

Youth Resources



**Change
our world**

Leader's notes

This session is adapted from a 5 module educational programme which has corresponding slides and can be provided upon request or downloaded from www.ijmuk.org/resources.

The next generation of young people has the potential to be real game-changers. Increasingly, we are seeing young people stand up for what they believe in and standing up for others who do not have a voice themselves. But whilst bullying, substance abuse, homelessness, climate change and even poverty are all issues which today's young people get passionate about, there is still little awareness about issues of injustice. It is not always an easy subject to discuss, but if they are to make a difference, the next generation need to be aware of the injustices that plague their world.

Activity 1: Introduction (15 minutes):

Introductory questions - What does poverty mean? What is life like if you live in poverty? Have the young people do a spider diagram in small groups of things they associate with poverty, e.g. hunger, ill health, no education, etc. Encourage them to think locally and globally. Listen to personal stories from the group of their experiences of poverty and/or share your own personal experiences from any travelling/working abroad etc.

Ask: Has anyone mentioned 'threat of violence' as a key factor of living in poverty?

Say: Setting the scene of Global Violence: here are some statistics (choose a few to highlight):

- Nearly 36 million people are held in slavery worldwide, in absolute terms that's higher than at any time in our history and more than the whole transatlantic slave trade (Global Slavery Index).
- 4 billion live outside the protection of the law. (UN)
- 1 in 5 women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime. (UN)
- For women aged 15-44 years, gender-based violence creates a greater risk of death and physical harm than cancer, motor accidents, war, and malaria combined. (UN)
- Every year, 5 million people are victimised by forced evictions, and millions more are run off by more powerful neighbours. (UN)
- Every year, 10 million people will enter pre-trial detention, which is being held in prison or jail without any proceedings to determine their guilt or innocence. (Open Society Foundations)

Explain: Violence is often a key part of living in poverty and it undermines efforts to end poverty. We are going to look at how we can address this by looking at the work of International Justice Mission (IJM), whose mission is to protect people from violence in their own communities.

Ask: Encourage the young people to write down choices they've made in the past few weeks. These will range from what to have for breakfast to what to do when they leave school. Explain that our lives are made up of choices, and we sometimes don't even realise that we're making them. What would it feel like to have all choice taken away from you? To not be able to decide your future or even what you'll do that day? We'll meet some people now for whom that happened – how must they have felt to be powerless in their own situations?

Activity 2: How can we address the problem? (15 minutes)

Introduce the work of IJM as an example of how the poor can be protected from violence. Property grabbing from widows and orphans or slavery are both examples of violent abuse from which poor people can be effectively protected. Introduce one of these issues using a story from the Youth Resources folder on the accompanying DVD or online at www.presbyterianireland.org

Discussion: Read the first part of Grace's story.
Ask the young people what we want to happen for:

1. Grace
2. Her Family
3. Her brother-in-law who kicked her off her land
4. Uganda's justice system

Explain: IJM use a model to help which they apply to all their different casework types. It includes four goals which are part of their mission. Use as much of the information below as is helpful or relevant to your group:

- *Rescue victims:* IJM partners with local law enforcement to go into brothels, brick factories and other dark places to rescue victims. It has relieved over 23,000 children, women and men from violence and oppression since 2004.
- *Bring criminals to justice:* IJM relentlessly pursues justice through the local courts, ensuring traffickers, slave owners, those who steal land and other criminals are brought to justice. It has secured convictions of over 800 violent criminals since 2004.
- *Restore survivors:* IJM helps survivors of violence rebuild their lives. It creates individual plans to help meet each survivor's specific needs, including medical help, trauma counselling, job skills training or education. Where appropriate, IJM works with trusted local partners to provide a safe place to stay in excellent aftercare homes. Over 4,000 clients are currently receiving IJM aftercare services.
- *Strengthen justice systems:* Based on casework on the ground, IJM develops an understanding of where the justice system is broken and what needs to be done to help fix it. It provides training and support to police, judges, prosecutors and justice system authorities and advocates for reforms that will keep the poor from being victimised.

Tell the second part of Grace's story and how IJM's 4 goals were met/are currently being achieved.

Repeat exercise using the slavery story from Ghana if time allows or start with this story instead.

Optional: show video of Grace's Story available on DVD supplied or online.

Activity 3: Why should we care? (15 minutes)

What does the Bible say?

Activity: Either individually or by splitting up and giving each verse to a small group or pair, ask the young people to read the following Bible verses: Genesis 1:27; Psalm 139:13-14; Isaiah 1:17; Isaiah 61:8; Micah 6:8; John 3:16.

Discussion: Discuss the verses in turn. What do they say about the problem of injustice, the importance of justice and the value of human life?

How did Jesus respond to injustice?

Activity: Either individually or by splitting up and giving each verse to a small group or pair, ask the young people to read the Bible verses: Matthew 21:12-13; Matthew 22: 34-40; Luke 4:16-22; Luke 10:25-37; John 8:1-11.

Discussion: Jesus' mission includes bringing freedom and restoration for the oppressed. This mission is practical and tangible on earth; it is not only about life after death. How do these verses demonstrate how Jesus helped the poor, the oppressed and the needy? How do they demonstrate that Jesus disliked injustice?

Activity 4: What young people can do (10 minutes)

Explain: There are actions we can all take as citizens to help protect people in this country and abroad from violent injustices such as slavery and property grabbing. We know that the UK government should respond to what its citizens think is important. So how can we let them, and others, know that we care about this issue? What practical actions could we take?

Discussion: In small groups explore actions, for now and in the future, of ways that young people can help those who are suffering violence in poorer parts of the world. Some ideas that would be appropriate include:

- a. Raising awareness within your school, church, or community (such as Stand for Freedom, see www.ijmuk.org/stand-for-freedom for information).
 - b. Spotting the signs of injustice and reporting concerns locally.
 - c. Campaigning / contacting local MP (see IJM's latest campaigns at www.ijmuk.org).
 - d. Consumer-buying choices such as buying Fairtrade.
 - e. Fundraising – there are ideas of how to raise money for the Project in the Children's Resources booklet in this pack or available online.
 - f. Future careers.
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Activity 5: Optional IJM interactive casework investigation (20 minutes)

The interactive investigation in the Youth Resources folder of the accompanying DVD is designed to give an insight and flavour of the type of work IJM do. By using role play, real client photos and scenarios typical of IJM's casework in a creative and engaging way, the exercise leads the young people through the real process involved in protecting those in poverty from violence.

The young people become a team of IJM investigators and lawyers, and work through a scenario they are given, deciding what steps to take by interviewing those involved.