student

METHOD

- Carry out an initial brainstorm on what students understand by community and development. Use the definitions provided in the glossary to give a basic explanation of these concepts. Again, using the glossary briefly explain what is meant by community development. The remainder of the activity should develop students understanding.
- Divide the class into groups of four.
- Distribute one case study to each group and a copy of sheet ★13 to each student.
- Instruct the groups to read the stories about communities taking action/community development and to fill in the worksheet. The group should discuss together the last question before writing an answer. Explain that they will have to tell the other groups about their case study and report back on what they wrote on their worksheet.
- It is particularly important that the final question is done properly as this will help the students to apply the definition of community development to a real life situation.
- When all the groups have finished ask one or two members of each group to report on their answers to the whole class. In particular discuss each groups conclusion on whether their particular case study is a good example of community development and why they think this.

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Discuss the meaning of the highlighted words within the case studies.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Draw, write or gather photographs or stories from newspapers which are about exclusion. Create a display for your classroom or some other prominent area of the school.
- Keep an 'ideas notebooks' on the theme of poverty and social exclusion. The notebook can be in any format and can contain any material, verbal or graphic – words, phrases, drawings, photos, poems, stories – and can form a personal record for the students of their progress.
- Imagine you are a journalist writing an article about the needs of your community. The editor has asked you to focus on people whose needs are not being met, or people who are excluded. Write the interview that you would have with one of the characters from the giant steps game (page 59). Make sure to ask the person if they feel that they belong to their community and if they feel that their opinion and voice counts. Students could compile all the articles into a newsletter for the school as an awareness-raising tool.
- Assess the situation of the characters in the giant steps game in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Are their rights being met?
- Investigate whether there is a community group or organisation in your area that works with any one of the groups at particular risk of experiencing social exclusion or disadvantage. Write to them and invite a speaker to come into your class. Plan and carry out an awareness raising day in your school around the issues facing this particular group.

CASE STUDIES

COMMUNITIES TAKING ACTION



Case Study

1

CHERRY ORCHARD
EQUINE CENTRE

- West Dublin is an area where there are not many **facilities** for young people. There is also not a big choice when it comes to jobs. Because of this there are many examples of poverty in the area.
- Some people from the local community got together to see what could be done. Horses are very popular with young people in the area and because of this the group came up with the idea of a training centre. The idea was to teach local children about horses and how to look after them. It has now developed to include a wide variety of training for young people.
- Those who take part in the project are mostly young people who have left school early or people who have been unemployed for a long time. The young people learn all about how to take care of horses. They also learn computers, business subjects, horticulture, and catering, and general life skills.
- The aim of the Centre is to help young people get ready for the world of work. But as well as this it also helps to **preserve** the horse culture that has grown up in the area.
- The Centre is managed by local people as well as **representatives** from **national** organisations. Because of the great work it does there has been a lot of support for this work, including Dublin Corporation providing land for the centre and the horses.

Case Study

2

MULLINGAR
S.O.S

- In some areas of Mullingar town there is a lot of unemployment and other problems, including many young people leaving school early without qualifications and lessening their chances of a job. One local woman decided that she wanted to do something to solve this problem. She saw that there was something needed in order to support young people moving from 6th class to secondary school. She went to the **Midlands Regional Youth Service** and a short time later a new programme started called SOS. SOS stands for Stepping Over to Secondary.
- The programme works with the local schools and together they decide which children might need support. These young people are then invited to take part free of charge. For two weeks in July the young people who have just finished 6th class take part in lots of fun educational activities that help them say goodbye to primary school. They also learn to start using a timetable, and get used to new subjects and having different teachers. Tutors from the local secondary schools are involved in the programme so the students get to meet and get to know their new teachers before they begin in secondary school.

CASE STUDIES

COMMUNITIES TAKING ACTION



Case Study

3

BOSNIAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

- After the war in Yugoslavia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Irish Government gave **refugee status** to a number of Bosnians. Since 1992, over 910 Bosnian people have come to Ireland. Some have since resettled in their homeland. Most of the Bosnians who stayed are living in private housing in Dublin. Most are renting but some have bought their own homes, a number live in local authority housing. Many have found full or part-time jobs. Others are retraining on FÁS courses or in college.
- Language is a big problem especially for older Bosnians who like many older people find it difficult to get work. This leaves them **isolated** and increases **social exclusion**.
- One of the first jobs of the Bosnian **Community Development** Project was to do a survey of the needs within the Bosnian community. Now there are many projects trying to meet these needs, they include:
 - A Community Magazine called 'The Future'
 - An Information Centre
 - The Bosnian Radio Programme
 - An Internet service
 - An Art Group
 - Chess Club
 - Bosnian evenings with cultural events
 - A summer project for children
 - The 'Zena' Project for women
 - Work with older people

The project has been very successful in providing Bosnian people with skills that help them support their own community.

Source: <http://www.iol.ie/EMPLOYMENT/integra/projects/cbcd.html> 21/08/01

Case Study

4

COMMUNITIES UNITE AGAINST HIGH RISE

- People living in the Docklands area of Dublin are **united in protest** about high rise buildings being planned for their area. Communities from the north and south east inner city came together to protest about the effect of these large buildings on their small communities. Together they marched to An Bord Pleanála to show their protest and tell the public about what was happening and how they will affect the rest of the city.
- The local people were worried that the changes would destroy the community spirit in these areas. They were also concerned that local communities would die-off as the new skyscrapers would not be affordable for people from the local community.
- The groups are not against the area being developed, but they don't support high rise buildings that will tower over their homes and gardens. The march marked the beginning of the United Docklands Community Campaign. The residents had some success because An Bord Pleanála turned down the proposal, but the high-rise buildings were still able to be built due to earlier approval. The residents continue to campaign against these developments.

(Extract adapted from Dublin Inner City Partnership Agenda Vol. 1 No. 1 Spring 2000.)

CASE STUDIES

COMMUNITIES TAKING ACTION



Case Study

5 KERRY TRAVELLERS TRAINING OUTREACH PROJECT

- There are over 850 Travellers in County Kerry and many of these are very disadvantaged. Most young Travellers don't go to school often. Travellers have a lot more health problems than settled people. Many Travellers face discrimination and are excluded (left out) from everyday life. Because of this many Travellers are unemployed and rely on social welfare payments.
- The Kerry Travellers Training Outreach Project was started to try to tackle some of these problems. It tries to **empower** Travellers to take control of the issues that concern them. One big issue is being **excluded** from jobs. The Travellers who work with the project improve their self-confidence and develop their skills. The project also helps them to learn about Traveller history and culture.
- Kelly is an example of one woman who has got a lot from the project. A year after her daughter was born she started a course with Kerry Travellers Project. As Kelly says herself 'I have learned a lot of new skills. I have had a chance to try to start a small business in jewellery-making and other crafts. I think this course should be funded more for another group of Travellers to have a chance to learn the skills we did'. Kelly now works for the Kerry Travellers Development Project, as the office administrator.

Source: <http://www.iol.ie/EMPLOYMENT/integra/projects/kdys.html>

Case Study

6 REMEMBER US

- Remember Us is the name of a group in North Fingal, an area in Dublin. It is a youth and social club for children and young people with special needs, their friends and family. The group was set up because the parents of the young people saw that no one was looking after their needs and so their future would not be good. They saw that something was needed to help their children with special needs develop and become more involved and included in their community.
- The aim of the group is to provide a place for young people with special needs and their friends to meet, have fun and help them grow into independent adults. The group also tries to involve all young people from the community.
- The club takes place every Saturday and there are lots of activities on offer such as, dance, samba music, sport, karaoke, arts and crafts and outings. There is also a summer project organised each year.

Source: Co-operation Fingal Newsletter, November 2001

COMMUNITIES TAKING ACTION

CASE STUDY NAME

WHAT TYPE OF COMMUNITY IS THIS?

WHAT BONDS THIS COMMUNITY TOGETHER?

WHO IS INVOLVED?

WHY ARE THEY INVOLVED?

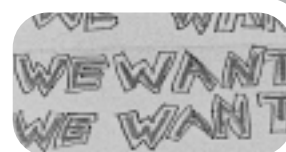
WHO IS BENEFITING?

WHO'S NEEDS ARE BEING MET?

HOW ARE THEY BEING MET?

DO YOU THINK THIS CASE STUDY IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AT WORK? WHY? DISCUSS THIS WITH OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP.

WORD POWER



AIMS

- 1 To aid students in understanding terms and words used in the case studies in Activity 12.
- 2 To familiarise students with the meaning and spelling of commonly used words in the area of poverty awareness.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★14 'Optional Word Exercises' and ★15 'Fill in the Blanks' for each student.

METHOD

- You may wish to do these exercises prior to doing Activity 12 or as homework assignments after.
- Distribute the sheets and ask students to complete the exercises individually or with others. Remind students to refer back to the case studies in order to place the word in a context. Check the answers by asking individual students to explain a word.
- Write the words onto an A3 size 'key words' sheet (page 20) for display in classroom and for further reference.

OPTIONAL WORD EXERCISES

Match the **WORD** with the correct **SENTENCE**

EMPOWER	TAKING PART AND GETTING INVOLVED
CHALLENGE	A PERSON OFFERED PROTECTION FROM PERSECUTION
UNITED	HELP OTHER PEOPLE TO IMPROVE THEIR OWN LIVES
ISOLATED	FOR EXAMPLE PLAY GROUNDS, YOUTH CLUBS, SWIMMING POOLS
SOCIAL EXCLUSION	STANDING UP TO SOMETHING OR QUESTIONING A DECISION
REFUGEE	A PERSON FROM A GROUP OR ORGANISATION
PARTICIPATE	STANDING TOGETHER FOR A COMMON REASON
PRESERVE	PEOPLE FROM THE COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER TO MEET THEIR NEEDS AND DEVELOP THEIR OWN COMMUNITY
REPRESENTATIVE	BEING LEFT OUT OF, NOT BEING INCLUDED IN THINGS
NATIONAL	KEEP SOMETHING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	FEELING LEFT OUT AND NOT INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY
FACILITIES	FOR THE WHOLE COUNTRY
CAMPAIGN	FIGHT FOR SOMETHING YOU BELIEVE IN

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Use the words in the box to help complete the sentences below

EXCLUDED	DISADVANTAGED	EQUALITY
LEFT OUT	ISOLATED	EQUAL
EXCLUSION	ADVANTAGED	OUT
INCLUSION		

1. IF EVERYBODY STARTED OUT WITH THE SAME THEY WOULD ALL BE _____
2. BEING LEFT OUT IS THE SAME AS BEING _____
3. WHEN YOU START OFF WITH MORE THAN SOMEONE ELSE YOU ARE _____
4. THE OPPOSITE OF EXCLUSION IS _____
5. NOT HAVING WHAT YOU NEED TO DO WELL CAN LEAD TO YOU BEING _____
6. EXCLUSION MEANS BEING LEFT _____
7. THE OPPOSITE OF INCLUSION IS _____
8. BEING LEFT OUT OF THINGS THAT ARE HAPPENING IN YOUR COMMUNITY CAN MAKE YOU FEEL _____
9. A GAME THAT IS FAIR AND EQUAL WHERE EVERYONE KNOWS THE RULES AND HAS WHAT THEY NEED TO DO WELL IS BASED ON _____
10. A COMMUNITY BASED ON INCLUSION IS ONE WHERE NO ONE IS _____



POVERTY – A NATIONAL ISSUE

AIMS

- 1 To develop understanding of poverty as a national issue affecting a sizeable proportion of the population of Ireland.
- 2 To develop awareness of how poverty is treated as an issue in the media and by society in general.
- 3 To provide information on government (national) responses to poverty through the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) and to analyse its effectiveness.
- 4 To provide key information about the State and one of its departments (Department of Social and Family Affairs).

CONCEPTS

- Democracy
- Development
- Law
- Interdependence

ATTITUDES & VALUES

- Appreciation for the workings of the State and national responses to combat poverty and social exclusion. Respect for critical awareness and thought in relation to the impact of national initiatives on individual lives. A commitment to active, constructive, participative citizenship.

KNOWLEDGE

- The National Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Facts on poverty in Ireland today
- Workings of the State
- Department of Social and Family Affairs and one aspect of its relatedness to the individual

SKILLS

- Communication – debating, discussing
- Analysis – media, application
- Identification – The web, telephone, letter writing
- Action

RECOMMENDED

Activity 14 or 15 and Activity 16.
Activity 17 depending on your class needs.

POVERTY – A NATIONAL ISSUE, TRUE OR FALSE?



AIMS

- 1 To demonstrate that poverty is a national issue in Ireland and that this issue affects a large proportion of the population.
- 2 To provide students with some key facts relating to poverty in Ireland today.

copy of ★16 to each student as an individual classroom or homework activity. Discuss the validity of each statement and give the correct answer with the explanation.

YOU WILL NEED

- One copy of the statements ★16 'True or False' cut into individual statements
- Two A4 signs with TRUE and FALSE printed in large lettering on each
- Alternative method: A copy of ★16 for each student

IDEA FOR ACTION

- Check out the Combat Poverty Agency website www.combatpoverty.ie for more information about poverty in Ireland today.

METHOD

- Place each sign on a separate chair at the front of the room.
- Distribute one statement from sheet ★16 to ten individual students.
- Ask each student to read out the statement and to place it on the appropriate true/false chair depending on whether they believe it to be true/false. They should explain their decision. You may choose to ask the students to discuss the statements first in small groups.
- Discuss the validity of the statement with the remainder of the class. Is there agreement / disagreement. Why?
- Confirm the correct answer and read out the additional information provided (*E). Allow time for any discussion that this may prompt.
- Alternative: Photocopy and distribute a

POVERTY – A NATIONAL ISSUE, TRUE OR FALSE?

Read these statements and shade the symbol that matches what you think.











STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1 There is no such thing as a poor farmer.		
2 Men and women are at the same risk of poverty.		
3 Ireland has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the European Union (E.U.)		
4 A lot of people who are unemployed for a long time have never been to secondary school.		
5 Well-off people are healthier and live longer than people who experience poverty.		
6 A baby born to a Traveller family has the same chances of survival as a baby born to a settled family.		
7 Education is the key to finding secure employment.		
8 A person is more at risk of experiencing poverty if they live in a large city.		
9 Ireland is one of the most unequal countries in the EU when it comes to people's income.		
10 The gap between the rich and poor has increased as Ireland has become wealthier.		



TRUE OR FALSE

TEACHER'S ANSWER PAGE



STATEMENT	FACT
1 There is no such thing as a poor farmer	<p> False. 12% of farming households are at risk of poverty. CPA Poverty Briefing no. 9. Poverty in Ireland – The Current Picture.</p>
2 Men and women are at the same risk of poverty.	<p> False. The risk of poverty has increased for single adult households and households headed by someone working full – time in the home. These are mainly women. CPA Poverty Briefing no. 9. Poverty in Ireland – The Current Picture.</p>
3 Ireland has one of the worst rates of child poverty in the European Union (E.U.)	<p> True. Ireland has one of the highest rates of child poverty in the EU. In the mid 1990s many EU countries had child poverty rates which were either half the Irish rate or below it. For every eight children in Ireland one of them lives in severe poverty. CPA Poverty Briefing No. 10. Child Poverty in Ireland.</p>
4 A lot of people who are unemployed for a long time have never been to secondary school	<p> True. Just under 50% of the long-term unemployed have at most attained primary education. Educational attainment determines both access to employment and the level of income derived from employment. NESF Forum Report no. 24. Early School Leaving.</p>
5 Well-off people are healthier and live longer than people who experience poverty	<p> True. People who experience consistent poverty get sick more often and die younger. This is due to a number of reasons such as poor nutrition, access to health services, stress, low self-esteem, poor quality or damp housing. NAPS Working Group Report. Equity and Access to Health Services.</p>
6 A baby born to a Traveller family has the same chances of survival as a baby born to a settled family	<p> False. Traveller infant mortality rates are over twice those of the settled community and Travellers have a general health status which is much lower than for members of the settled community. 1995 Report from the Task Force on the Travelling Community.</p>
7 Education is the key to finding secure employment	<p> True. Early school leavers with no qualifications are at a high risk of poverty and unemployment. About 20% leave the education system with no or poor qualifications each year. CPA Poverty Briefing No. 7 Unemployment and Poverty.</p>
8 A person is more at risk of experiencing poverty if they live in a large city	<p> False. The highest risk of poverty is in villages and towns with populations less than 3,000 people. Brian Nolan et al. 1998. Where are Poor Households? CPA.</p>
9 Ireland is one of the most unequal countries in the EU when it comes to people's income.	<p> True. The richest half of the population share 3/4 of the income while the poorest half divide 1/4 of the country's income between them. Income inequality increased between 1994-98. CPA Poverty Briefing No.11 Richer but more unequal.</p>
10 The gap between the rich and poor has increased as Ireland has become wealthier	<p> True. People's living standards have increased generally but relative income poverty has increased. Ireland has one of the highest levels of income poverty in the E.U. CPA Poverty Briefing No.11 Richer but more unequal.</p>

FORTY SHADES OF GREEN



AIMS

- 1 To initiate thought and discussion on poverty as a national issue.
- 2 To demonstrate the impact of the media on the image portrayed of a place or issue.



YOU WILL NEED

- One copy of ★17 'Forty Shades of Green' per student or group



METHOD

- Distribute copies of sheet ★17. Read and discuss the newspaper headlines either as a whole class group or small group activity.
- Guide discussion on the points outlined below:
 - ✍ Use one word to describe the image of Ireland presented by the newspaper headlines. Write these words on the board and review them in their entirety when each student has spoken.
 - ✍ Is this image of Ireland realistic? Why?
 - ✍ If this were the only information you had about this country how would you feel about coming to live in Ireland (a) if you were wealthy and (b) if you were poor?
 - ✍ Do you think the title 'Forty Shades of Green' is suitable? Why? What do you think the message is behind this title?
 - ✍ Having completed this and/or the true or false activity, do you think that poverty is an important national issue for Ireland? Why?
 - ✍ Choose one headline which sums up the level of poverty in Ireland today.



IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Carry out a media tracking exercise on poverty or an issue related to poverty in Ireland. Demonstrate how the media can influence perception on an issue.
- Choose one of the newspaper headlines, imagine you are the journalist who wrote it, now write the article that accompanies the headline.

FORTY SHADES OF GREEN

- THIBSBORD (order to town)
- 95 E per week
- WORKERS with REF

Homeless Man Lives in Concrete Pipe

(Irish Times, 21/2/2000)

Homeless Hostels Shut Down

(Irish Independent, 7/2/2000)

Homeless Children Sleep in Cars

(Irish Independent, 7/2/2000)

Simon Soup Flows Where Celtic Tiger Never Purrs

(Irish Times, 15/12/98)

Rich and Famous Meet their Match at the K Club

(Irish Times, 21/8/97)

Government slammed for not sharing prosperity

(Irish Times, 17/11/01)

One in Five Living in Poverty

(Irish Times, 25/8/2000)

Tycoon Plans to build a new 'titanic'

(Irish Times, 5 June, 2000)

Poorest not as poor but rich a lot richer

(Irish Times, 17/7/99)

Economic boom fuels a surge on spending

(Irish Times, 1/4/00)

Many Travellers still living in bad conditions

(Irish Times, 30/9/00)

Social inequality still a barrier to third level

(Irish Times, 10/10/00)

1 in 3 lone parent families living below poverty line

(Irish Times, 6/9/00)

Irish child poverty among worst in E.U.

(Irish Times, 4/7/00)

Women more likely to live in poverty today

(Irish Times, 28/5/99)

4

17

STUDENTS

POVERTY – IRELAND RESPONDS



AIMS

- 1 To provide students with a broad understanding of the National Anti-Poverty Strategy (NAPS) as a national response to poverty in Ireland.
 - 2 To illustrate some of the targets, initiatives and principles under the NAPS.
 - 3 To aid students in understanding the impact of national programmes such as NAPS on individual lives.
 - 4 To develop skills of critical thinking by assessing the effectiveness of certain initiatives for different people.
- 6 Complete the exercise by asking each group to feedback what impact they think the NAPS will have on the life of the character in the role cards.
 - 7 Discuss similarities in feedback between groups. Ask for suggestions on what initiatives would improve these lives.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of the ★18 'NAPS Facts' for each student
- A copy of the ★19 'NAPS Road out of Poverty', ★20 'NAPS At Work' and a role card (pages 81 & 82) for each group of students

METHOD

- Introduce this activity by explaining that it relates to how the government is responding to poverty
- As a whole class activity read and discuss sheet ★18
- Divide the class into groups and distribute a copy of sheet ★19 and sheet ★20 and one role card to each group
- Allow some time for the groups to read about the character in the role cards before asking them to complete sheet ★20
- Each group must decide how the NAPS will impact upon the character in question by applying each of the sign posts (NAPS targets), road signs (NAPS initiatives) and road works (gaps in the NAPS) to the person. The worksheet ★20 'NAPS At

Work' will serve to focus this group work activity.

IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Contact the following national organisations and find out what they have to say about the effectiveness of the NAPS:
 - Irish Traveller Movement or Pavee Point
 - National Council on Ageing and Older People
 - Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed
 - OPEN – One Parent Exchange Network
- Profile the Department of Social and Family Affairs and the Minister in charge. This department co-ordinates the NAPS. What does this department do? How is it funded? How does it relate to the lives of Mary, Noel, Marie and Laura?
- Carry out research on social welfare allowances, for example, for unemployment, lone parents, pensions, etc. Estimate the weekly expenditure for a family of two adults and four children, compare the allowance with the weekly income.
- Contact a local T.D. or the HQ of the various political parties and find out what each party has to say about poverty in Ireland. Where do they stand on the issue and what do they think should be done about the issue?

NAPS FACTS

National Anti-Poverty Strategy

In 2002 the Government published a report called '*Building an Inclusive Society*'. The report was about the new National Anti-Poverty Strategy for Ireland

What is the National Anti-Poverty Strategy?



So what's this plan about?

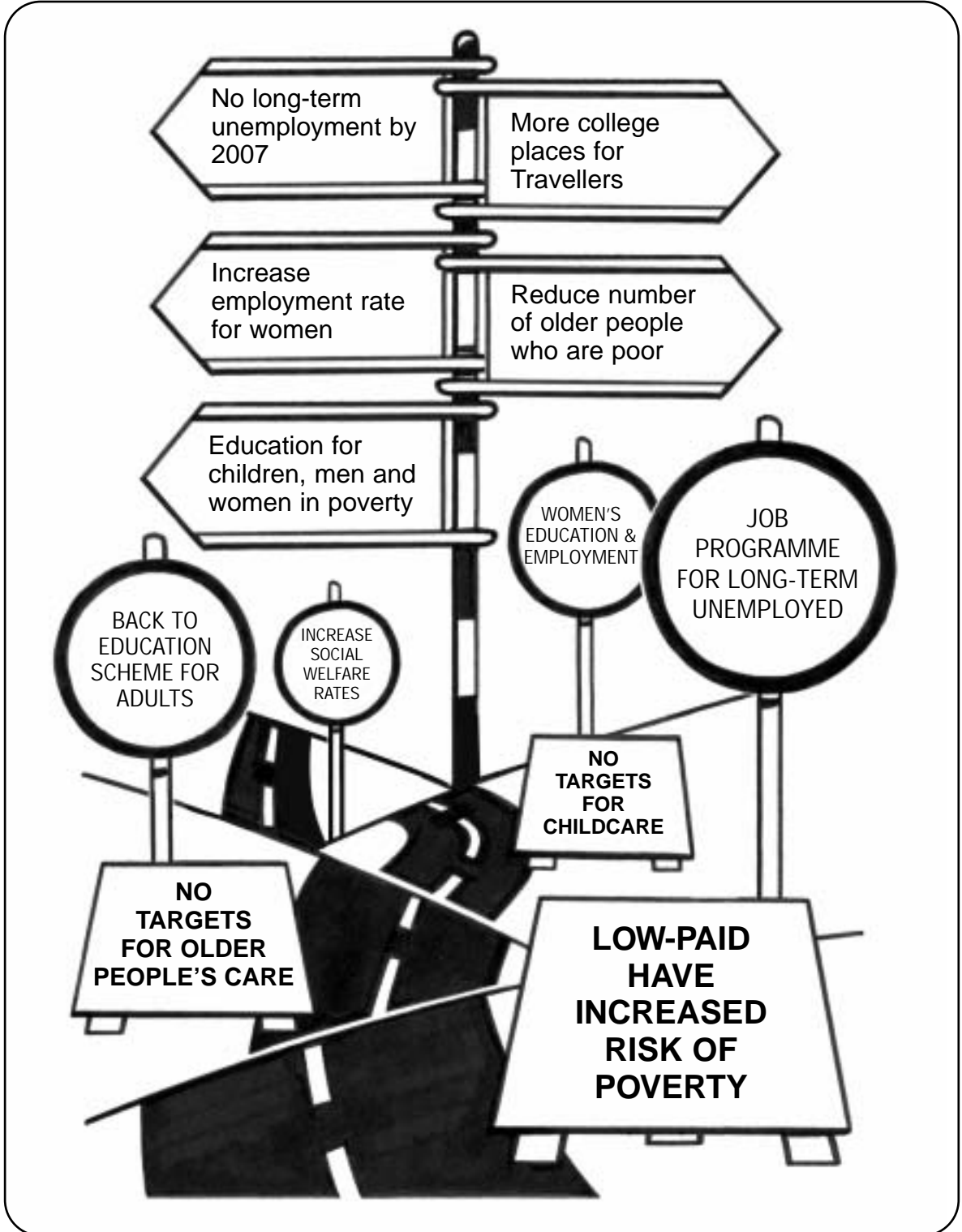
The aim of the plan is to reduce, and if possible eliminate, poverty in Ireland in ten years (1997-2007). In order to do this the plan has to do a lot of work on these areas:

- Making sure that everyone has enough money (*adequate income*)
- Making sure everyone who can work has a job (*unemployment, especially long-term*)
- Making sure that all children and young people do well from education regardless of their family background and making sure that every child gets to go to the right sort of school for them and learns in the way that suits them (*educational disadvantage*)
- Paying attention to areas in cities and towns (*urban areas*) where there are a lot of people living in poverty
- Paying attention to people who live in the country (*rural areas*) and who live in poverty

To see if everything is going to plan the government have set lots of targets to tackle these issues:

- Consistent poverty
- Income adequacy
- Employment & unemployment
- Education
- Health
- Housing & Accommodation
- Vulnerable Groups – children and young people, women, older people, Travellers, people with disabilities, migrants and members of ethnic minorities

THE NAPS ROAD OUT OF POVERTY



NAPS Targets
 NAPS Initiatives
 GAPS in the NAPS

THE NAPS ROAD OUT OF POVERTY

1 NOEL

Noel is 43 years old and is married to Anne. He lives in Dublin in a large council estate. He left school at 13. He worked at a lot of different things over the years – his last job was in a printing company. The company closed down five years ago. Noel hasn't been able to get a job since – employers keep telling him that they're looking for someone younger or someone with qualifications. He's got to the stage now where he gets depressed about it and doesn't think anyone will give him a job.

NOEL'S FACTFILE

Name:	Noel
Age:	43
Marital Status:	Married
No. Dependents:	5
Occupation:	Unemployed (5 yrs)
Education:	Left school at 13 with no qualifications
Income:	Unemployment Assistance (Social Welfare)



2 MARY

Mary is 71 years old. Her husband died three years ago. She lives alone. Her children visit as often as they can, but they're busy with their own jobs and children. Mary worked all her life in the home. Her husband worked as a builder for as long as he could. There was no such thing as taking out private pensions in those days. So when her husband retired they lived off his pension from the government. When Joe died Mary had to claim her own pension. Because she never worked outside the home she was not entitled to as much as Joe. She owns her own home now but living on an old age pension can be hard. She has to cut back on a lot of things.

MARY'S FACTFILE

Name:	Mary
Age:	71
Marital Status:	Widowed
No. Dependents:	None
Occupation:	Old-Age Pensioner
Education:	No qualifications
Income:	Old-Age Pension



THE NAPS ROAD OUT OF POVERTY

3 MARIE

Marie is a mother of five children under 17 years. She has been separated from her husband for the past 8 years. She receives the One Parent Family Allowance from the Social Welfare for herself and the youngest 4 children. She doesn't get any money for her eldest son. He works in a restaurant but doesn't get paid much, she still has to partly support him. The family lives in a large council estate in the midlands. A lot of people in the estate depend on social welfare. Many of the young people leave school without doing the Leaving. They end up with low-paying jobs that have very little future. Marie would love to get a job even a part-time one, but the cost of childcare is too much.

MARIE'S FACTFILE

Name:	Marie
Age:	42
Marital Status:	Separated
No. Dependents:	5 (7-17 years)
Occupation:	Full-time at home
Education:	Junior Certificate
Income:	One parent Allowance



4 LAURA

Laura is seventeen. She is a Traveller living in Cork. She left school when she was eleven after years of not feeling she belonged. She spends most of her time helping her mother and minding her younger brothers and sisters. She has never had a paid job, but she would love to train as a hairdresser and get a job. She is proud of her Traveller identity and hates all the prejudice and discrimination that she and her family have to put up with because they are different from settled people.

LAURAS FACTFILE

Name:	Laura
Age:	17
Marital Status:	Single
No. Dependents:	None
Occupation:	Unemployed
Education:	No qualifications
Income:	None (under 18 years)



THE NAPS AT WORK

FACTFILE

Name:

Age:

Number of dependants:

Education:

Income:

What is stopping this person's life improving?

What do you think would make this person's life better?

What sign posts (NAPS targets) or road signs (NAPS initiatives) would help this situation?

What road works (NAPS gaps) would not help this situation improve?

In your opinion do you think this persons life will get better as a result of the NAPS? Why?

THE DEPT. OF SOCIAL & FAMILY AFFAIRS

IN FOCUS


AIMS

- 1 To give students an insight into the functions of one government department.
- 2 To assist students in accessing information about government departments.
- 3 To assist students in making a personal connection with the workings of one government department, in this instance, the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA).



YOU WILL NEED

- Prior work done on the State
- A copy of worksheets ★21, ★22b, ★23 for each student.



METHOD

- This activity assumes students have done prior work on the State.
- Distribute a copy of sheet ★21 to each student. The worksheet provides information about the Department of Social and Family Affairs. Students should be assisted in accessing the information required to complete the details about the current minister with responsibility for this department. If students have access to the internet the class could include a visit to the government website www.irlgov.ie. Alternatively, students should study the Green Pages at the beginning of each phone book where they will acquire the contact details for this department.
- When complete, read and discuss the contents of the worksheet.



FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Distribute a copy of sheet ★22 to each student. Read and discuss its contents, in

particular drawing attention to Bob's connection with the Department.

- Additional information about the Department is contained on sheet ★22a if required.
- Distribute a copy of sheet ★23 to each student as a take-home activity. The worksheet requires the student to find out their PPS Number and to investigate where and how it is used in relation to them. They could use Bob's life for ideas. It is intended that students would identify areas in their own lives that are connected with the DSFA. It is important that students realise that social welfare is not about 'handouts' but is a right that each citizen benefits from at some point in their lives.
- Spend some time in the next class discussing the outcome of the students investigations into their own PPS number.



IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Visit the Government's website www.irlgov.ie for complete information on all government departments and much more.
- Trace your Personal Public Service Number with the local Social Welfare Office.
- Gather information about social welfare entitlements. Profile one social welfare payment, e.g. lone parents allowance, using Marie's story (previous activity page 82) find out how much money she and her family receive on a weekly basis. Compare this with a weekly budget for the same family (Remember to include food, housekeeping, travel, clothing, rent, education, E.S.B., telephone, T.V. licence, pocket money for kids, etc). Write an article for you school/local newspaper illustrating your findings.

THE DEPT. OF SOCIAL & FAMILY AFFAIRS

IN THE
SPOTLIGHT

Draw or
stick the
Department's
logo here.

"Our mission is to work for the well-being of people
by making sure everyone has money and support to
take part in everyday living"

Insert a photo of
the current
Minister for Social
& Family Affairs

MINISTER'S FACTFILE

Title: Minister for Social & Family Affairs

Name:

Political party:

Age:

Length of time
as Minister:

Previous positions:

Education:

What does this department do?

- Tries to understand people's needs and designs ways to meet those needs
- Sees how much money is available to spend and how much the department needs
- Looks after the running and delivery of services
- Provides information to the public
- Gives support to employment services
- Supports community development work

DID YOU KNOW?

THE TERM SOCIAL WELFARE MEANS A LOT MORE THAN JUST DOLE QUEUES AND OLD AGE PENSIONS, WHICH IS WHAT MOST PEOPLE THINK OF.

THAT THE SOCIAL WELFARE RIGHTS OF CITIZENS ARE GUARANTEED BY LAW.

THAT SOCIAL WELFARE IS YOUR RIGHT!

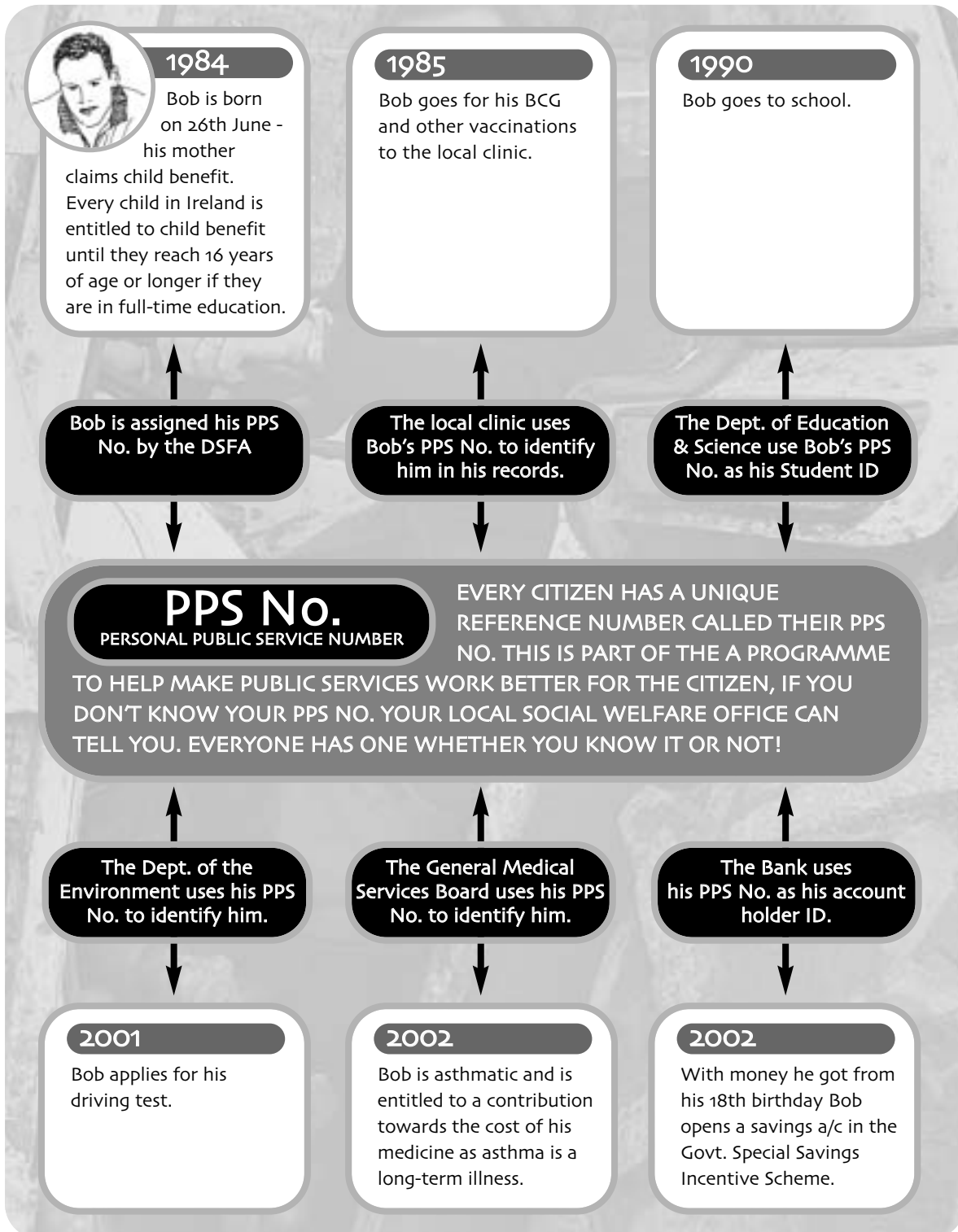
THAT THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO MEET PEOPLE'S NEEDS AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN THEIR LIVES. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN PEOPLE ARE YOUNG OR OLD, WHEN THEY ARE HAVING A BABY OR JUST GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS AND NEED A NEW UNIFORM, OR WHEN THEY ARE UNABLE TO GET A JOB.

THAT THE DSFA HAS A RECORD OF YOU WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT. WHEN YOU WERE A BABY A SPECIAL NUMBER WAS GIVEN TO YOU BY THE DEPARTMENT. READ THE CARTOON "ABOUT BOB" TO FIND OUT MORE.

THAT THE DEPT. OF SOCIAL AND FAMILY AFFAIRS, WITH THE DEPT. OF AN TAOISEACH IS IN OVERALL CHARGE OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY (NAPS)

DID YOU KNOW?

Meet Bob he's an ordinary citizen just like you. Read on as he tells you how the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) knows about him...



CITIZEN X

You are citizen x. Fill in as many details as possible. Find out what your Personal Public Service number is. There are blank boxes left so that you can fill in more details about how your PPS number is used

DATE OF BIRTH

WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

ANY OTHER DETAILS ABOUT YOUR BIRTH?

VACCINATIONS

WHERE DID YOU GET THEM?

WHAT VACCINES DID YOU GET?

ANY DETAILS YOU CAN REMEMBER?

CITIZEN X

FULL NAME

PERSONAL PUBLIC SERVICE NO.

OTHER NAMES BY WHICH YOU ARE KNOWN

STARTED SCHOOL

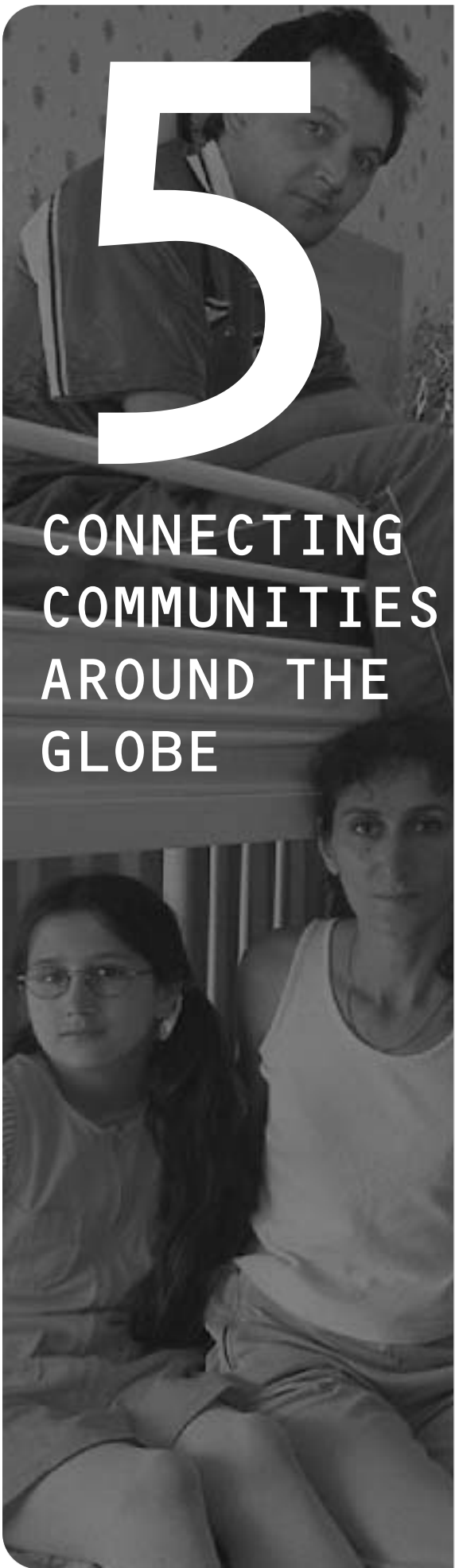
DATE

NAME OF SCHOOL

MEMORIES

5

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES AROUND THE GLOBE



AIMS

- 1 To develop awareness of the increasing reliance on credit in Irish society and its link with poverty.
- 2 To develop appreciation for the difficulty some groups experience in accessing credit.
- 3 To highlight community initiatives around the world based on principles of self-help and interdependence.
- 4 To develop an appreciation of the benefits of communities working together in the spirit of interdependence.

CONCEPTS

- Interdependence
- Development
- Human Dignity

ATTITUDES & VALUES

- Recognition for the growing indebtedness of the Irish population and an understanding of the possible problems that this may create, including an increase in poverty.
- Understanding of the difficulties some people experience in accessing credit facilities. Activities on community banking initiatives are designed to give students the opportunity to assess the benefits of communities coming together and practising self-reliance and the value of time and skills that are present in all communities.

KNOWLEDGE

- The Credit Union of Ireland
- Requirements for opening accounts in financial institutions
- Local Exchange Trading Systems

SKILLS

- Spatial awareness – map work
- Communication – discussion, role-play, presenting
- Analysis and evaluation – case studies
- Action

RECOMMENDED

- Activity 18, 19 and 20.
- Activity 21 is a follow-on from Activity 20 and can be used as the basis for an action project.

'A FRIEND IN NEED...'



AIMS

- 1 To develop awareness of increasing debt in Irish society and its possible consequences, particularly in relation to poverty.
- 2 To develop knowledge of the Credit Union system in Ireland as a means of people within communities depending on each other for saving and loans.
- 3 To increase understanding of the difficulty people on low incomes have in accessing loans.
- 4 To develop awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of saving and borrowing from credit unions, banks, building societies, etc.

becoming poor?

- ✎ How is the concept of interdependence related to credit? How do banks, building societies, etc, depend on people and vice versa? Who benefits in each case, and how do they benefit?

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Select five students to read out the role cards about their local credit union. Discuss each case and how each individual benefits from their membership of the Credit Union.
- Discuss Credit Unions as an alternative to borrowing and saving in banks and building societies. Ask the students to list some of the advantages and disadvantages of both. Once a list has been made discuss these.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★24 'Vox Pop' for each student or one for the OHP
- For Follow-On Activity a set of the credit union role cards to be distributed amongst five students (page 91)

IDEA FOR ACTION

- Carry out an investigation of your local Credit Union. Do a web search to see if it has its own web site. Survey members of the school community to find out how many students are members of Credit Unions or have family who are members. Find out what they consider the advantages and disadvantages of membership to be. Write an article from your findings and submit it to the newsletter of the Credit Union - most Credit Unions produce a regular newsletter for their members.

METHOD

- Distribute or display a copy of the Vox Pop. Read the headlines and discuss their content.
- Ask a selection of students to choose one statement from the Vox Pop that says something to them about increasing debt in Ireland.
- Have a general discussion on the following issues:
 - ✎ Do students see rising debt as a problem? How might it become a problem?
 - ✎ How can debt lead to someone

VOX POP

As a nation we depend on banks and building societies to help us when we want to buy something for which we do not have the full amount of cash. This dependence on the world money system has led to a situation in Ireland today where debt has become a normal part of life. So much so that there are few adults in Ireland who do not owe money. Here is what some people are saying about debt in Ireland today...

'I don't need help to spend my amount of money, I know exactly what it costs to feed and clothe my kids....I can just afford the basics, I'm always going from Billy to Jack to buy what the children need.'

Poverty Today, June/July, 2001

**Unpaid
Mobile
Phone
Accounts
Mounting**

The Examiner, August 6, 1999

"The ready availability of credit and aggressive marketing of money means more people are ending up in debt. Now you can even get a loan over the telephone".

The Examiner, May 11, 1999

Mr Edwards National Co-ordinator of the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), said people taking out loans need to be aware of the warning signs which signal a spiral into debt, such as an inability to meet core bills like electricity and rent.

The Examiner, August 6, 1999

**People feel entitled
to spend money
nowadays because
of the affluence in
today's society.**

Irish Times, October 2, 2001

Parents of children going to school and students entering college for the first time are among the most likely to fall into serious debt, according to the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).

Irish Times, October 2, 2001

**Banks regard students
as very good customers
nowadays and will give
loans to entice custom,
but the day of
reckoning comes when
the students leave
college and are faced
with debts.**

Irish Times, October 2, 2001

**Inability to
repay credit
puts more
into the
clutches of
moneylenders**

Irish Examiner, May 11, 1999

**Economic
Boom Fuels
a surge on
spending**

Irish Times, April 1, 2000

OUR LOCAL CREDIT UNION



SARA

I am a member of my local Credit Union. Credit Unions are democratic, financial co-operatives that are owned and controlled by their own members. The first Credit Union was started in Ireland in 1958. I became a member by buying a share and starting to save. All the money that is saved is used to help other people in the area. This is what a co-operative is about – people co-operating and working together.



CLARE

I've been a member of the Credit Union for about a year and a half. I save €10 per week and now have total savings of €720. I'm going to continue saving for as long as I can, when I'm older I'll have enough to buy a moped. I like saving in the Credit Union because I know that my money is being used along with other savings to give other members low-cost loans.



ANNA

I don't know what I'd do if it wasn't for the local Credit Union. It has saved me many times from the hands of moneylenders. I have three school-going children. I work in a supermarket where the money isn't great. My husband is on disability allowance. So between us our income is very low compared with the cost of living. On a weekly basis we get by all right. But as soon as anything out of the ordinary arrives, like going back to school or communions or birthdays, we run into problems. I now have learned to manage by taking out loans with the Credit Union. I tried to get a loan from a Bank before but they said I wasn't earning enough. That's when I discovered the Credit Union. I pay back a small amount every week as well as the small bit of savings I put by. I don't wake up at night worrying about money as much as I used to. I wouldn't sleep at all if I were borrowing from moneylenders.



PETE

I've been a member of the same Credit Union for two years and have savings of €1,400. I just passed my driving test and would like to buy a second-hand car but I don't have enough money. I've applied to the Credit Union for a loan of €5,000 to be repaid with a low rate of interest over three years. They have told me that I will get the loan but that I should continue saving something while I pay back the loan. The interest that I pay on my loan is used either to improve the services offered by the Credit Union or it is given back to each of the members at the end of each year.



JOHN

I've been a member of the Credit Union for 10 years and have saved money and borrowed money over that time. I like the idea of Credit Unions as they are about people who live in the same communities helping each other out. I think it is important that all members attend the annual general meeting (AGM) each year, so that everyone can have a say in how the Credit Union is run. Every member has one vote at the AGM no matter how much they have borrowed or saved.



WHO GETS THE CREDIT?



AIMS

- 1 To broaden knowledge on requirements for opening bank, building society or credit union accounts.
- 2 To increase students understanding of peoples ability to access credit, particularly those on low incomes.

IDEA FOR ACTION

- Find out where your local Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) is located. Contact them and ask for information on the services they provide.

YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of sheet ★25 'Who Gets the Credit?' for each student in the class

METHOD

- Give a copy of sheet ★25 to each student.
- Read the snapshots of the characters aloud before asking the students to complete the worksheet. Once the students have completed the exercise have a general class discussion on the following points:
 - ✎ Discuss whether Winnie and Anne were allowed to open an account and why?
 - ✎ Do students think the rules for opening accounts are fair? How might they change them if they could?
 - ✎ Discuss whether Dave and Anne were allowed to borrow the amounts requested. What were the reasons for their decisions? Discuss the fairness of these decisions. Are there any suggestions to help the situation of each character?
 - ✎ Is it fair that people should have previous borrowing history in order to take out a loan?
 - ✎ What options exist for Winnie and Anne for their future financial needs? (i.e. strong possibility of reliance on moneylenders).

WHO GETS THE CREDIT?

The following people want to either open a bank, building society or credit union account, or borrow money. You have to decide if you will open an account*, and grant loan approval. Read the information about the people and tick the boxes below before making your decision.

WINNIE
Traveller
Woman



- Lives on a halting site
- Uses ESB meter. No bills
- No passport or drivers licence
- No history of borrowing
- Income €250 per week
- Living costs €200 per week
- Request: Open account

Checklist

Yes No Don't know

- ESB, Gas, Phone Bill*
- Passport/Drivers Licence*
- Adequate income
- Able to repay
- History of paying back
- Savings
- Open Account
- Grant loan

DAVE
Single Man



- Lives in an estate
- Has all bills
- Has drivers licence, passport
- Has bank account
- No savings
- Income €400 per week
- Living costs €380 per week
- Request: Borrow €1000 to go on holiday

Checklist

Yes No Don't know

- ESB, Gas, Phone Bill*
- Passport/Drivers Licence*
- Adequate income
- Able to repay
- History of paying back
- Savings
- Open Account
- Grant loan

ANNE
Lone Parent



- Lives in an estate
- Has all bills
- Has passport
- Has no history of borrowing
- Income €160 per week
- Living costs €200
- Request: Open Credit Union account. Borrow €200 for daughters communion.

Checklist

Yes No Don't know

- ESB, Gas, Phone Bill*
- Passport/Drivers Licence*
- Adequate income
- Able to repay
- History of paying back
- Savings
- Open Account
- Grant loan

* To open an account a person must show one bill to prove address. Must also show one photograph ID, for example passport or drivers licence.

BUILDING COMMUNITY AROUND THE GLOBE



5

20

ACTIVITY

AIMS

- 1 Students will learn about community initiatives throughout the world that are based on principles of self-help and interdependence.
- 2 Students learn about the value of skills, time and interest in building community ties.
- 3 Students see how communities/individuals can help each other through mutual self-help and interdependence within the community.

YOU WILL NEED

- Copies of the role cards (pages 95-98). One role card per student.
- A copy of ★26 'Round it Up'. One per group.

METHOD

- Divide the class into groups and distribute a role card to each student and a copy of worksheet ★26 to each group.
- In groups students should read the role cards carefully. Move around the groups answering any questions that they might have.
- Instruct each group to complete the worksheet about their particular role card. They must discuss what information is being sought before writing any response. This worksheet is designed to focus the discussion and draw out understanding of the schemes and their relation to the concept of 'interdependence'.
- Once the worksheets are complete each group should prepare a very short role-

play to illustrate the scheme that they have just learned about.

- Ask each group to do their role-play and to feed back the contents of the worksheet.
- Alternatively, if the class are not comfortable with role-play you could ask each group simply to explain what they have learned using the worksheet to guide their explanation.

FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITY

- Conduct a class debate on the following topic, 'Local exchange trading will not reduce poverty?' Encourage the students to focus the debate by asking whether LET systems tackle the **causes** of poverty?

IDEA FOR ACTION

- Carry out an investigation into LETS systems in operation in Ireland. Your local FÁS office may be able to help you get started.

ROLE CARD 1

BANGLADESHI VILLAGERS



INSTRUCTIONS

You are a group of very poor Bangladeshi villagers. No one in your village has the luxuries that are common in Ireland, such as TVs or music systems, or even running water. You are all involved in a micro-credit project, which has helped improve your lives. Carry out a sketch or role play of the scene where members of the micro-project come to visit Fardia and explain the project to her. Make sure to explain exactly how the micro-credit project works and how it helps your community to stick together in helping each other out.



FARDIA

You are a middle-aged woman who makes her living by making mats. Mats are an important part of your culture as people use them for sitting and sleeping. It takes you five days to make one mat. You get €2.50 for each mat that you sell. Sometimes the people in your community don't have enough money to buy the mats, which means that you don't earn enough money on those weeks. You have just finished repaying a loan to the moneylender. You had to borrow the money to buy mat-making materials. He charges huge rates of interest and it takes a long time to repay him. You will soon run out of mat-making materials, which means that you will probably have to borrow from him again.



UNNOTI

You were once like Fardia. You had no hope that you would ever get out of debt. One day someone from your village came to tell you about a project that they were part of. They called it the Micro-Credit Project. Now you tell Fardia about it, you meet her one-day at the market and explain how it works. You explain to her that through the project she can borrow the money she needs to buy the materials but the interest she will pay will be very low. Everybody in the project will support her in repaying the loan, so if she runs into problems she will be helped in making the repayments in a way that suits her.



KRISHNA

You have been a member of the micro-project for 8 months. You explain to Fardia that the reason it is called 'micro' is because the amount of money that people need to borrow is very small and that the moneylenders were ripping them off with the interest. They were making people poorer and poorer. In the Micro-Credit Project all the interest that people pay is used to give small loans to other people who need them badly. In this way the project is about people with very little money depending on each other to help each other out. So far it has worked very well. It has also brought people in the community even closer together.

(Adapted from an article by Stephen de Meulenaere in *New Internationalist*. October, 1998).



ROLE CARD 2

A COMMUNITY IN CANADA



INSTRUCTIONS

You are a group of Canadians from the same town. You are all members of something called the LETS system. Read each of your role cards carefully and carry out a sketch or role play to explain the system. Make sure to explain how the system works and how it helps to build up your community.



JOHN

You are thirty-five and have worked in a timber mill since you were 17. Lately, the mill hasn't been doing well and your hours were cut in half. Because you have worked in the mill all your life you don't have the skills to get a full-time job doing something else. You are finding it harder to get by on half the amount of money that you used to earn. You can't afford to pay all your bills. One day you read in the local newspaper about a new kind of barter (exchange) system that has started in your town. It is called LETS (Local Exchange Trading System) and it uses its own 'local currency' (money). You decided to go along to a meeting to find out more. When you walked into the town hall you were asked to write down any goods and services that you would like to offer for exchange. You were also asked what goods and services you would like to receive in return.



CHRIS

You are one of the people who planned the meeting. You tell John how things work. He has said that he can cut wood and someone else (Susan) has said that she needs firewood. But instead of swapping wood for firewood Susan will pay John some LETS dollars ('local currency') and some ordinary money in exchange for cutting her wood. John can then use both these types of money to buy food in the local shop because the owner is also taking part in the LETS system.



SHOPKEEPER

You own the local shop. You decided to get involved in the LETS scheme because you saw that it could help your business. You buy vegetables and eggs from a local farmer and bread from local people. You pay them with LETS dollars and national dollars, so you have cut down on the amount of money you spend. On one day each week you accept LETS dollars in exchange for groceries. People like John can spend the LETS dollars he earned through the scheme. You are helping other people but also yourself.



SUSAN

You joined LETS because it makes a lot of sense. Making pottery for a living means that you don't have as steady an income as someone who works in an ordinary job. Being part of LETS means that you can still get the materials that you need (like firewood) without having to spend a lot of cash. It also means that you get to know more people in your area and makes your community stronger because people help each other out.

(Adapted from an article by Stephen deMeulenaere in *New Internationalist*. October, 1998).

ROLE CARD 3

JAPANESE ECO-MONEY



INSTRUCTIONS

You a group of people who live in the same town in Japan. With the agreement of the town the local council has decided that you are all going to take part in an Eco-money project. The project uses a new type of currency (money) called 'kurins'.



COUNCIL WORKER

You are a member of the town council and are one of the people who started the Eco-money project. You are very excited about the project and hope that it will help to plant more trees and tidy up the town in general. Your job is to explain how 'kurins' work. You explain that kurins can't be used to buy things at the supermarket but you can use them to pay someone who provides you with a service. You can earn them by helping someone else. The council gave everyone 20,000 kurins in values of 100, 500, and 1,000 kurins to start off. You also made a list of over 200 services that can be bought or earned with kurins. For example, removing snow from the roof, taking dogs out for walks, helping someone to do their shopping, fixing things, etc.



MASANARI

You earned 3,000 kurins for fixing the handrail of your neighbour's staircase. You are good at fixing things and enjoy it so you think its great that you can earn kurins by doing something that you enjoy and helping people at the same time. You think that the project is a great way of getting neighbours to help each other out and to deepen relationships in the community.



MAYUMI

You used some of your kurins by paying 1,000 kurins to an old man to write the addresses on invitation envelopes in beautiful handwriting. You really enjoy being part of the project as you have got to know your neighbours better through the project.



AMI

You are a young girl who used 1,000 of your kurins to have your favourite game fixed.

(source: <http://ccdev.lets.net/asia/japan/ecomoney.html> 11/10/01)

ROLE CARD 4

COLOMBIAN MARKET-GOERS



INSTRUCTIONS

You are a group of people who live in the same neighbourhood in Colombia. The national currency (pesos) in Colombia is very weak, people don't have a lot of money and things are very expensive to buy. But in your neighbourhood you have invented a new currency (money) called the Altamir. It is doing very well.



PABLO

You are one of the people who started the new currency. You got the idea from the internet. You discovered that people in Argentina have been exchanging things using a local currency since 1995. When you told some friends everyone agreed to have a meeting to talk about it. Everyone decided to give it a go. It was named the 'club of exchange'. You and a few other people decided that the new currency would be called the 'altamir', named after the neighbourhood where the market is held. The new currency is used on one day per week when people come together to exchange things. On this day everyone uses the altamir and not the weak national currency.



JUA

You are also one of the starting members. You explain more about the currency. The altamir is a triangle of cardboard about 5 cms high with an axe painted on it. They have a value of 1/2, 1, 5 and 10. People bring things to the market that they no longer want, such as books, CDs, magazines, cassettes. Everything is given a value in altamirs. So for example if one person brought 3 books, that were valued at 5 altamirs each, that person could then 'buy' other items up to the value of 15 altamirs. As an example of how it works on one day alone market goers exchanged about 3,500 objects that would normally cost millions of Colombian pesos if they were being bought for 'real cash'. Now about 150 traders come together for the community market every week.



JOHN JAIRÓ

You are also one of the group members. You are very excited about the future of this idea because people in the area are also beginning to exchange services and knowledge. About 6,000 people live in the neighbourhood. For example, a maths teacher might give maths lessons to someone in exchange for having their hair done, or a mechanic might fix a car in exchange for a visit to the doctors, or a carpenter might do some work in exchange for dance lessons, and so on. All you have to do is look at the directory to see what services are on offer in the neighbourhood.

(source: <http://ccdev.lets.net/latin/colombia/altamireng.html> 11/10/01)

'ROUND IT UP'

NAME OF COMMUNITY SCHEME

WHERE IN
THE WORLD?

WHAT I FOUND
INTERESTING ABOUT THIS

DO YOU THINK
THIS COULD WORK
IN IRELAND?

THINGS I THINK ARE BAD
ABOUT THIS SCHEME

DOES THIS SCHEME HELP
PEOPLE WHO
EXPERIENCE POVERTY? HOW?

THIS SCHEME IS OF A GOOD
EXAMPLE OF INTERDEPENDENCE AT
WORK BECAUSE

THIS SCHEME IS A GOOD
EXAMPLE OF DEMOCRACY
AT WORK BECAUSE

DO YOU THINK ANY OF THESE
SCHEMES COULD REDUCE
POVERTY IN IRELAND? WHY?

LETS GET ACTIVE



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ACTIVITY



AIMS

- 1 To provide an opportunity for students to design and plan a class or school based exchange trading system based on learning from Activity 20.
 - 2 To encourage students to engage in co-operative initiatives outside the monetary system.
 - 3 To encourage students to value their own skills and talents and those of other students in a non-monetary way.
 - 4 To build community within the class/school.
- Ask students to spend a few minutes thinking about what skills, talents or services they could and would like to offer to other students in a class trading system.
 - Display a copy of ★27 'What can I offer?' and invite students to fill in a line. Leave the value blank at this stage. It will be easier for display purposes if this is done using an OHP.
 - The class must now decide on the value of all the services offered. Discuss whether all the items listed should be valued in the same way, for example, an offer to loan a computer game for a certain period may not be considered as having the same value as teaching someone how to use a computer programme or package. Agreement should be reached on which services are more valuable than others. List the services in order of this value on the board. This discussion can be done as a class activity or in small groups.



YOU WILL NEED

- A copy of ★27 'What Can I Offer?' either for display on an OHP or large enough for display in class
- A copy of worksheet ★28 'Trading Terms' for each student

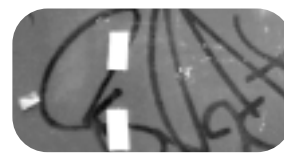


METHOD

- This activity may be done as one class or it may be developed into an action project. If using for one class period the emphasis will be on designing and planning a trading system. However, if an action project is undertaken this will involve carrying out the exchange activity.
- Explain to the class that they are going to design and plan a class trading system similar to those they learned about in Activity 20. Discuss what the good and bad points of each system were before proceeding – this will serve to remind students as well as aid in the planning of this activity.
- Once agreement has been reached on the order of the list the class must now decide upon whether the value will be set in terms of time or currency. If consensus cannot be reached a simple vote should decide the matter.
- If the class decide that a currency is necessary, decide upon the name of the currency, the nominal values of the currency and the currency design. Assign a starting amount for each participant.
- Assign values to each of the services on offer – this should be done as much by consensus as possible, if necessary vote to arrive at an agreed value for each service.

cont/...

LETS GET ACTIVE



- Agree principles (rules, values) that the system and everyone involved should follow. For example, the agreed values should be respected; no one should destroy currency, etc.
- Distribute a copy of worksheet ★28 'Trading Terms' to each student as a revision or homework exercise.



POINTS TO CONSIDER

- Consider the time and effort involved in each service and value it accordingly. Steer students away from discussion on existing national monetary values.
- Remember to stress that they are planning a community activity based on mutual help, understanding and trust – this should be reflected in how services are carried out and exchanged. It also should be considered in how the currency (if any) is used and may be a factor in allowing someone to participate or not if they choose not to adhere to these principles.
- Discuss which elements from the international schemes have been borrowed and highlight the fact that international learning has taken place if relevant.
- If the class decide to undertake the trading system as an activity, the following should be agreed and discussed:
 - ✍ How will the system operate?
 - ✍ Does it need to be managed?
 - ✍ When would be a good time to review how it is going?
 - ✍ Should it be extended to other classes in the school?



IDEAS FOR ACTION

- Class carries out the scheme over a specified period and reviews it after the period is up. Write up the experience of participating in the scheme with particular reference to the concepts of interdependence and democracy. Ask the local newspaper to do a piece about it.
- Carry out research on other local exchange trading systems that exist in Ireland and invite someone to come in to talk to your class about it.

TRADING TERMS



SERVICES I OFFERED

SERVICES I'D LIKE TO USE

VALUE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN SERVICES

NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF
OUR CURRENCY

MAKE A SKETCH OF THE CURRENCY BELOW

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FURTHER IDEAS FOR ACTION PROJECTS

Action projects related to rights and responsibilities

- ✓ Survey on bullying in school (for reasons relating to poverty)
- ✓ Rights competition (focus on economic & social rights) – Poetry, prose, posters, slogans.
- ✓ Guest speaker from an appropriate organisation
- ✓ Topical issue, for example, child poverty
- ✓ Track a media issue, for example asylum seekers and work – forced into poverty
- ✓ School magazine/exhibition on a poverty related issue
- ✓ Letter to local TD
- ✓ Letter to local newspaper
- ✓ Hold a designated day in your school e.g. 'Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty in Ireland'

Action projects related to the concept of human dignity

- ✓ Stereotyping: Track how people who experience poverty are portrayed in the media or in popular 'soaps'
- ✓ Survey attitudes on unemployment and poverty
- ✓ Survey reasons for unemployment and poverty
- ✓ Investigate how local groups have helped unemployed or other people at risk of experiencing poverty in your area
- ✓ Speaker from the local Health Centre/Community Information Centre to explain entitlements
- ✓ Investigate children in the workplace
- ✓ Letter to local TD
- ✓ Letter to local newspaper
- ✓ Hold a designated day in your school e.g. 'Open Your Eyes to Child Poverty in Ireland'

Topics for Issue based Action projects

- ✓ Traveller Accommodation
- ✓ Lone Parents' access to employment
- ✓ Youth homelessness
- ✓ Housing – case study
- ✓ Rural poverty
- ✓ Access to employment for people with disabilities
- ✓ Adequacy of social welfare (could focus on a particular group)
- ✓ The effects of long-term unemployment

Action Project ideas adapted from www.scoilnet.ie/13-15/schoolsubjects and Bassett, Maureen. 1995. Poverty in Focus. ASTI and the Combat Poverty Agency.

SCHOOL BASED ACTION PROJECT



Survey to assess economic inequalities within a school

The following is a real action project carried out by students as part of a series of classes on poverty in Ireland. Following introductory classes which involved collecting images of poverty they were able to look at their own attitudes and understanding. The students then decided that they would like to do an action project by carrying out research amongst other students in their school. It is worth noting that the majority of students in this school came from relatively affluent backgrounds as becomes apparent from the indicators used in the survey. The purpose of this confidential research was to assess economic inequalities amongst students from the same school. The students themselves chose the questions presented below in the questionnaire. They administered the questionnaire and collated the results to calculate overall percentages. They presented these results in the form of a display, which was put up on a public notice board within the school, in order to impact upon the awareness of other students. Each student wrote up the project individually and wrote their conclusions independently.

Questionnaire (Planned and designed by students)		
1.	Do you get pocket money every week?	YES / NO
2.	How many children are in your family?	
3.	Do they all get pocket money? If not, why?	
4.	Would your parents supply money for unexpected needs, e.g. school tour?	YES / NO
5.	Do you consider your family financially secure?	YES / NO
6.	Do you have a part-time job? If so, why? (experience/money)	YES / NO
7.	Do you have a room of your own?	YES / NO
8.	Do you have a television in your room?	YES / NO
9.	Do you have access to a computer?	YES / NO
10.	Do you wear brand name clothes, e.g. Levi, Nike?	YES / NO
11.	Is any member of your family at college?	YES / NO
12.	If so who supports them?	Parents / Self
13.	Do you have a family car?	YES / NO
14.	Do either/both your parents/guardians work?	YES / NO
15.	Do you attend any clubs?	YES / NO
16.	Does your family take a holiday annually?	YES / NO
17.	Do you have a family pet?	YES / NO
18.	Do your family eat out often/regularly?	YES / NO
19.	How much would you expect to be spent on you at Christmas?	

- This action project enabled these students to take at least a first step towards poverty awareness, in that, they began to grasp the existence of economic inequality, which for at least some of them, was a new idea. These indicators chosen demonstrate that these students have begun to grasp the relative nature of poverty.
- The skills that these students used and developed are laid out on the following page as an example of skills development through action projects.

SKILLS IN ACTION



The following table outlines the skills involved in each of the activities that led up to and formed part of the action project. They are directly related to those specified in the Civic, Social and Political Education programme as are the concepts, attitudes and values that were relevant to this project.

ACTION/ACTIVITY	SKILL
Collecting images of poverty	Analysis skills – choosing relevant images Communication skills – personal reflection, presenting images to others
Brainstorming	Communication skills
Question formation and choice	Communication skills – discussion, designing, listening, group participation Action skills (political) – decision-making
Administering the questionnaire	Identification/awareness skills – carrying out the survey Action skills (social) – organising and carrying out a survey
Collating results of questionnaire	Analysis skills – collating and sorting results
Calculating percentages based on the results	Analysis skills
Presentation of the results for display	Action skills (social and political) – awareness raising Communication skills – presenting a display
Drawing their own conclusions from the results	Analysis/Evaluation skills – evaluating and analysing the results Communication skills – personal reflection

CONCEPTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Dignity • (Economic) Rights & Responsibilities • Interdependence, e.g. the actions of individuals (wearing designer labels) can have effects on others
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ATTITUDES & VALUES	Through their work on this module students had the opportunity to reflect upon, and recognise, the belief and values which underlie their attitudes and actions as individuals and as members of groups or communities.
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COMMUNITY BASED ACTION PROJECT



Investigation into community services and needs

Students from St. Brigid's Post Primary School in Athy were involved in piloting this resource. Their teacher Micheline Purcell was concerned that there would be some element of action taken by the students in response to having spent a number of classes investigating the nature, causes and effects of poverty in Ireland in general, and in the local area specifically. An equally important concern was that the action would offer the students an opportunity to engage with an initiative that operates out of a solidarity and/or empowerment approach to situations of poverty or disadvantage.

The Kildare Youth Service, which is situated in Athy, had some existing links with the school. Micheline rang the service and explained what she was trying to do. From that phone call she was given the names and contact details of other groups and organisations whose activities are targeted at tackling poverty and disadvantage.

After some investigation into local services the students decided to visit a Refuge Centre for families in crisis situations, children in foster care and people experiencing homelessness. While they were aware that family crisis situations could affect all kinds of families, they were also mindful of the fact that situations of poverty can lead to crisis. It also helped the students to learn that poverty is not always about money, that people can be forced to live in unsafe surroundings due to social exclusion and deprivation.

Arising out of classwork on the rights of the child and the responsibilities of parents and guardians, the project was closely related to the concepts of rights and responsibilities and human dignity. After a visit to the Centre the students learnt that people can arrive at any time of the day or night. Upon arrival the adults are usually involved in making practical arrangements whilst accompanying children are left to their own devices. The students decided they would like to take action to improve the experience for the children who come to the Centre. They decided to make play packs for use by the children.

In doing this action the students used and developed various skills, such as deciding upon suitable action, becoming aware of local services, collecting materials and preparing the packs. They also developed their awareness of the needs of children and the impact of social exclusion. In the words of their teacher, "through doing this action project the students learnt that everybody has rights and responsibilities, which they are not always allowed to enjoy. That people can make a difference by helping".

GLOSSARY

The following provides a definition of terms as they are used in the preceding text.

Asylum seeker

This term is used to describe a person who is seeking protection and recognition as a refugee. A person must apply to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to become recognised as a refugee. Under Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights “Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution”.

Community

The term ‘community’ usually refers to groups of people who live in geographical areas that provide some kind of common bond or identity – a single housing estate, a parish or village, a scattered suburban area on the edge of a city or town, a street or a townland. But a community can also consist of a group of individuals who come together on the basis of some other interest or who have a common identity for instance, women, Travellers, lone parents, people with disabilities, students, lesbians, gay men, older people, young people or religious groupings.

A variety of diverse groups make up local communities. Many locally based groups will organise around a common agenda for their community. Minority or other groups within that community may want to organise either in addition to or separately from their local group.

(Combat Poverty Agency, 2000; 4)

Community development¹⁶

Community development is essentially about people working collectively for social change which will improve the quality of their lives, the communities in which they live and/or the society of which they are a part.

It is a collective process, with an emphasis on ‘process’ i.e. how change is achieved, as well as outcome, i.e. what is achieved. It helps people to identify and articulate their needs, and influence the decision-making processes and structures that affect them, their communities and wider society.

In an anti-poverty context, community development is about enabling and empowering those who are disadvantaged to participate in this work for change. Community development is about working for change at three levels:

- Personal – a focus on empowerment and participation;
- Community – a collective rather than an individual approach;
- Public policy. – based on a social analysis and understanding of the causes of poverty and disadvantage and a commitment to equality and social justice.

In popular usage community development is used to describe a broad range of activities that take place in a variety of settings with a variety of objectives, methods and value-bases. It spans the work of community development projects, women’s groups, anti-drugs groups and youth projects through to community enterprises, credit unions, local tourism initiatives, partnership companies and tidy towns committees. However for the purposes of feeding into poverty awareness education it is essential that the chosen group have an anti-poverty focus and work from community development principles and involve representatives of groups which experience poverty and social exclusion.

Deaf Community¹⁷

A Deaf community is a group of people who live in a particular location, share the common goals of its members and in various ways work towards achieving these goals. A Deaf community may include hearing people who support the goals of the community and work with deaf people to achieve them. Most deaf people who were born deaf or became deaf so early in life, and who grew up as part of the Deaf community, see themselves as fundamentally visual people with their own visual language, social organisation, history, etc. known as the Deaf Culture. Historically, society did not view Deaf people in the way Deaf people view themselves. Within the Deaf community not being able to hear and/or speak is not seen as a problem. Deaf people view themselves as a cultural and linguistic minority,

¹⁶ Definition taken from ‘The Role of Community Development in Tackling Poverty’. Combat poverty Agency 2000. page 4.

¹⁷ Source: <http://indigo.ie/~ids/deafrelatedinformation/com&culture.htm>

GLOSSARY

therefore the use of upper case as above is deliberate. Cultural because they are part of the Deaf community and a minority because they live as a minority in a society of hearing people.

Development (as outlined as a concept in CSPE syllabus)

Development can be defined as a process of improvement (social, economic, cultural, political) to meet the needs in people's lives at all levels (personal, local, national, international). Pupils should be aware that development is usually planned and can often be influenced through the democratic process. They should also be aware that the process of development is complex, often controversial, and one where planned solutions do not always meet the needs of all parties involved. Failure to develop leads to decline and underdevelopment.

Discrimination

Discrimination is prejudice in action. Discrimination is described under the Employment Equality and Equal Status Acts as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been, or would be treated on any of the nine grounds listed below (see Equality Authority). Discriminatory action can be carried out by individuals or through groups and institutions.

Equality Authority

The Equality Authority is an independent body set up on foot of the Employment Equality and Equal Status legislation. Its primary role is to defend and promote the rights to equal treatment established in this body of legislation. These rights cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, race and membership of the Travelling community.

Halting Site

Sites provided by Local Government for Travellers to live in are generally referred to as halting sites. There are distinctions between types of halting sites. By far the most numerous are temporary halting sites. The name however belies the true length of time they are used for, ranging from 3-4 years to 10 years. The sites offer poor quality services and are generally in bad locations. Permanent halting sites are of a much higher standard and consist of either group housing

schemes or trailer bays. They provide all the facilities and services of a modern house. Transient sites, although few currently exist would provide the same standard of facilities and services as that of permanent sites however people could move in and out of this network of sites and thus fulfil their nomadic culture.

Poverty

See page 8

Prejudice

Prejudice is when a person holds an opinion or belief about something or someone which is formed without reasonable knowledge or experience. Prejudice is usually negative and may be directed towards a group as a whole or towards individuals because of their membership of that group. It is generally the precursor to discrimination and differs from it in this respect as it does not necessarily involve action.

Refugee

In Ireland the term refugee is used to describe a person who is fleeing from persecution. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform uses it to identify those people who have been recognised as being in need of protection and resettlement.

Social Exclusion

See page 8

CONTACT LIST

Action South Kildare

Main Street,
Kilcullen,
Co. Kildare
Tel. 045 481999

Area Development Management Ltd

Holbrook House,
Holles Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01 240 0700
Website: www.adm.ie

Bosnian Community Development Project

40 Pearse Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01 6719202

CDP Regional Support Agencies*

These agencies provide support and advice to local projects and promote good practice and set standards for their work.

CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit

Sundrive Road,
Crumlin,
Dublin 12
Tel. 01-453 5487

Cherry Orchard Equine Centre Ltd

c/o The Orchard Community Centre,
Cherry Orchard Grove,
Ballyfermot,
Dublin 10
Tel. 01 620 7195

Children's Rights Alliance

13 Harcourt Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 1890 200 715
Website: www.childrensrights.ie

Combat Poverty Agency

Bridgewater Centre,
Conyngham Road,
Islandbridge,
Dublin 8
Tel. 01 670 6746
E-mail: info@cpa.ie
Website: www.combatpoverty.ie

Community Action Network (Eastern Region) *

24 Gardiner Place,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 878 8005 / 878 0796

Community Workers Co-Op

1st Floor,
Unit 4,
Tuam Road Centre,
Galway
Tel. 091 779030
Website: www.cwc.ie

Cork Community Development Institute (Southern Region) *

Grattan Street,
Cork
Tel. 021 276050

County/City Development Boards Local Government Policy Section,

Task Force Secretariat,
Department of the Environment and Local Government,
Custom House,
Dublin 1
Tel 01 888 2700 or
LoCall 1890 202021,
Extension 2700)
Website address. www.cbd.ie

(Or contact individual Directors of Community and Enterprise at County or City Council Offices).

Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs

43-49 Mespil Road,
Dublin 4
Tel. 01 647 3000

Department of Health and Children

Hawkins House,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01 635 4000
Website: www.doh.ie

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

72-76 St. Stephen's green,
Dublin 2,
Ireland.
Tel. 01 602 2802
Website: www.justice.ie

Department of Social & Family Affairs

Áras Mhic Dhirmada,
Store Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 704 3722

Draóicht*

An Tobhar
Elm Court,
Faontas,
Tallaght,
Dublin 24
Tel. 01 414 6979

DunRath*

Unit 9
Dun Laoghaire Enterprise Centre
George's Place
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Tel. 01 236 624

European Anti-Poverty Network

5 Gardiner Row,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 8745737
Website: www.iol.ie/~eapn

Fairtrade Mark Ireland

Carmichael House,
North Brunswick Street,
Dublin 7
Tel. 01-475 3515
Tel. 01 236 624
Website: www.fair-mark.org

Focus Ireland

14A Eustace Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01-671 2555
Website: www.focusireland.ie

Framework (South-Eastern Region) *

37 Georges Street,
Waterford City,
Waterford
Tel. 051-876122

Forum of People with Disabilities

21 Hill Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 878 6077
Website: www.inforum.ie

Holywell Trust (North-Western Region) *

10/12 Bishop Street,
Derry BT48 6PW
Tel. 01 504 2 61941

Irish National Organisation for the Unemployed

Araby House,
8 North Richmond Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 856 0088
Website: www.inou.ie

* CDP Regional Support Agencies

CONTACT LIST

Irish Prisons Service

Monastery Road,
Clondalkin,
Dublin 22
Tel. 01 461 6000

Irish Refugee Council

40 Lower Dominick Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 873 0042
Website: www.irishrefugeecouncil.ie

Irish Rural Link

Prospect House,
Eyre Square,
Galway
Tel. 091 567 338

Irish Traveller Movement

4-5 Eustace Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 679 6577

Kildare Youth Services

Canal Stores,
Basin Street,
Naas,
Co. Kildare
Tel. 045 897 893
Web: <http://www.iol.ie/nyicnaas>

Knockanrawley Community Development Project

Knockanrawley Resource Centre,
Tipperary town
Co. Tipperary
Tel 062 52688

KWCD Partnership Company Ltd

Unit 9,
Ashleaf Shopping Centre,
Crumlin Cross,
Dublin 12.
Tel. 01 405 9300

Meitheal (Eastern Region) *

35 Exchequer Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01 671 9803

Midlands Regional Support Development Agency *

No. 2 Garden Vale,
Athlone,
Co. Westmeath
Tel. 0902 79980

Mid West Community Development Support Agency (Mid-Western Region)*

c/o Adult Education College,
Presentation Court,
Sexton Street,
Limerick
Tel. 061 312284

Money Advice & Budgeting Services (MABS)

See Dept. of Social and Family Affairs

National Anti-Poverty Strategy Programme Unit (NAPS)

See Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs

National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturism

26 Harcourt Street,
Dublin 2
Website:
<http://homepage.tinet.ie/~racismctee/>

National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)

3 Montague Street,
Dublin 2
Tel: 01 478 4122

National Youth Federation

20 Lower Dominick Street,
Dublin 1
Tel: 01 872 9933

Older Women's Network

90 Fairview Strand,
Fairview,
Dublin 3
Tel. 01 834 9573
Website: www.olderinireland.ie

One Parent Exchange Network

Unit 19,
Greendale Shopping Centre,
Kilbarrack,
Dublin 5.
Tel. 01 832 0264
Website: www.oneparent.ie

Pavee Point

46 North Great Charles Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 878 0255
Web:<http://homepages.iol.ie/~pavee>

Pobail Regional Support Agency

Abbey Moat House
Abbey street,
Naas,
Co. Kildare
Tel. 045-883 816

Rhode Parish Enterprise Association

Rhode,
Co. Offaly
Tel. 0405 37550

Simon Community

St Andrews House,
28-30 Exchequer Street
Dublin 2
tel. 01-671 1606
Website: www.simoncommunity.com

SOS Project

c/o Midlands Regional Youth Service
Garden Street,
Gleesan Street,
Athlone

Teamworks

Hollymount Industrial Estate,
Hollyhill,
Cork

Triskele Associates (North-Eastern Region) *

66 Ailesbury Road,
Belfast BT 3FH
Tel. 0232 208328

Tosach *

44 Lower Gardiner Street,
Dublin 1
Tel. 01 817 1911

West Training & Development Ltd. (Western Region) *

Hynes Building,
St. Clares Walk,
Merchants Road,
Galway
Tel. 091 567827

Youth Affairs Section

Department of Education & Science,
Hawkins House,
Hawkins Street,
Dublin 2
Tel. 01 473 4700

* CDP Regional Support Agencies



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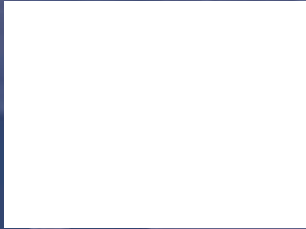


CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit

Sundrive Road,
Crumlin,
Dublin 12
Tel. 01-453 5487

Combat Poverty Agency

Bridgewater Centre,
Conyngham Road,
Islandbridge,
Dublin 8
Tel. 01 670 6746
E-mail: info@cpa.ie
Website: www.combatpoverty.ie



WE WANT ACTION
WE WANT ACCESS
WE WANT WORK
WE WANT OUR RIGHTS