

Briefing Paper for Trainee Teachers  
of  
Citizenship Education

International NGOs

Produced by citized  
(a project of the Teacher Training Agency)

Spring 2005

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Briefing Papers for Trainee Teachers can  
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## Background notes

Learning about the programmes of the UK's International Non-Government Organisations (INGOs) is an essential part of citizenship education. This is because the aid, development and advocacy work of these organisations can help young British citizens to understand better their role in the wider world, particularly in relation to countries that are economically poorer than the UK.

The UK's INGO sector is constantly in change and development itself. The first non-government organisation that could be called 'international' was The Save the Children Fund, started by Eglantyne Jebb and her sister Dorothy Buxton in 1919 to send relief to starving children in eastern Europe after the First World War. Great Britain had at this time a long tradition of charitable work, with organisations like Barnardos having their origins in Victorian philanthropy. What was new was the Jebb sisters taking Henri Dumont's International Red Cross organisation as a model for how charitable organisations could work effectively across national frontiers, aiming to create a truly international movement for children's welfare.

During the course of the twentieth century, the League of Nations became the United Nations and the so-called 'Third World' was named and re-named as the 'South' or 'Developing World'. In other words, UK attitudes towards aid and development in poorer parts of the world have been influenced by global processes of de-colonisation and economic globalisation. In response, more INGOs have been founded and terminologies developed from 'overseas charities' through 'aid agencies' to 'non-government organisations'. This latter term, the one most widely in use today, signifies an operational shift from privately funded operations to ones that work more through both funding support from governments and through seeking to influence government policies, within restrictions that have been laid down in the UK since Tudor legislation.

Today, typically, a large UK INGO has programmes or partners in 50 to 80 countries with an administration and fundraising base in the UK. The UK INGO may be part of a network of parallel organisations like The Save the Children Alliance or Oxfam International. Operations are therefore much more complex than in the days when the Jebb sisters could arrange to send food and medicines to children starving during the Russian famine of the 1920s.

At the start of the twenty-first century, the 'British Overseas Aid Group' (BOAG) of larger INGOs consists of ActionAid, CAFOD (the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development), Christian Aid, Oxfam and Save the Children (now with a shorter official name). INGOs are one vital element of a large charitable or non-government sector of organisations that are privately run for the public good. These organisations now campaign for causes of social justice and fair trade, seeking to influence not only the UK government's international development programmes but also what is being taught in UK schools about what it means to be a young global citizen and what everyday life in countries of the still 'developing' world is really like.

This paper offers student teachers of citizenship three model lesson plans for bringing understanding of the role and work of the UK's major INGOs into their teaching practice. The author hopes that they will seek to develop these ideas, find out more for themselves about INGOs and get involved in helping to expand young people's frontiers of understanding as citizens of today's fast-changing world.

To find out more about UK INGOs visit their websites:

- [www.actionaid.org.uk](http://www.actionaid.org.uk)
- [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)
- [www.christian-aid.org.uk](http://www.christian-aid.org.uk)
- [www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk)
- [www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk)

# Curriculum focus

## ***Aid in emergencies***

*Suitable for use with 11 to 14-year-old pupils (Years seven to nine in England)*

The Citizenship Programme of Study at Key stage 3 in England requires *knowledge and understanding* of:

- the work of international voluntary groups (1f)
- the world as a global community, and the political, economic, environmental and social implications of this (1i)

and *skills* to:

- use their imagination to consider other people's experiences (3a).

This model lesson on emergency aid is based on the December 2004 Asian tsunami, but could be applied to any emergency situation in the world that is currently in the news. It can also be useful for cross-curricular learning, linking Citizenship to:

- **Geography** and **Science** themes of the natural environment
- **English** speaking and listening skills in communicating ideas.

### **Introduction**

The Asia tsunami disaster has had a big impact on school learning in the UK. Many schools have postponed lessons to organise fundraising events or set up special day events to deepen understanding of what happened and what the effects of the disaster have been. Education teams in the major UK INGOs have supported school learning, particularly through producing resources and model lessons.

### **Method**

1. Ask students to share what they know about the emergency situation, including what caused it and what the international response has been.
2. Use the websites listed on page one to collect and present information about how aid agencies (INGOs) are responding to the situation. This could be as individual pieces of work or a class display or assembly.
3. Extend learning about aid in emergencies through a focused study of a previous emergency. The INGOs have resources to support this, for example on [www.savethechildren.org.uk/scales](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scales) there is a role-play activity about food shortages during the civil war in Angola.
4. Share and list learning points that come out of this extended learning, including comparisons of INGO responses. Ask students if they think these organisations are getting better at responding to emergency situations in the world, and what they themselves would recommend doing to save lives and improve child and family welfare when emergencies occur.

### **Differentiation**

With mixed ability groups, follow-up tasks can vary between producing a simple *front page newspaper account* showing the emergency response to an *extended* essay on the emergency role of international non-government organisations.

### **Assessment**

The above writing tasks can be used as a basis for *individual teacher assessment*, grading the quality of expression and understanding of basic concepts. The group simulation activity can be *peer-assessed* by asking students to share their opinions about how well they and others took on the task.

# Whole School focus

## ***Campaigning on a global issue***

*Suitable for use with 11 to 16-year-old pupils (Years seven to eleven in England)*

The Citizenship Programme of Study at Key stage 4 in England requires *knowledge and understanding* of:

- the media's role in society, including the internet, in providing information and affecting opinion (1g)
- the wider issues and challenges of global interdependence and responsibility (1j)

and *skills* to:

- research a topical political, spiritual, moral, social or cultural issue, problem or event (2a)
- express, justify and defend orally and in writing a personal opinion about such issues, problems or events (2b).

This model lesson on global campaigning is based on the 2005 Make Poverty History campaign, which has been part of promoting action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) against poverty, gender discrimination, lack of education and health care by the year 2015. The lesson could be applied to any global campaigning issue. It can also be useful for cross-curricular learning, linking Citizenship to:

- **History** interpretation of source material about the contemporary world
- **English** speaking and listening skills in communicating ideas.

### **Introduction**

2005 has been an important year for the UK's role on the world stage. In July, world leaders came to Scotland for the G8 Summit of the richest nations and the UK took on the Presidency of the European Union. Many INGOs and other groups concerned with action against world poverty and the achievement of the MDGs have been taking campaign action to raise public awareness and influence government decisions.

### **Method**

1. Ask students in different year groups to prepare presentations for assemblies, the school newsletter or visual display around the school. These presentations could be based on the 2005 'Make poverty history' campaign co-ordinated by a wide network of non-government organisations (visit the website [www.makepovertyhistory.org.uk](http://www.makepovertyhistory.org.uk)).
2. Use the assemblies or class presentations to collect ideas about possible school action for the campaign. These could include individual or group poster making, as happened during the build up to the July 2005 G8 Summit when schools created large-scale white banners on the theme of child poverty through history (visit: [www.savethechildren.org.uk/mcph-education](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/mcph-education)).
3. Organise a poll or consensus-making activity to decide which activity idea will be best for everyone who wants to get involved to take part in. Publish the results of this and start to plan the action. This could be co-ordinated for the whole school by the existing school council or a specially chosen group of class representatives.
4. After the activity has been carried out, communicate the results to the whole school and wider community. This could be done by organising a local media event. This also gives scope for media analysis, for example of news coverage in the local and national press.
5. Evaluate the aims and impact of the campaigning activity and let one or more selected non-government organisations know about this.

### **Differentiation**

The campaign activity can be planned so students of different ages and abilities can all be involved. Tasks could range from designing, making and displaying posters for the campaign to hosting the media event with a public speaking role.

### **Assessment**

The end-of-activity evaluation can be used for *peer-led assessment* by asking students to design and complete evaluation forms on the event or share their comments more informally in small group discussions.

# Community focus

## ***Sharing ideas about rights***

*Suitable for use with 11 to 19-year-old pupils (Years seven to thirteen in England)*

The Citizenship Programme of Study at Key stages 3 and 4 in England requires *knowledge and understanding* of:

- human rights and responsibilities underpinning society (1a/1a) and *skills* to:
- contribute to group and exploratory class discussions (2c/2c)

This model lesson on sharing ideas about rights is based on global links and exchanges that have taken place between some schools in the UK and schools in other parts of the world. It could be applied to any topic area or issue that students would like to share ideas about, from hobbies, fashion, music to actions to improve local environments. It can also be useful for cross-curricular learning, linking Citizenship to:

- **Art and Design** tasks to express ideas creatively.
- **English** speaking and listening skills in communicating ideas.

### **Introduction**

There is a growing emphasis from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) on developing school links, through the global gateway website ([www.globalgateway.org](http://www.globalgateway.org)) and the world class education strategy. This model lesson offers the possibility of sharing immediate learning with a wider young people's audience in the "global commons". This does not draw on the expertise of the UK INGOs as directly as the two previous lessons, but they can be a source of support and information. INGOs may well have produced resources about a link country that can help to make it seem more real to learners in the UK.

### **Method**

1. Ask students to produce response materials on a current issue that concerns them or that they have recently carried out activities for. The example here is for learning about young people's rights, based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (information available at [www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)). Students can, for example, design a set of posters to show what they consider to be the most important rights for young people and ways in which they think all young people can get these rights. It will be best to think visually rather than verbally when preparing the materials, so these could be in the form of picture books, photograph albums or videos.
2. Extend the impact of this work by sharing the presentations with a wider audience. This could be in the local community, through participation in local events or media coverage. It could be with a European partner school or a school in another continent. The school may already have links or potential contact people in other places.
3. Arrange the exchange of visual response work about young people's rights (or whatever the chosen topic is). This is the 'global commons' where young people can meet virtually to share ideas about making the world a better place to live in, starting with their own local communities.
4. Plan ways to consolidate and continue the exchanges, either by going more deeply into the chosen issue area in response to ideas received from other communities or by agreeing to share responses to other issues of local importance. Communicate outcomes to a selected international non-government organisation to see if they are interested in giving support or developing the exchanges further.

### **Differentiation**

As with the previous whole school activity, this global sharing can be carried out by students of different ages and abilities taking on tasks that interest them.

### **Assessment**

This activity is good for *self-assessment*, with each participant completing a diary or record sheet of what they did and what they thought about the stages of the activity.