
LESSON 1

POVERTY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

These three one-hour lessons provide an introduction to poverty, an exploration of the human rights abuses associated with poverty, an overview of NGO efforts to tackle poverty and information on what action students can take. Each lesson comes with full lesson plans, worksheets and accompanying PowerPoint slide shows, along with film clips for Lessons 1 and 3.

About this lesson

Students review key definitions and information about poverty and human rights. They are then introduced to the concept that poverty is a human rights issue – illustrated by *Deep Sea – A community's fight against poverty and injustice* film. Students will watch this film, and study accompanying PowerPoint slides, before identifying human rights abuses associated with poverty that the residents have suffered. Refer to background notes on page 12 of the pack for more information about the Deep Sea story.

Learning objectives

Students will be able to:

- explain the key terms 'poverty' and 'human rights';
- identify the human rights abuses associated with poverty and suffered by residents of the Deep Sea community.

Prior learning

This lesson assumes some prior learning about poverty and human rights. The expert exchange activity may recap prior learning or provide a quick introduction to key concepts and facts that could be explored in more detail in a follow up lesson.

Resources required

Resource sheet 1 – *Expert information on poverty* (one per pair, half of class)
Resource sheet 2 – *Expert information on human rights* (one per pair, other half of class)
Resource sheet 3 – *Deep Sea teacher notes*
Worksheet 1 – *Key terms* (one per student)
Worksheet 2 – *Deep Sea case study* (one per student) – to also be used in Lesson 2.
PowerPoint – *Poverty and human rights – Lesson 1*
Film: *Deep Sea – A community's fight against poverty and injustice*

How to prepare

Set up the room so that there are six clusters of tables.

Glossary

Swahili words used in the film:

Githeri – basic maize (corn) and beef stew

Ugali – an East African cornmeal dish

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Lesson plan

Time	Introduction	Resources
0-5 minutes	Ask students to answer the question on slide 2, jotting down ideas and images: when you hear the word 'poverty', what thoughts, keywords, images come to mind? Students share their ideas in pairs. Then each pair shares with another pair. Clarify the learning objectives.	Lesson 1 Poverty and Human rights PPT slides 1-3
Activities		
5-30 minutes	<p>1. Expert exchange</p> <p>Explain that in this activity students will be introduced to key ideas about 'poverty' and 'human rights'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the class to get into pairs. • Label half of the pairs 'poverty experts' and the other half 'human rights experts'. • Hand out the relevant Resource sheets 1 or 2 to each pair, along with <i>Key terms</i> (worksheet 1) to record information on. • Talk through the activities on slides 4-6. Allow 10 minutes for students to prepare and 15 minutes for students to share. • If time allows, ask students to feedback their findings. 	<p><i>Expert information on poverty</i> (resource sheet 1) – one per pair for half the class; <i>Expert information on human rights</i> (resource sheet 2) – one per pair for the other half of the class</p> <p><i>Key terms</i> (worksheet 1) – one per student</p> <p>PPT slides 4-6</p>
30-55 minutes	<p>2. Poverty and human rights</p> <p>Clarify that poverty isn't just about a lack of money. Poverty is a denial of basic needs and fundamental rights. Work through the four key features of poverty described on slide 7 to explain this in more detail.</p> <p>Tell the class that they are now going to watch a case study of absolute poverty from Nairobi, Kenya, where residents tell of their fight for human rights. Go through slides 8-9. Hand out <i>Deep Sea case study</i> worksheet 2 and explain the task: to identify examples of human rights abuses associated with poverty in the Deep Sea community (column 1).</p> <p>At the end of the film give students the opportunity to finish off worksheet 2, column 1 (column 2 to be completed in Lesson 2). Invite students to talk about their examples. See <i>Deep Sea teacher notes</i> (resource sheet 3) for suggested answers.</p>	<p><i>Deep Sea case study</i> (worksheet 3); <i>Deep Sea teacher notes</i> (resource sheet 3)</p> <p>FILM: <i>Deep Sea – A community's fight against poverty and injustice</i> (13 minutes)</p> <p>PPT slides 7-9</p>
55-60 minutes	<p>Plenary</p> <p>To consolidate learning, students should do the hot seating activity in pairs. Ask students to make up three questions based on what they have learnt during this lesson (from the expert exchange and <i>Deep Sea</i> film). Students should pair up and take it in turns to ask each other questions.</p>	PPT slides 10-11

LESSON 1 RESOURCE SHEET 1

EXPERT INFORMATION ON POVERTY

How is poverty defined?

There are many definitions of poverty. However, most modern definitions recognise that poverty involves not just a lack of income and/or resources, but also exclusion from the opportunities available to others in society.

Relative poverty

Where income levels and resources are significantly (eg 60 per cent) below the national average, making it impossible to have a standard of living considered acceptable in the society in which people live. People living in relative poverty may experience unemployment, low income, poor housing, inadequate health care and barriers to learning, culture, sport and recreation, along with social exclusion.

Absolute poverty

A condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities (eg toilets), health care, shelter, education and information (eg access to newspapers, radios, televisions, computers). Absolute poverty is often measured in terms of income – living on less than \$1.25 (approximately 76p) a day. However, it depends not only on income but also on access to services (eg legal, health, social and financial services). People living in absolute poverty are often alienated from mainstream society and are more susceptible to violence.

Relative poverty case study

Rose is a single parent with three boys aged under 17 living at home. She is registered disabled and receives incapacity benefit and disability living allowance. She also suffers from chronic depression and she and all her boys have asthma. The house is unsuitable for the family as it is on three levels. She finds the upkeep difficult.

'I've been in this house for 14 years and it's never been wallpapered from the day I moved in – no central-heating and no possibility of me getting carpets or lino as it's too expensive. I can't get anyone to decorate, I can't afford it.'

Rose spends £25 a week on gas and electricity but the house is still cold and this is affecting the family's health.

'Draughts come through the doors and it affects everyone in the house here because we're constantly cold all the time. It's frozen, we've only got the gas fire, there's nothing in the rooms so you have to get wrapped up at night because it's so cold.'

Source: *It doesn't happen here*, Barnardo's Scotland Executive summary briefing, 2007

Absolute poverty case study

Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world, with more than half of its population living on less than \$1 a day.

In Central Malawi, the Phiri family begins its day at 4.30am – without breakfast. In a maize field, they use a handmade hoe to till the overworked soil. The soil is eroded so the Phiri family spent \$15 on a bag of fertilizer that they hope will last them the year. Friends and family helped them purchase it.

Running out of food is common in Malawi. Crops often fail when rains fail to arrive. A few months earlier, the Phiri family had nothing to eat but unripe mangoes, which made them sick. Sometimes they even resort to eating poisonous plant roots.

The Phiri's have aspirations beyond scrimping and surviving. The daughter, Martha, wants to be a reporter, but she knows that her family will probably never have the money to send her for the training.

In the evening, the family splurges 35 cents on a fish dinner to honour a guest. They have spent a total \$1.25 on this day. But the day's income was only 94 cents, including the 63 cents they received from relatives to help them out.

Source: *Living on a dollar a day in Malawi* by Suzanne Marmion, 1 October 2006, www.npr.org

LESSON 1 RESOURCE SHEET 2

EXPERT INFORMATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

What are human rights?

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. They ensure people can live freely and are able to flourish, reach their potential and participate in society. They ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. You have human rights simply because you are human and they cannot be taken away.

Human rights are underpinned by core values such as fairness, respect, equality and freedom. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the most famous and most important of all human rights frameworks in the world. Below is a selection of articles from the UDHR:

Article 5: No one should be subjected to torture

Article 11: Everyone has a right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law

Article 19: Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Article 25: Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for their health and wellbeing

Article 26: Everyone has the right to an education

The UDHR is not a law. However, many international laws (sometimes called 'Conventions') have been built on the principles that were laid down in the UDHR. Examples of international human rights laws include, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which protects the rights of people under 18 years old and the UN Convention on Torture, which protects individuals from torture and other cruel treatment. UN Committees monitor how well countries are following laws such as these.

Human rights case studies

Since February 2003, members of women's rights organisation **Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA)** have been repeatedly arrested while taking part in peaceful demonstrations against the worsening social, economic and human rights situation in Zimbabwe. They have often been denied access to food, lawyers and medical care while in detention.

Jenni Williams, national coordinator of Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA), has been arrested 32 times since 2003. Despite the adversity, WOZA members continue to show great resilience and bravery.

Patrick Obinna Okoroafor was 14 when he was arrested in 1995. He has now been in prison for 14 years – half of his lifetime. Patrick was initially sentenced to death for robbery. In 2001, when a Nigerian High Court judgement declared his death sentence to be illegal, his sentence was changed to one of indefinite detention 'during the pleasure of the governor' of Imo State. On 29 May 2009, Patrick's sentence was reduced to 10 years imprisonment, starting immediately.

If Patrick completes his sentence he will have spent a total of 24 years in prison – for a crime he says he did not commit. Besides Patrick's age at the time of arrest, there were many irregularities in his trial and subsequent detention. He also alleges that he was tortured.

Source: www.amnesty.org.uk

LESSON 1 RESOURCE SHEET 3

DEEP SEA TEACHER NOTES

Use this sheet to check student responses and to support their understanding. Some student examples may fit into more than one category. Point out that this is because many human rights are interconnected.

	Examples in the Deep Sea community	What could the Kenyan government and other organisations do to protect human rights?
DEPRIVATION Denial of the right to an adequate standard of living, eg food, shelter, health care, education.	No direct access to clean water; little money; no sanitation; poor health and healthcare; poor housing; little electricity; little food; limited education.	Kenyan government could improve their living conditions, such as collect rubbish and maintain the sewage system as they do for surrounding communities; aid from organisations could be provided to improve living conditions to build wells, provide sewage systems, provide food/farmland to grow crops.
INSECURITY Denial of the right to physical security, eg protection against police brutality, gender violence and gun crime.	Domestic violence; forced evictions; police and government brutality during forced evictions; residents hurt whilst protesting (including children).	Organisations could work with the community to educate people about domestic violence and to provide support for victims; police and government could put an end to the forced evictions and provide secure shelter for the residents; the government could provide guidelines for the police to regulate their behaviour, ensuring that individuals are brought to justice for any violent acts committed.
POWERLESSNESS Denial of the right to freedom of expression, to protest and to influence politics. Denial of the right to freedom of information.	Not allowed to protest; denied information on who is laying claim to the land; denied the opportunity to speak to the authorities to try and work out a solution.	The government could allow peaceful protest; through education programmes, the residents could become more aware of their legal rights in terms of the land; the government could agree to meet with and listen to the community to try to reach a solution; other organisations could campaign to persuade the government to listen to community demands.
EXCLUSION Denial of the right to participate fully in society. Denial of the right to be free from discrimination and to be treated equally.	Few opportunities for work and to develop skills; 'slum' residents are excluded from surrounding affluent communities.	Work with the government and other organisations to provide residents with the skills they need to get jobs; government and other organisations could improve the living conditions, so that there would be less inequality between rich and poor in Nairobi.

For each possible action, please emphasise to students that it is vital for the community to be fully involved in any decisions that will affect their lives. Also consider how different people in the community need to be involved, eg women, children, people with disabilities. Communities ought to take the lead role in decision-making and action, with the assistance of key local and international organisations.

LESSON 1 **WORKSHEET 1**

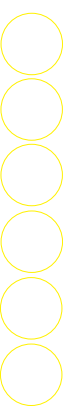
KEY TERMS

- Read your *Expert information* sheet and identify key information.
- Record this information below in the form of key words, pictures and diagrams.
- Join with another 'expert' and record what they teach you in one of the boxes below.

Name: _____

Poverty

Human rights



LESSON 1 WORKSHEET 2

DEEP SEA CASE STUDY

Name: _____

	Examples in the Deep Sea community	What could the Kenyan government and other organisations do to protect human rights?
<p>DEPRIVATION Denial of the right to an adequate standard of living, eg food, shelter, health care, education.</p>		
<p>INSECURITY Denial of the right to physical security, eg protection against police brutality, gender violence and gun crime.</p>		
<p>POWERLESSNESS Denial of the right to freedom of expression, to protest and to influence politics. Denial of the right to freedom of information.</p>		
<p>EXCLUSION Denial of the right to participate fully in society. Denial of the right to be free from discrimination and to be treated equally.</p>		

