

THE LINKS OF POWER

ACTIVITY

9

AIM

To examine how power is shared out in relation to four global justice issues – trade, debt climate change and child labour

TIME

40 minutes

MATERIALS

A4 paper, scissors, markers and arts and crafts material.

NOTE TO LEADER

See if you can find how some of these issues can be linked together, then you can join the chains to make one large chain.

For information on trade, debt, climate change and child labour visit:

www.youthdeved.ie

www.developmenteducation.ie

www.concern.net

www.debtireland.org

www.fairtrade.ie

www.stopclimatechaos.ie

www.ictu.net

WHAT TO DO

Before the session, cut out strips of paper from flipchart sheets. Form four groups and give each group one of the stories and strips of paper. Ask them to brainstorm who they think has power in the story from the person with the least power to the person with the most power. Using the art materials, decorate each strip with the name of the person involved in the story (make up names if necessary) and images or messages about how they feel about their level of power. Give the groups 20 minutes for this.

Now explain that you are going to use the strips to form a chain going from least power to most power. Use pritt-stick to glue all of the links together and create the chain. Each group holds up their chain. They read out their story and then briefly explain what the links represent. Finally, hang the chains in a visible place in your club.

In the large group, ask if it was easy or difficult to decide who had power and who didn't. What was in common or different about the different stories?

WARM UPS

CARROTS

One volunteer is selected. The rest of the group lie on the floor face down linking arms with the people on either side of them, the volunteer tries to pull one person out of the circle. When a person is removed from the circle they join the volunteer in trying to remove other people. The game ends when only one person is left.

SPOT THE LEADER

One volunteer leaves the room. The group stand in a circle, one person becomes the leader. This person decides a movement which the rest of the group follow. The volunteer returns to the centre of the circle and they must watch the group to see who has the power to change the actions. The leader can change the movement when they wish and the rest of the group follow immediately.

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TRADE

My name is Manuel and I live with my family in Ecuador. My father works as a coffee farmer. Most of our family work with him to help in the harvesting. When we harvest the coffee we sell it to a company who transport it to a factory to be roasted, before being shipped to rich countries. One year the price of coffee dropped suddenly and the company did not buy any of our harvest. We have very little money for food now. My sister and I cannot go to school anymore because we cannot afford to pay the school fees.*

DEBT

My name is Steven and I live in Zambia. My mother got sick last year and needed to go to hospital. She had to travel for a full day to get there and I dropped out of school to look after the family. The local clinic has closed because the government has not got enough money. The government wants to build hospitals and clinics but they are spending most of their money repaying loans to rich countries, so for now we have to keep travelling long distances for basic health care.*

CLIMATE CHANGE

I am Sakhi from India. Over the last few years, there has been a lot more flooding in winter and extreme heat in the summer. In my village, very often people get ill because of the heat. There also seem to be much more mosquitoes than before that bite and give us malaria I was told in school that this is because of the world getting hotter. We are told that this is because of people driving cars around the world. But hardly anyone drives a car in my village, so I don't think it's very fair. *

CHILD LABOUR

My name is Kabisa, I come from Benin in West Africa. One night at midnight a man came for me and a large group of children and we journeyed for many hours in two trucks. When we reached the border we had to run from the soldiers. We were told "if you see lights, run and hide!" We were picked up by another truck and people started taking the children's names. Eventually we reached Nigeria. We were divided into groups and put to work. We were told "I am your father here and my wife is your mother you will do as we say". We were each given plots of land to work on and those who did not finish their areas were beaten. **