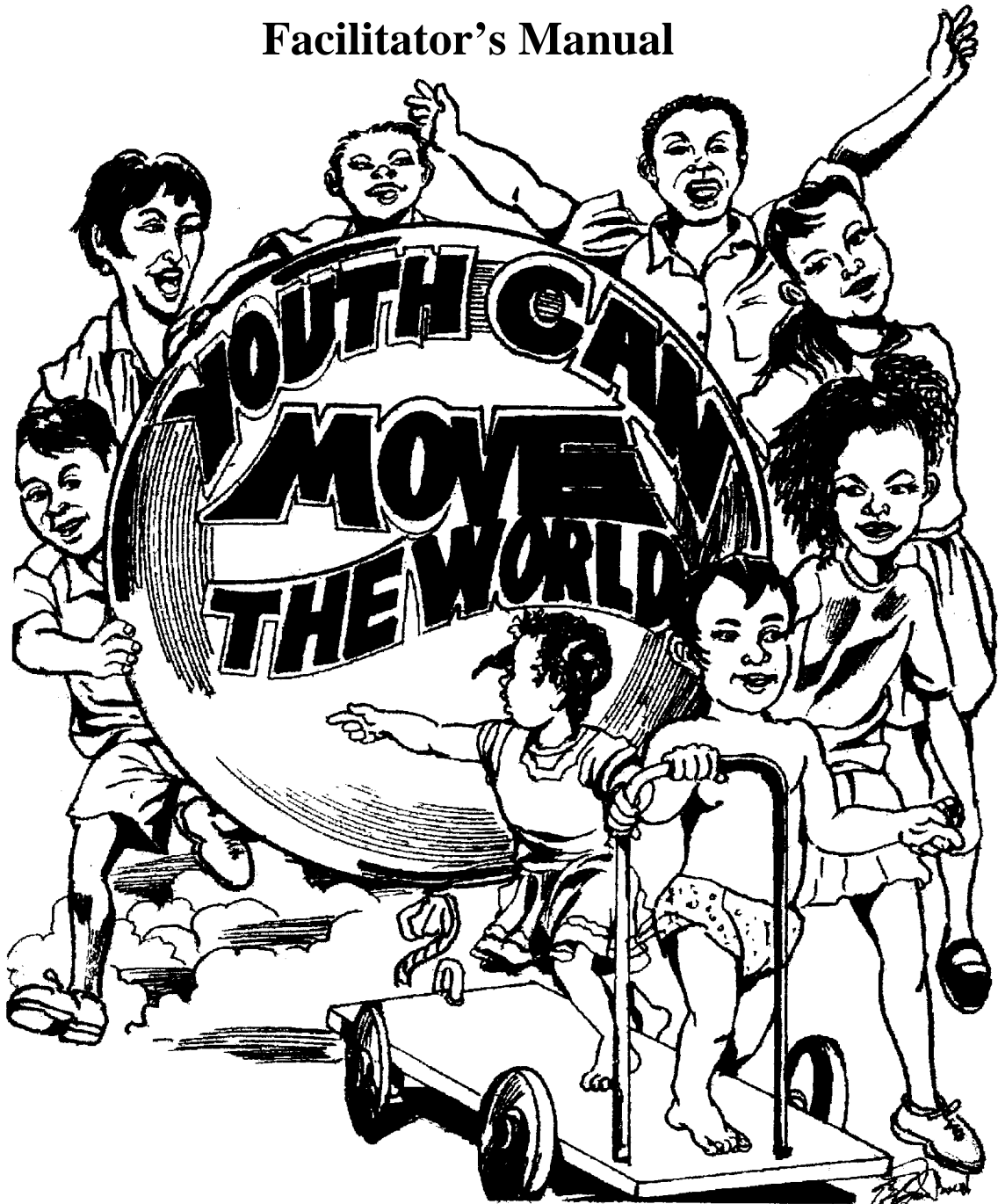


YOUTH CAN MOVE THE WORLD

Facilitator's Manual



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Funded by UNICEF, CIDA and the International Baha'i Community

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Youth Can Move the World



Overview:

The Youth Can Move the World Programme is a one-year training programme presented by Varqa Foundation in collaboration with the Institute of Distant and Continuing Education (IDCE) of the University of Guyana. The programme is funded by UNICEF, CIDA and the International Bahai Community.

The programme is organised into two parts. In the first part volunteer youth from the community attend a seventy-hour training course in the capital. This training programme covers a number of issues of special importance to the youth, including: drug abuse, domestic violence, literacy, gender equity, and HIV/AIDS. Another key element of the course is on ways to promote personal and community transformation.

In the second phase of the programme, the facilitators return to their own communities and take their peers through the same seventy-hour training programme. This is done on a weekly basis, in schools, community centres and youth clubs throughout the country. This takes place over a one-year period. People who successfully complete the course and then conduct weekly classes in their communities receive a certificate from IDCE.

A number of agencies have contributed to the development of this programme, including:

- Help and Shelter
- Ministry of Health, Health & Family Life Task Force
- Conservation International
- Nancy Campbell Collegiate Institute (Canada)
- Iwokrama
- National Commission of the Rights of the Child
- On the Wings of the Words Literacy Project
- Gender Equity Programme, CIDA

This manual provides information on eleven areas of concern to youth all over the world. Each of these eleven sections is divided into three parts:

- Background information on that topic for the facilitator
- Activities for use in training sessions
- Background reading from the world's great religions on these topics.

This is the Fourth Edition of this Manual. However it remains a 'draft volume' and will be further improved and modified in the course of its use this year. An acknowledgement is made in each section to the person/s who helped to develop that section of the manual. The book, 'Contemporary Moral Issues,' by Joe Jenkins (and published by Heinemann) proved particularly useful in developing this manual.

Preface

Some of the major objectives of the Youth Can Move the World Programme are:

- to provide relevant facts about important issues facing youth today
- to help young persons understand these issues
- to help young persons understand that people have different views on these issues and to explain what these views are
- to enable young persons to begin to understand, develop and express their own views on these issues

It can all be rather confusing. How can we ever know who's views are the 'right' ones? How can we ever know whether our own views and opinions are the 'right' ones?

One of the best ways of beginning to understand other people's view and our own views on something is to look at the reasons they, or we, give for believing in something.

Reflection:

Can you think of some reasons people might give to support the following statements?

- 'Nobody should be allowed access to any sort of gun.'
- 'People have a right to know if convicted sex offenders live in their neighbourhood.'
- 'Cigarette and alcohol advertising should be banned.'
- 'Animals have rights.'
- 'If somebody is dying and in great pain, they have a right to end their own life.'

When is a reason a good reason?

Look at each of the statements below. For each one decide whether it is:

- a good reason
 - a reason but not a good one
 - not a reason.
1. 'Gary's homework is written in blue ink. He must have copied mine' because I use blue ink.'
 2. 'I suspect Gary didn't copy my homework. He told me so.'
 3. 'I suspect Gary didn't copy my homework 'because his is different from mine.'
 4. 'Gary must have copied my homework, he can't do the subject anyway.'

You will get more out of the course if you are able to argue your point of view using good reasons. You will begin to understand other people's points of view if you can look closely and carefully at their reasons.

You must also beware of 'jumping to conclusions', and be alert to other people jumping to conclusions. People jump to conclusions when they fail to use reasons to arrive at a conclusion or an opinion.

Reflection: Jumping to conclusions

Here are some examples of reasoning. Decide whether you would classify them as:

- a good reasoning
- b not so good but possibly all right
- c seems good but possibly unsound
- d poor reasoning

Explain your choice for each situation below.

1. 'My father has been reading in the paper that smoking causes cancer, so he says he's going to give up reading.'
2. 'I've been reading that one child out of every five that's born in the world is Chinese. I have three brothers and so I think the next baby in our family will probably look pretty Oriental.'
3. 'Whenever I see Jason I ask him what he thinks of Sharon, and he gets really embarrassed. He has really got a crush on me.'
4. 'I once met a French boy who was a brilliant dancer. I'll bet all those Frenchmen are brilliant dancers.'

A Crucial Question

Among all the questions that human beings ask themselves about life, there is one that is crucial. This question is, 'Who am I?' Throughout human history, men and women have asked this question and looked to the great teachers of the world for possible answers. Teachers like, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, the Buddha, Lord Krishna and Baha'u'llah have inspired countless generations to seek the answer to this question. From their teachings, the great religions of the world have developed – Judaism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and the Bahai Faith.

Who Am I?

Although we might feel that we can answer the question, 'Who am I?' by referring to our name, what we look like, where we come from, what our personalities are like and so on, the complete answers according to these teachers go further.

All the world religions, teach that we are more than just our bodies, minds, feelings and personalities. They all teach that our physical bodies are a container, a shell, and that, within this container, a Divine Spirit exists:

'Do you not know that your are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?'
(I Corinthians 3:16)

The universe has meaning. It is a created universe and not the product of blind chance. This view of who we are is very different from the one we are often presented with by our culture. Our society, which is largely influenced by a materialistic view of the world, often sees life as

having no meaning. According to this view human beings are little more than peculiar animal types with a complicated brain. For many people however this view of who we are robs life of any meaning or purpose.

Personal Growth

Religions teach that we are here on earth not 'just' to exist, we are also here to grow, We all know that we grow physically. We know that some aspects of our life grow, for example, our knowledge of the world.

However, according to the great Teachers of the world, we can grow in other ways. Our spiritual world can grow and develop just as our outer world does. The great religions teach that a human being can be compared to a seed; a living entity with 'potential'. Given the right conditions a seed will grow.

These conditions for growth include an understanding of the teachings of the 'Masters'. Throughout history they have appeared on earth with knowledge about who we really are. Some of this knowledge has been written down in the sacred books of the world. These include the Qur'an of Islam, the Bhagavad-Gita of Hinduism, the Bible of Judaism and Christianity and The Most Holy Book of the Bahai's.

The idea that our spirit, the Kingdom of God, is 'within' us, is a powerful idea. It implies that it is our inner world that needs to grow if we are to fully answer the question, 'who am I'? If we can find the conditions necessary for this growth then we will truly change and as a result, so will the world.

The Bible describes how such a world might be:

'they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' (Micah 4:3)

And yet, today, around the world, millions of people are going through terrible suffering. In many cases this suffering is caused by other human beings. As well as the physical suffering that is going on everyone suffers in other ways. To many, suffering, is regarded as part of the human condition.

The amount of suffering in the world at any moment is staggering. The writer Chaim Potok remembers seeing a dead bird when he was six. He asked his father 'Why?' His father replied, 'That's the way the world was made.' 'Why?' asked the boy. 'So life would be precious,' said the father. 'Something that is yours forever is never precious.'

Making Moral Decisions

From the moment we are born we begin learning. At first we learn most things from our parent(s) but as we grow so do our influences. These 'influences' can include our relations, friends, teachers and the mass media.

The way we learn about the correct way to behave in our own society is called socialization. We also slowly learn what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. Some of the ways we begin to discover what is right and what wrong are:

- by consequence - if you do this, such and such a thing will happen
- by example – watching how others behave
- by experience – if you do something yourself you find out what happens
- by emotions – e.g. do this to please your mother.
- by following rules.

Morality is concerned with what is right and wrong. As human beings we are able to think about what we do and say. Because we are able to think, we are also able to decide or choose what we think is the right way and what we think is the wrong way to behave.

Judgements

Our sense of what is right and what is wrong depends upon many things – upbringing, parental attitudes, friends, what type of environment we have grown up in and live in now, and so on. Morality is therefore very complicated. What we consider to be right, somebody else might see as wrong. In the end we have to come to our own decisions about how we live. We all have the ability to make moral judgments.

Ideals

We all think we can judge fairness pretty well. We recognize at once what is not fair and can usually give a quick answer to the question 'Why not?'. Fair means 'honest' and 'just', giving the same chances and treatment to everyone, according to the rules if there are any.

Life would be fair if we all had an equal chance; if everyone had enough to eat and clean water to drink; if everyone were treated equally regardless of their colour, sex, or religion; if everyone could say what they wanted; if everyone could vote freely.

These are some examples of things that are fair. They are human rights and are due to every single one of us just because we are human. Human rights should automatically belong to everybody.

But life isn't fair, and many people are denied these rights. In some countries children starve to death; only the wealthy can go to school; people are treated differently because of the colour of their skin; people are tortured and imprisoned for saying what they think; there are no elections.

There are many more examples of unfairness. Being fair is not always easy. Sometimes what is fair to one person may not be fair for another. It becomes more complicated when we consider people's freedoms and their rights. Freedom and rights are quite different from each other.

In the same way, having rights involves having responsibilities. We may say what we like, but we shouldn't insult people. Having rights means being fair to others. It is our responsibility.

Being fair to others is often difficult. It is made more difficult by the great inequalities that exist. It is becoming more and more urgent that we achieve greater fairness in the world. When unfairness and suffering get worse, so, often, does violence and even war. The world needs to try and find a balance between rights and responsibilities. If there is no such balance people and nations will not trust and tolerate each other. To tolerate someone means to accept and understand them. It is sometimes difficult to be tolerant when something seems unfair.

Activities

1. Look at the following list of human rights and responsibilities. The rights and responsibilities are muddled up.

- A name and identity of our own
- To show respect to other people of other countries.
- A country to belong to.
- Food, shelter, warmth.
- To be educated and develop new skills
- To buy and own things.
- To treat other people as individuals, not as things or just part of a group.
- To have the protection of the law.
- Not to steal people's things.
- To share our things with needy people.
- To meet together to share new ideas.
- To be safe from violence and fear.
- To be helped when we are old or ill.
- To protect other people from unfair treatment.
- To listen to others
- To always try and find out what the truth is.
- To respect other people's religious beliefs.

Divide your page into two columns headed 'Rights' and 'Responsibilities'. Put each of the above statements in its correct column.

2. Make a list of 'fairness' and 'unfairness' that you can think of. You can include things in your life as well as about people in general.

3. In two columns write down 'My needs' and 'My wants'.

4. Write a sentence about each of the following: human rights, freedom, rights, responsibilities, inequalities, tolerance.

Justice

The word 'justice' is defined in the dictionary as ' the quality of being just; rightness; fairness; to treat someone in a fair way'. In the Old Testament, the Prophet Amos says,'

...let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
(Amos 5: 24).

Today, we live in a global village, through the power of mass communication, of television and satellites, we can see examples of injustice on our screens everyday. But do these pictures help us to get in touch with our feelings about injustice? Do we have such feelings? Do we have feelings towards the homeless people who live on our streets, or towards prisoners forced to live in a violent prison system, or towards the local shop keeper whose small family business is swallowed up by a multi-national company? Injustice is not an abstract, unreal thing; it is about the draining away of hope and joy from people's lives. We can only be moved by justice if we are moved by injustice.

Reflection:

'Those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.'
(Mahatma Gandhi)

'For the cost of one nuclear weapon test we could train 40,000 community health workers in the poorest parts of the worldand for the cost of one Trident submarine we could introduce a five-year programme for universal child immunization against six deadly diseases, thus preventing a million deaths a year.'
(Mathew Fox, theologian)

'We are living beyond our means. As a people we have developed a lifestyle that is draining the Earth of its priceless and irreplaceable resources without regard for the future of our children and people all around the world.'
(Margaret Mead, anthropologist)

PROMOTION OF THE ARTS



1. PROMOTION OF THE ARTS



Fact Sheet

(Prepared by Mr Gordon Naylor, NCCI, Canada)

Visual art, drama and dance have long been a major source of social commentary. Now, the power released by the arts needs to be focused on social change. The arts should not only be a source of beauty and attraction in our environment, but also rather play a major role as a means to educate people on how and what to change in their community.

Did You Know?

Listening and learning music in children helps their progress in Math and English?



Education through the arts is an effective way to shape the values, attitudes, behaviours and skills which will make it possible to function effectively in an integrated world society. The role of the arts in the social change process is critical.



In our increasingly interdependent world, programmes in the arts should have certain aspects in common including:

- ✱ Teaching unity in diversity as the foundation principle for social integration.
- ✱ Cultivating tolerance, love, brotherhood, compassion, humility and an active commitment to justice.
- ✱ Nurturing an appreciation for the richness and importance of the world's diverse cultural, religious and social systems.
- ✱ Emphasizing virtue as the foundation for actions, which fosters individual and collective spiritual and material well-being.
- ✱ Freedom from stereotypes based on religion, culture, gender, race, class or ethnicity.
- ✱ Foster an ethic of service to the entire human race.

1. Promotion Of The Arts



Activities

Main Ideas:

- The arts provide a way of expressing thoughts, views and feelings on issues that are important to youth and to the world at large
- The world is weary of words, therefore the arts provide an opportunity to communicate through drama, music and dance more than mere words can say
- The arts move hearts and souls
- Art can be considered an act of worship.

Activities:

1. Choose one of the following songs or choose one of your own:

Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Bamboo Fire
Small days

Are you sleeping?
Dis Time Na Long Time
Mary had a little lamb

Change the words to express your views on one of the issues that affects you as a youth. If you are really creative, then create your own tune!!

2. Write a poem about how you see things differently from other people.
3. Create a mural in your group that expresses how the members of your group feel about a particular issue that is important to you.
4. Create a short skit showing different aspects of a current social issue and include several points of view **or** a possible solution.
5. Discuss the following with your group:
 - Compare the effectiveness of a speech with an artistic presentation on the same topic.
 - Are all current forms of art uplifting or in keeping with the nobility of man?
 - Discuss why you like your favourite music? Is it the beat, the melody or the words?
 - If mankind generally becomes more spiritual and noble in the future, what types of entertainment might be discontinued? Why do you think so?
6. Make a chart of how you spend your day. How much time do you spend in recreation? What types of recreation are you involved in? Are the TV shows or movies you watch conducive to spiritual upliftment?
7. Imagine that you have to develop a rating system for movies. What would your rating system look like? Upon what would you base your decisions?

1. PROMOTION OF THE ARTS



READINGS

‘Try, if thou canst, to use spiritual melodies, songs and tunes, and to bring earthly music into harmony with celestial melody.’¹

‘Do not try to develop what is natural to man; develop what is natural to Heaven. He who develops Heaven benefits life; he who develops man injures life.’²
Taoism - Chuang Tzu 19

‘Consider how much marvelous notes or a charming song influence the spirits. A wonderful song giveth wings to the spirit and filleth the heart with exaltation.’³

‘In this great dispensation, art is identical with an act of worship... Therefore extreme effort should be made in art...each should assist the other in art and guidance. For instance, when the studying of art is with the intention of obeying the command of God this study will certainly be done easily and great progress will soon be made therein.’⁴

‘... in accordance with the divine teachings ...the perfection of arts are considered acts of worship. If a man engageth with all his power....in the perfection of an art, it is as if he has been worshiping God in churches and temples.’⁵

‘While the children are yet in their infancy ...let them share in every new and wondrous craft and art.’⁶

‘Music expresses the harmony of the universe...Through harmony all things are influenced and through order all things have a proper place. Music rises to heaven...’⁷

‘The Lord is my strength and my soul, my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart rejoiceth; and with my song I will praise Him.’⁸

GLOBAL PROSPERITY



2. GLOBAL PROSPERITY



Fact Sheet

Based on material prepared by Mrs Evelyn Hamilton,
Chief Planning Officer, Ministry of Education

What do we understand by the term ‘global prosperity’? The opening lines of the first “Human Development Report” 1990 states:

“The real wealth of a nation is its people. And the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long healthy and creative lives.”

Did you know?

That 1.2 billion people don't have access to safe drinking



In a special contribution to the “Human Development Report” 1999, Paul Streeten points out:

“More income is only one of the things poor people desire, adequate nutrition, safe water, better medical services, more and better schooling for their children”.... do not show up in higher income per head, at least not for some time.

Streeten also notes that there are non-material benefits that are often more highly valued than material improvements e.g. liberation from oppression, violence and exploitation, security from persecution, a satisfying family life, the assertion of cultural and religious values, a sense of purpose in life and work and a sense of belonging to a community.

Condition of the World today

Despite considerable improvements between 1990 and 1997 in health education, the status of women and children, etc. there are still significant developmental problems.

FACT BOX

- One fifth of the world's population is hungry all the time.
- Every two seconds a child dies of a disease.
- 780 million are undernourished.
- 850 million are illiterate.
- 1.5 billion have no access to medical facilities.
- Large numbers of people are inadequately housed.
- Large numbers of people are unemployed.
- Inadequate global planning for wise use of natural resources.
- A trillion U.S. dollars spent annually on war preparation.

Human Development Report 1999

These problems exist because the improvements in the world's prosperity have been very uneven and there are new setbacks. Some reasons are highlighted below:-

- Because of technological progress in transportation and communication, people's lives, their jobs, income and health are affected by events in countries far away from them: e.g. environmental degradation, oil spills, deforestation, poisoning of rivers, lakes, over fishing etc. These will affect the economic, food and health security of most countries.
- Global travel has meant that a disease which starts in one country can soon become an international epidemic. The most obvious example now is the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- Civil conflicts in a particular country can affect neighbouring countries through the flow of refugees across the border.

What is the solution?

There are many suggestions as to how global prosperity can be promoted:

a) Possible national actions:

Expand the capabilities, opportunities and life choices of poor people e.g.

- Build human capabilities through education
- Ensure access of poor people to credit.
- Reduce inequality through progressive income taxation
- Make provision of safe water, health services and housing accessible to poor people.
- Create effective partnerships of various groups in a country e.g. between NGO's, local firms, and multinational corporations.

b) International actions

- Strengthen the global commitment to humane governance. Globalisation has expanded people's awareness of their connection with the wider world. We need to make people conscious of their being citizens of the world, not just their countries.
- Strengthen global ethics and responsibility. Global government with a humane face requires shared values, such as those spelt out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, e.g. respect for justice, equality etc. and tolerance and mutual caring.

c) Economic measures include

- Preserving the environment - Create a world environment agency.
- Promoting fairer trade, especially for the poorest countries - Make the World Trade Organisation fairer and give it a mandate over multi-national corporations.
- Refocusing aid to support poverty reduction, especially in the poorest countries.
- Protecting people during periods of economic crisis and adjustment.

World Poverty

- There must be an emergency programme to help the world's poorest countries in the poverty belts of Africa and Asia.

- There must be an end to mass hunger and malnutrition. This means more funds for developing agriculture, irrigation, agricultural research, crop storage, fertilizers and other aids.
- There should be more international support for family planning programmes.
- Funds and skills being put into arms production must be channeled into peaceful needs.
- There should be an international 'income tax' to spread wealth from the rich to the poor.
- The international monetary system must be reformed, giving greater participation and advantage to poorer countries.
- More attention must be paid to educating public opinion, and the young especially, about the importance of international co-operation.

North-South

North-South is a very simple way of showing how the world divides into rich and poor countries. The rich North includes North America, Europe, Russia, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. The poor South includes most of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Countries of the South are sometimes called the *Third World*, *underdeveloped* or *developing countries*.



North:

- 25 % of the world's people
- 80 % of the world's income
- a person can expect to live on average more than 70 years
- most people are educated at least through primary and secondary school
- over 90% of the world's manufacturing industry
- about 96% of world's spending on research and development, nearly all the world's registered patents
- dominates most of the international economic system and institutions of trade, money and finance.

South:

- 75 % of the world's people
- 20 % of the world's income
- a person can expect to live, on average, to about 50 years.
- 20 % or more of the people suffer from hunger and malnutrition
- 50 % of the people still have little chance of formal education.

Definitions

Absolute poverty: A condition of life so characterized by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, high infant mortality and low life expectancy as to be beneath any reasonable definition of human decency.' (Robert Macnamara)

Absolute poverty is a trap that imprisons about one billion people, nearly a fifth of the world's population. 90% live in the countryside, more than half are small farmers and a quarter are landless labourers.

Whilst people in the North worry about diets, 35,000 people every day starve to death in the South.



The majority of people in developing countries manage to survive on an income of under US\$150 a year. Many people live on less. There are over 825 million illiterate adults in the world, mostly in the South, the majority are women. In 60 countries over 40 % of houses have no piped water. Some 1.4 billion people do not have access to clean water.

Over 450 million people are mentally or physically disabled; 800 million have no access to health care. At least 15 million children die every year.

WHILE YOU ARE READING THIS HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE STARVING OR MALNOURISHED AND DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY WILL BE LIVING BY THIS TIME NEXT WEEK.

Basic Needs

Food

Food helps us grow and develop. Without the right amount of food or the right kinds of food, people suffer from malnutrition which can result in death. At least one in eight of the world's population does not have enough to eat.

Water

Clean, safe drinking water is essential for life. It is vital for the control of diseases such as diarrhea, typhoid and cholera. The World Health Organization estimates that 80% of all sickness and disease can be attributed to inadequate water and sanitation. Such diseases cause an estimated 50 million deaths each year.

Housing

Housing provides us with protection and security. Today, as more and more people in Third World countries are drawn to cities in search of work and a better life, overcrowding becomes a major problem.

Health

Health care is important to 'ensure a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or illness' (World Health Organization). This requires adequate food, access to safe drinking water, sewage disposal, health education and health care. Yet 70% of the Third World populations do not have access to organized health care and 90% of child deaths are linked with malnutrition, contagious diseases and unhygienic living conditions.

Education

We take education for granted but in the poorest countries of the world only four adults in ten can read and write and less than one in four children go to secondary school.

Reflection:

'More people have died as a consequence of hunger in the past six years than have been killed in all the wars, revolutions and murders in the past 150 years.'

(The Hunger Project, 1987)

The Great Divide

We have virtually conquered the planet, explored the moon, overcome the natural limits of travel and communication; we stand at the dawn of a new age, ready to move farther into space and perhaps inhabit other planets. Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life span, alter the course of human evolution, unlock vast new powers, and provide humankind with an unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life. The future is, however, filled with dangers.

In learning to apply science to life, we have opened the doors to ecological damage, overpopulation, political repression and nuclear and biochemical disaster. Humanity, to survive, requires bold and daring measures. The ultimate goal should be the fulfilment of the potential for growth in each human personality – not for the favoured few, but for all of humankind.

The huge divide between rich and poor in the world has been created by human greed and selfishness. There is enough food to feed everyone, and if nations redirected their wealth to help their fellow global citizens, instead of spending it on armaments and nuclear weapons, the world would be transformed. For the cost of two fighter aircraft (US\$25 million) we could install 300,000 hand pumps in villages in Africa to give the people access to safe drinking water.

2. GLOBAL PROSPERITY



Activities

Main ideas:

- The real wealth of a nation is its people and the purpose of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives
- More income is only one of the things poor people desire
- The problems that exist have become increasingly a matter of international rather than national concern.

Activities:

1. Draw a pictorial representation of the unequal distribution of the wealth of the world.
2. Create a mural showing the life styles of the rich versus the poorer peoples of the world.
3. Draw a tree representing the world and its conditions as they are today. Write the problems on the roots and show the consequences in the tree itself (its leaves and fruits etc). In contrast, draw a tree representing the world and what the conditions will be if we solve today's problems. Write the solutions on the roots and show the effects these solutions have on the tree itself (its leaves and fruits, etc).
4. Make a chart of the basic material things that everyone should have access to without exception. On the same chart, list the spiritual or non-material things that everyone should have access to without exception.
5. Make a rectangular puzzle with six randomly cut pieces. Give one piece to each group member in a group of 6 youth. Ask them to piece together the puzzle while following these rules: No one can ask another person for their puzzle piece, but anyone can offer their piece to someone else. Everyone must cooperate with each other to accomplish the task. This activity can be done with any number of groups working at the same time. The purpose is to learn how to cooperate and work together.
6. Make a set of twenty cards. On each write a difficult situation that is common in the world today, i.e. You are a high school drop out and you cannot read very well. OR You are a single mother of six children in a developing country. OR You have a physical disability and you cannot leave your home unaided, etc. Put the cards into a hat and have each member of your group pull out a card and speak for two minutes about how they would try and overcome the difficulty.

2. GLOBAL PROSPERITY



READINGS

‘Indeed, the chief reason for the evils now rampant in society is the lack of spirituality. The materialistic civilization of our age has so much absorbed the energy and interest of mankind that people in general do no longer feel the necessity of raising themselves above the forces and conditions of their daily material existence...The universal crisis affecting mankind is, therefore, essentially spiritual in its causes...Man’s outlook on life is too crude and materialistic to enable him to elevate himself into the higher realms of the spirit.’¹

‘The earth is upheld by the veracity of those who have subdued their passions, and, following righteous practices, and, are never contaminated by desire, covetousness or wrath.’²

‘The inordinate disparity between rich and poor, a source of acute suffering, keeps the world in a state of instability, virtually on the brink of war.’³

‘When such a crisis sweeps over the world no person should hope to remain intact. We belong to an organic unit and when one part of the organism suffers all the rest of the body will feel its consequences.’⁴

‘It is we who portion out between them their livelihood in the life of this world: and We raise some of them above others on rank, so that they may command work from others. But the Mercy of your Lord is better than the wealth which they amass.’⁵

‘In keeping with the requirements of the times, consideration should also be given to teaching the concept of world citizenship as part of the standard education of every child.’⁶

‘He who has two coats, let him give him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.’⁷

‘All the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, become increasingly interdependent. For none is self sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch as political ties unite all peoples and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Hence the unity of mankind in this day can be achieved.’⁸

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



3. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Fact Sheet
Prepared by Mr Vidya Kissoon, Help and Shelter

1. WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Violence is the behaviour of one individual or group of individuals with the intent to intimidate, either by threat or force, another person or group of individuals. The purpose of the violent behaviour is to control the victim. Domestic violence occurs when the people are members of the same family, or household or have a relationship. The effects of the violence on the victim are that they become afraid of the abuser, and become controlled. Any activity or behaviour which endangers the life or well being of the victim, persistently humiliates the victim, dishonours them, or lowers their self esteem is abuse.

The message from government, media and law enforcers, is quite clear. Our society is plagued by violence. Bolts, steel doors, alarm systems and all manner of sophisticated locking devices are enjoying boom sales all over the world.

Set against this violent world outside is a powerful and cherished ideal: The Family – offering love and security against the cruel world outside. However, statistics show a different picture. More than half the murders in the West are the result of domestic disputes. Children are more likely to be abused by their own parents than by anybody else. Most women are raped by people they know – in the home. To quote American sociologist Norval Morris:

‘You are safer on the streets than at home, safer with a stranger than with a friend or relative’.

Did you know?

Two out of three females in USA have been attacked by a family member or person with which they have been acquainted.



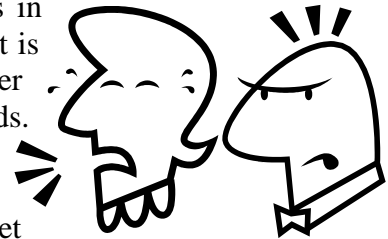
2. What are the forms of domestic violence?

The forms of domestic violence are physical violence, sexual violence and emotional/psychological violence. Physical violence takes the form of slapping, punching, kicking or beating and any other physically violent behaviour. Sexual violence takes the form of forcing the victim into unwanted and degrading sexual acts. Emotional/psychological violence is designed to destroy the victim’s self-esteem and reduces the victim’s ability to make decisions and take action, which is necessary for her or his well-being. The purpose of the abuse is to make the victim dependent of the abuser.

Personal violence can take many forms: physical, psychological, sexual and economic. There are however, some things common to all types of personal violence. Personal violence usually involves the person inflicting the violence gaining power – or extra power – over the victim by causing them pain. It’s easier to do this to a person if you ‘own’ them. They become an object, a commodity that you can treat as you please.

Violence breeds violence. Parents who batter their children have often been battered themselves. These people are not simply sadistic. Often they are beating to make sense of their own confusing and painful childhood. Using violence against others they regain an element of control, even self-respect.

Some people cannot express their anger and resentment to others in their home environment and so project their violence onto others. It is often the case that obedient children who never express anger towards their parents carry a psychological time-bomb in their heads. Many men find an escape for their anger in what sociologists call 'compulsive masculinity'. Some join the armed forces, some go into aggressive 'cut and thrust' business and some turn into street fighting machines. The 'macho' way, continuously shown in Hollywood movies, presents the idea that action speaks louder than words. The hero bottles things up and then explodes in a display of violent power. But behind this bravado lies the fact that these men can't express their feelings and emotions until it is 'too late'.



One way this manifests itself is child sexual abuse. Men who can't express their emotions find it more desirable to have sexual relationships with children they easily dominate than with other adults with whom they feel emotionally inadequate.

Women, on the other hand, are more likely to 'internalize' aggression, become depressed and turn violence against themselves. Anorexia and tranquilizer dependency are typical symptoms of this self-destructive urge.

3. In which domestic groups does violence occur?

Domestic violence occurs in relationships of people who come from all ethnic, social, education, economic and religious backgrounds. The victims of violence are mostly women and children.

4. What kind of person would abuse their loved ones?

The men who are abusive tend to believe strongly in traditional sex roles such as – they are the heads of the household and the chief decision- maker. They believe they have the right to control their wives.

5. Why do people stay in abusive relationships?

Some of the reasons why people, mostly women, often go back to abusive relationships include the following:

- The hope that things will get better
- Fear of failure as a wife to the husband
- Love of husband/partner
- Economic dependency
- Feeling that they should stay because of the children

6. The cycle of violence

The violence has a cyclical pattern. Most victims will go through the violence again and again. There are three phases in the cycle:

- **Tension-building phase** characterized by threats where the woman often blames herself for every incident.
- **Abusive phase.** The abuser attacks the victim. The victim may be seriously injured.
- **Honeymoon phase.** The abuser expresses remorse, which the victim may believe. In some cases this phase does not exist.

It is important to discuss the cycle of violence with the victims so that they do not become trapped.

7. What can be done to end domestic violence?

- Men have to become involved in the fight against domestic violence
- Ask people to discuss non-violent parenting skills instead of flogging.
- Share with others how gender inequality leads to domestic violence.
- Support victims as they try to go through the courts and police to seek help.
- Ask the religious leaders in your community to discuss domestic violence with their members.
- Condemn the behaviour of people who are violent.

Violence breeds violence. This does not mean that we should just ‘internalize’ anger – this will lead to an explosion later, or to illness – but rather we should look to the root causes of our anger or frustration and try to change these causes.

At a practical level this means:

- providing more refuges to make it possible for women and children to leave violent men
- making counseling readily available for people who are concerned about their own violence.
- creating conditions where children can reveal sexual abuse, be believed and receive professional help
- respecting the rights of people who are often the victims of violence – children, women, racial minorities, gays or any other group chosen as scapegoats.

8. Child abuse

Child abuse can be characterized by neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. Many children do not get help because they feel that no one would believe them. Some children are afraid of their abusers.

9. What to do if you find out a child is being abused

- Believe the child if they tell you.
- Encourage the parents to seek help for themselves.

- Encourage the parent or guardian to remove the child to a place of safety. The child could be damaged for life if the abuse continues and no help is sought for him or her.
- Contact the nearest probation officer or sympathetic police officer.

10. How to teach children to report abuse.

- Teach children never to go with strangers.
- Teach children how to scream if they feel threatened.
- Encourage children to speak to someone until someone believes them.
- Teach the children the difference between “bad touching” and “good touching”.

11. Help available.

- Help and Shelter, Telephone 02 73454, 54731, Homestretch Avenue, Georgetown
- Guyana Women’s Leadership Institute. Cove and John, E.C.D.
- Women’s Affairs Bureau and the Regional Women’s Actions Committee.

3. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Activities

1. Discuss - Why do people in family/loving relationships fight/abuse/hurt one another?
2. List at least four characteristics of people who are abusers.
3. List at least four characteristics of persons who are victims of their partners' violence.
4. Give 6 reasons why you think people stay in abusive relationships.
5. Discuss – What are the groups in which you think domestic violence occurs.
6. Act out one of the following skits (remember this is a serious issue)
 - A teacher finds marks of violence on a child's body during physical education class.
 - Men are talking about the way they treat their wives and one (more enlightened individual) tries to get them to see the wrong in this type of behaviour.
 - A lady seeks advice from a neighbour on what to do about her abusive husband.
7. Discuss why it is harmful for youths to slap and hit each other even in fun.
8. Make a poster depicting the effects of domestic violence.
9. In a recent survey by Professor Ken Dadds from the University of Guyana results indicated the percentage of men and women in abusive relationships was 66%. List at least four lines of action that could be taken to reduce this alarming number.

3. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



READINGS

THERE MUST BE EQUALITY OF RIGHTS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN... FOR THE WORLD OF HUMANITY POSSESSES TWO WINGS – MAN AND WOMAN. IF ONE WING REMAINS INCAPABLE AND DEFECTIVE, IT WILL RESTRICT THE POWER OF THE OTHER, AND FULL FLIGHT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE. ¹

‘Abuse not your wife. Women are sacred. If you make your wife suffer, you will die in a short time. Our grandmother, Earth, is a woman, and in abusing your wife you are abusing her.’ ²

‘Domestic violence is a fact of life for many women throughout the world, regardless of race, class or educational background. In many societies traditional beliefs that women are a burden make them easy targets of anger. In other situations, men’s frustrations are vented on women and children when economies shrink and collapse. In all parts of the world, violence against women and children persists because it goes unpunished.’ ³

‘Beliefs and practices that contributed to the oppression of women must be re-examined in the light of justice. When properly understood, the principle of the fundamental equality of men and women will eventually transform all social relations, allowing each person to develop his or her unique gifts and talents. The utilization of everyone’s strengths, will foster the maturation of society. As the principle of equality gains acceptance, the challenge of transmitting it to the next generation must be undertaken by parents, schools, governments and NGOs.’ ⁴

‘When women are honoured, there the gods are pleased; but when they are not honoured no sacred rite yields rewards.’ ⁵

‘When the female relations live in grief, the whole family soon wholly perishes; but that family where they are not unhappy ever prospers.’ ⁶

‘The family is the basic unit of society; all of its members should be educated according to spiritual principles. The rights of all need to be safeguarded and children trained to respect themselves and others.’ ⁷

‘Education in spiritual values is necessary not only to protect women but, to foster respect for all people, so that human honour and dignity may be preserved and a global ethos may evolve in which all human rights are upheld.’ ⁸