



GOD'S WORLDWIDE FAMILY

How does this session help people to grow in Christ?

As technology creates instant connections across the globe, it's easy to feel that the whole world is at our fingertips. But it's less easy to remember how interconnected we are with real people on every part of the planet, particularly through the food we eat and the impact our lifestyles have on the climate. Today we are going to discover that loving our neighbour reaches beyond our own streets and right around the world. As we meet children from other countries and hear their stories, we'll see that God's family is full of people with very different lives to ours, and that we can have a positive impact on their lives.

Micah 6:8 tells us that God wants us to 'act justly', to 'love mercy', and to 'walk humbly' with him. We want to explore the ideas of justice and fairness, because God loves all of his children wherever they are in the world, and calls us to make the world a fairer place.

As families try the activities and hear the stories from different countries, they can stamp or cross

off the flag on their Worldwide Passport sheet. The stories to accompany each of the activities are included as printouts. These can be given to team members in advance for them to read and practise telling in their own words, ready to share with the families. They can also be left on tables for families to read themselves.

Bible references

Proverbs 31:8-9; Isaiah 58; Micah 6:8; James 2:15-17

Messy team theme

- How many ways are you aware of being connected to others around the world?
- What links does your church already have to projects in other countries that help make the world fairer?
- How can you encourage people to see acting justly and loving mercy as an important part of their walk with God?

Activities

1. Worlds together

Invite families to decorate at least two of the cut-out paper-people: one to look like themselves as they're dressed today, and one to represent one of the people pictured from another part of the world. Stick the two people on the outline of the world in the countries they're from, and pin a length of wool from one to the other. Ask what the wool might stand for.

You will need:

- a large paper outline of the world
- paper cut-outs in the shape of people
- colouring pens or collage scraps
- copies of the Worlds Together sheet
- wool (or thread)
- pins





2. Weighing scales

You will need:

- a stick or (dowelling) rod
- string
- yoghurt pots or eggbox segments
- weights from kitchen scales, or lumps of modelling dough measured to weigh different amounts
- small items to weigh

Weighing scales have been a symbol of justice for centuries. Make a pair of scales by tying string around the centre of the dowelling rod as a handle. Make a 'pan' for each end by tying a yoghurt pot or eggbox segment to it. Use the modelling dough weights to weigh different items. Make it 'unfair' by moving one of the pans nearer the centre on one side.

- ▶ How hard is it to stay fair?
- ▶ Where do you see unfair situations happening in the world today?
- ▶ What might make them fairer?

3. Malawi: gardening

You will need:

- an area of garden or grow bags/troughs and compost
- garden tools
- seeds or seedlings
- seed labels (from sheet) printed or stuck on to card

Have a go at digging, weeding, cutting, hoeing, raking and seed-planting. If you keep watering, perhaps by next month something will be growing! Use the seed labels sheet to remind yourself of what you have planted. Bizwek's family is being helped to garden and farm in Malawi.

- ▶ What are your favourite fruits and vegetables?
- ▶ Where do they come from?
- ▶ What would it be like if you had to grow all your own vegetables?

4. Sierra Leone: build a school roof

You will need:

- scissors
- cardboard boxes – shoe boxes or larger (no lids)
- small pieces of wood
- nails, hammers (if you feel confident for families to use these)
- sticks from the garden
- thatching materials – long grass, straw or reeds (beware of hayfever sufferers), drinking straws, string
- watering can and water

To find a film clip you can use of Patricia's story, go to christianaid.org.uk/globalexplorers and click on Sierra Leone in the scrapbook section.

Patricia and the other children in her village are getting a new school building as the old one let the water in and was dangerous. Let's see if you can make a waterproof roof for a miniature school. The cardboard box is your school but it has no roof – it is open to the sky. First, cut a door in one side of the box, then make a roof using the different materials available. Test your roof by pouring water over it with the watering can.

- ▶ Does the inside stay dry?
- ▶ What do you think would be the worst thing about trying to work in a building where it's cold, wet and dangerous, and where insects eat your papers?

5. Nicaragua: coffee making

You will need:

- Fairtrade Nicaraguan coffee beans
- Fairtrade sugar
- a coffee grinder (children will be fine with a hand grinder)
- a coffee machine or similar to make the coffee (children may well be safe with a kettle or coffee-maker, if properly instructed and supervised)
- milk
- cups

Make a lovely cup of coffee: grind up the coffee beans and make coffee for someone to drink. If you have any real foodie types, they might be delighted to offer adults a lesson in coffee tasting.

- ▶ What do the beans smell like?
- ▶ Talk about Meriling's story and the way the community is hoping to build a new school together, with the money from the coffee.
- ▶ What would you like to say to Meriling's dad about the new school?

6. India: agents of change

You will need:

- pictures of superheroes
- pictures of children
- scissors
- glue
- paper and pens

Read the story of Rajashekhar. In India, some schools are starting eco-clubs, and John Deveram says: 'Children are the best agents of change.' Cut out the outline of your favourite superhero and then cut out his/her face carefully, replacing it with the face of a child. Glue the new superhero onto a

sheet of paper and add the caption: 'Children are the best agents of change' in comic book writing.

- ▶ Why do you think John said that?
- ▶ Talk about things you'd like to change in the world.
- ▶ What's stopping you?

7. Bolivia: animals and chocolate

You will need:

- sheep-, chicken- or egg-shaped biscuits
- melted Fairtrade chocolate
- clean brushes

Read the story of Ivana in Bolivia or watch her film. Go to christianaid.org.uk/globalexplorers and find Bolivia in the scrapbook. Choose a biscuit shaped like one of the animals she has on her farm, and paint it with the chocolate that she may have helped to grow.

Alternative activities: decorate hard-boiled eggs or bring in some overgrown tomato plants and some secateurs. Learn how to trim off the shoots, just as Ivana trims the cocoa trees.

8. Afghanistan: thank you for school!

You will need:

- chalk
- board cleaners
- individual boards pre-painted with blackboard paint, or large blackboards

See how beautifully you can draw and write the words 'Thank you for school' on a blackboard, using chalk.

Read the story of Guljan in Afghanistan and talk about what a privilege she considers her classes to be.

- ▶ Do you think school is a luxury and a privilege?
- ▶ How would it feel if you had to do work at home or in a factory or a field instead of going to school? (Get both adults and children to respond.)

9. Kenya: toilet art

You will need:

- brown lightweight card or thick paper
- inner cardboard tubes from toilet rolls
- small, sharp scissors
- glue
- a book or pictures about Kenya
- pencils
- coloured paper
- googly eyes
- fake fur and felt scraps
- desk lamp or torch

To find the film clip to go with this story, go to christianaid.org.uk/globalexplorers and click on Kenya in the scrapbook section.

Easier option (for younger children): Make a Kenyan animal (giraffe, lion, rhino, hippo, elephant, cheetah, crocodile etc). Use the inner tube of a toilet roll as a body and glue on paper or fabric (felt or fur).

Time-consuming and satisfying, if fiddly, option (for older children): Create a silhouette sculpture to sit inside the inner tube of a toilet roll.

First, take a piece of brown card or thick paper. Draw some tiny pictures on the card – no bigger than the diameter of the tube – of people, animals, trees or houses you might see in Kenya. Add a small tab at the base and anywhere it might touch the side of the tube.

Now, cut them out using sharp scissors, and fold back the tabs to use for gluing. Arrange your figures inside and stick them carefully in place so that, when you look down the tube, you see a silhouetted scene. Try shining a light at the far end to make it more mysterious.

Read about or watch, the film of, Jeremiah in Kenya and the lack of toilets in the place where he lives.

- ▶ Talk about how blessed we are to have toilets in our own homes, never mind toilet paper!
- ▶ Is it fair that we live in such comfort when many people don't have these basics?

10. Colombia: a safe place to live

You will need:

- fruit juice cartons
- squares of coloured sticky-backed plastic for the windows and doors
- tape
- pens
- lolly sticks
- A5 size blank card
- sticky labels – some blank, some with words or symbols for unwelcome things (weapons, arguments, hunger, loneliness etc), and some with words or symbols for welcome things (hugs, food, bed, laughter, love etc)

You can see Edile's film by going to christianaid.org.uk/globalexplorers and finding Colombia in the scrapbook section.

Make a juice carton house by pointing the lid into a roof and taping it in place, and adding sticky coloured squares to be the door and windows. Tape a lolly stick to the piece of card so it makes a signpost. On one side of the card write YES and on the other write NO. With your family, choose which stickers should go on both sides of the sign – which things you want inside your house (yes) and which ones should never be allowed in (no) so that it stays a safe place for everyone in the family and perhaps others outside the family too. Tape the sign to the house roof.

Edile and his family in Colombia had to run away from their home because of war. Christian Aid has helped a local organisation to bring them to a safe place. Outside that safe place is a sign that says 'No weapons allowed here'.



Celebration suggestion

You will need:

- large print-out of Micah 6:8 (NIV) for display, with the words 'act justly', 'love mercy', and 'walk humbly with your God' covered up with sheets of paper that can be removed later
- story reminders sheet and 8 volunteers to read
- lots of eggshells
- a cross or image of a cross

Display the words of Micah 6:8 with phrases covered up as above, and get people to read it together, with a hand over their mouth for the blanks:

'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To... and to... and to...'

Ask people to talk among themselves for about a minute about what words might go in the gaps. What might God want his people to do? Get some suggestions and then uncover the right words. Read it out together as it now says:

'He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To **act justly** and to **love mercy** and to **walk humbly with your God.**'

Does that surprise you?

Today, we've been thinking about what Christian Aid thinks it means to act justly and love mercy and walk humbly with God. We've heard lots of stories from children in countries where things aren't fair or just, where people don't have the things they need and where Christian Aid is working with the local churches and organisations for justice and mercy. Ask 8 people to read out the reminders of each child's story.

These children remind us about trying to make our world a fairer place – acting justly and loving mercy – so that we can work together for everyone to have what they need to live well. To do that, we need to walk humbly. We need to remember we're not the only people on this planet.

Spread lots of empty eggshells across the floor on a mat or cover. Now, invite two helpers to walk across this in two different ways: one as if they don't care what happens to anything they find underfoot and one as if they want to keep the eggshells as safe as possible.

The way God wants us to live is to walk humbly. That means to go through life like the person who walked carefully, noticing the fragile people and countries around us, and living in a way that does as little damage as possible and tries to mend what is broken.

Prayer

Display a cross, or picture of a cross, that you've covered with tacky glue. Invite everyone to come and take a piece of broken eggshell from the floor and stick it onto this cross shape. As you stick it on, ask God to help you be part of the answer, not part of the problem. Play some music while the egg-cross is being created.

Lord, thank you for the amazing world that you have made, and the all people who live in it. Help us to remember people who don't have the things they need. Thank you for Christian Aid and those who they work with in countries around the world. Please help us to live carefully, and to help make the world fairer for everyone.

Amen

Song suggestion

'Nothing's too big, big, big for his power'
(© 2005 Doug Horley/Thankyou Music)

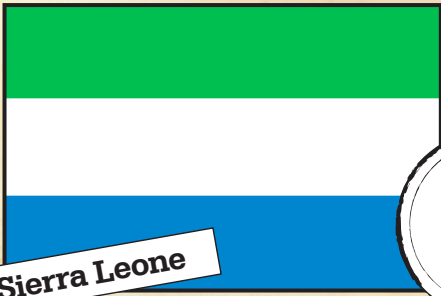
Meal suggestion

Try a round-the-world buffet, with food to try from lots of different countries. If you have people in your congregation who come from different countries, ask them to bring something from their country. Or, ask everyone to bring their own favourite food to share with others as we think about sharing things out more fairly.

For free all-age and children's resources from Christian Aid and Messy Church, visit christianaid.org.uk/childrens-resources, messychurch.org.uk/resources and barnabasinchurches.org.uk



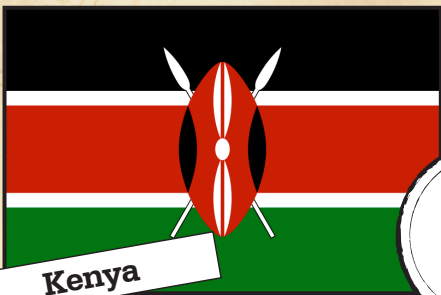
WORLDWIDE PASSPORT



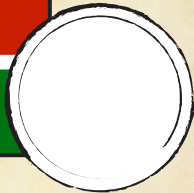
Sierra Leone



Afghanistan



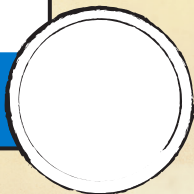
Kenya



Bolivia



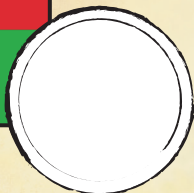
Nicaragua



Colombia



Malawi



India



WORLDS TOGETHER



Patricia
from Sierra Leone



Rajashekhar
from India



Guljan
from Afghanistan



Ivana
from Bolivia



Meriling
from Nicaragua



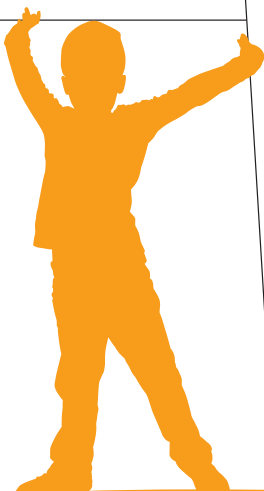
Bizwek
from Malawi



Jeremiah
from Kenya



Edile
from Colombia



SEED LABELS



CELEBRATION STORY REMINDERS

I'm **Edile** from **Colombia** and I told you about how I now have a safe place to live.

I'm **Meriling** from **Nicaragua** and I told you about people in my town growing coffee to get us a new school.

I'm **Guljan** from **Afghanistan** and I told you about the classes I go to as we have no school.

I'm **Rajashekhhar** from **India** and my story was about the eco-clubs and being agents of change.

I'm **Bizwek** and I told you about my garden in **Malawi**.

I'm **Jeremiah** and I told you about the flying toilets in **Kenya**.

I'm **Ivana** from **Bolivia** and my story was about the animals on my farm and about the cocoa we grow.