

Making Sense of World Conflicts

Lesson plan 4: Futures

Age group: 14–17

Objectives

To think constructively about our global future. To develop empathy with other communities.

Learning outcomes

Pupils will have: examined, hypothesised and discussed non-fiction material; and developed skills of enquiry and communication.

You will need

Copies of one of the case studies – **Sierra Leone, Manchester or Cambodia** (below) – for each pupil pair.

What to do

Starter

1. Give pupils as individuals or in pairs one of the case studies.

- **Sierra Leone** (below)
Children's radio in Sierra Leone – project supported by Plan International.
- **Manchester** (below)
Taking action against arms abuse: UK – news report and poem.
- **Cambodia** (below)
Campaigning for change – a report of the Control Arms campaign launch.

They should read the case study and highlight up to three actions that have been taken to bring about change for the better.

2. Take feedback and check that everyone understands their case study.

Activity

3. Pupils should then imagine that it is ten years in the future and that they are journalists visiting the country of their case study to find out what happened and how successful the people were in continuing to bring about change.

4. They can discuss what they think they find. If time, they then write a newspaper article dated ten years into the future reporting on the situation in the country and the success of the projects. They should include brief interviews and a picture.

5. Pupils then get into groups of three or four with pupils who have been looking at the same case study. They should pool ideas or read and discuss their newspaper reports.

6. Ask each group to list three or four things which (either in real life or in their newspaper articles) helped ensure that things changed for the better in their case study. Examples could include the fact that Patsy and Sheila took advice from people with experience of their problem (Manchester), or the fact that the concert was shown on television (Cambodia). Groups should feed their lists back to the class.

Closing discussion

7. If they wanted to campaign to change something, what methods and strategies could they use? How would they go about this?

Children's radio in Sierra Leone

Marian Magdalene Bangura, a 17-year-old radio presenter from Freetown, Sierra Leone, says:

“Radio is important for children, especially for children who do not have a voice. It is very important for the girl child. It's important for children to make programmes so they can show their talent, not just go to school. Also, they can share their knowledge and skills and it's very interesting to hear their voice on the radio. Parents encourage children to learn things on the radio, you can listen to what is going on in the country.”

Radio is an excellent way of educating and engaging people, especially in countries where literacy levels are low and newspaper distribution generally confined to urban areas, but where almost every family

has access to a radio.

After years of civil war, a radio project in Sierra Leone is trying to help children and their families return to a normal life. Plan UK (www.plan-uk.org) is working in partnership with local communities to establish Moyamba District Children's Awareness Radio (MODCAR), a child-led community-based radio station. Moyamba is a rural region of Sierra Leone with a population of 420,000.

Many children and young people in Sierra Leone missed out on their education during the recent war, and through this radio station they will be able to alert adults and their peers to the importance of gaining a good education to ensure a return to normality. They will also be able to share important information on such topics as HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, about which there is currently no popular resource for children and young people.

Children will use the radio station to express their feelings on the war and how it affected them. The station will also help to raise awareness amongst children and adults of children's rights and responsibilities.

“Radio is important to us, we want to communicate with other children. There are programmes we want to tell other children about; if there is a problem in maths, a child can go on the radio and explain the difficulties. We can explain rights and responsibilities that are relevant to children. As we have just come out of the war, children attend school and many are still traumatised; radio helps them understand things better. Adults will have their own programmes too: they will have agriculture programmes that will help farmers to know when to apply fertilisers,”

says Mohamed, 17, a student representative for the MODCAR radio project.

(Source: www.plan-uk.org)



▲ Children interviewing other children in Sierra Leone



▲ Recording a radio programme

Plan-UK

Taking action against arms abuse: United Kingdom

Mothers' war on gangland shootings

Two mothers whose sons were victims of gangland shootings in Manchester are campaigning for an end to gun crime.

Together they helped set up Mothers Against Violence (MAV) to support victims' families.

Patsy McKie and Sheila Eccleston travelled to Boston, United States, last year, to find out how American methods are curbing street crime. In the USA police patrols intervene and mentor young gang members before they get sucked into a life of crime.

With 200 people injured and 25 dead in Manchester in the last four years, Patsy and Sheila set up a similar scheme closer to home. The scheme in Greater Manchester uses two specially appointed street workers rather than the police to go out into communities.

Mrs McKie's son, Dorrie, who had never been in trouble with the police, was shot dead in 1999, but nobody has been charged with his murder. Sheila's son, Dean, was shot and killed almost two years ago in Longsight, Manchester. Police say his death was gang-related but no one has been charged with his murder.

Patsy and Sheila hope the MAV group will get to the heart of the problem and spare other mothers the heartache they have gone through.

(Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

Mothers against guns

I am a poet, daughter, sister, mother. This is something I wanted to share. Peace needs to begin in our hearts to reach the streets...

A mother to her children

This fragile world we live in, the trials that we face
the children scared of living, they pull guns they don't embrace.

As mothers of these children,
we fear to let them go.

You think you have prepared them,
but then you never know.

The torment that you live with,
the fear that clouds your days.

These children what can we give them,
to make a brighter day?

It's always in a mother,
to love with her whole heart.

In hope her child may follow...

be strong, be wise, be smart!!

Ms L Lovell

(Source: Black Information Link, www.blink.org.uk)

Cambodia: campaigning for change



Pajaree/Oxfam

◀ Women at Phnom Penh Central Market drawing their own faces to add to the Control Arms petition. More than 38,000 faces were collected in Cambodia.

The Cambodian government has given its backing to Control Arms – the international campaign of Oxfam, Amnesty International and IANSA (the International Action Network on Small Arms) to push for an international treaty on the trade in weapons.

In Cambodia this campaign is desperately necessary. As a result of its 30 years of war the country is awash with weapons, perhaps as many as one million – one for every eight adults. And though Cambodia's government is working hard to rid the country of this plague, every day at least two or more Cambodians are killed or injured in incidents involving firearms.

On the launch day in October 2003 about 450 people gathered in the Cambodian capital Phnom Penh for the three-kilometre march, bearing banners, posterboards and balloons, through the city's busiest streets. The march ended with a concert at a large outdoor stage in the riverside Hun Sen Park. Massive banners on either side of the stage proclaimed 'The Arms Trade is Out of Control', and 'Control Arms'. The park grew thick with people, peaking at about 10,000.

Broadcast live by Cambodia's national television station and interspersed with popular Cambodian music and dance performances, the concert's messages included more strong statements of support by senior government representatives.

Will the world pay attention to Cambodia's voice of experience as this small country, flooded with arms by the superpowers during its 30 years of war, takes a stand against the arms trade?

(Source: www.oxfamgb.org/eastasia/cambodia)