

A PERFECT WORLD?

Confirmation resource 1 – Leaders' notes

A 60-90 minute session for a Confirmation group to explore justice in the world and our role as Christians to play our part in bringing about God's Kingdom on earth. Use the whole session or choose parts to fit with your programme, for example, with the nature of God or discipleship.

You will need:

- *Imperfect World?* station cards from cafod.org.uk/confirmation
- Materials for the game
- *God and justice* quote cards from cafod.org.uk/confirmation
- Large sheets of paper and pens
- *Wonderful World* and *As it is in Heaven* music (optional).



If only 7 mins

Present young people with a series of quick-fire choices. Ask them to decide quickly which would make the world perfect to them. They could show their choice by moving to one side of the room for one option and the other for the second option. Start with easier choices then make them more serious or difficult. Keep it quick and the energy high!

The world would be perfect (for you) if ...

- You could only eat pizza /eat ice cream?
- You only had PE lessons/ Geography lessons?
- You could see Chelsea/[Other] win the Champions league?
- You could get the latest iphone / the latest games console?
- You could only go to school /be on holiday?
- You could travel to the US /travel to Australia?
- Young people could vote for the government – yes or no?
- There was no more war or no more hunger?
- Everyone had a home or everyone had job?
- Everyone had access to healthcare or everyone had access to education?



Debrief briefly after each question, or cover some of them at the end. Ask which choices were difficult. Remind that we often have choices that other people across the world do not have. Also, that our choices impact others.

Imperfect world? game 30-45 mins

A short simulation game, to help young people understand some of the injustices experienced by communities CAFOD works with in Brazil. It is designed to develop empathy, by experiencing something of injustice.

(Alternatives: *Climate action game* or *I should be so lucky sweets game*.)

Instructions

Divide the young people into groups of three to five. Explain that for the next 30-45 minutes they are going to be a family group who have to move from their home in a rural area in Brazil to a *favela* (shanty town) in São Paulo. They will have up to four challenges to complete.

Set up the four challenges as different 'stations' around your space. If you have a big group, you may need to double-up the stations. If you have less time, each group could just do two or three stations. Alternatively, choose one station to do as an icebreaker. Allow seven to ten minutes per station, then move each group along until each group has done all stations, or as many as you have time for.

Ideally, have a leader at each station. At each station the group should read the scenario, do the challenge then discuss the questions.



Station 1 Leave home

Set up: you will need a copy of *Station one card* and ten or more blown-up balloons, labelled with words such as: animals, passport or identity card, clothes, food for a week, water for two days, bucket, mobile phone, phone charger, medicine for Dad's heart condition, three year old sister's teddy, Bible that Gran gave me, photos, mirror, blankets, tool kit, toiletries, \$20. Or use real items instead of balloons. Label a 10-metre path to walk down carrying the balloons.

How to play: give out *Station one card*, and time to read it. Give the group three minutes to decide which balloons to take and how the nominated individual will carry them. S/he carries the chosen balloons down the 10-metre path. Carrying by holding the knot is not allowed, neither is deflating them! Confiscate dropped balloons.

Afterwards, give a couple of minutes to:

- Was it hard or easy to choose what to take?
- Which items are most practical on long journeys?
- How did you decide what to take?

Make it harder: people migrating away from their home often have limited resilience and finances. They may not have enough money for shelter, medicine or food. They may be the victims of crime. Make the path an obstacle course or remove some balloons, such as food, water, medicine.

Station 2 Build a shelter

Set up: you will need a copy of *Station two card* and a selection of materials to make homes with, eg. cardboard boxes, newspapers, tarpaulin, bamboo sticks, string/rope, etc.

Divide the materials between groups, or use the same ones and dismantle shelters between constructions, ready for the next group.

How to play: give out *Station two card*, and time to read it. Give the group five minutes to make a shelter into which their whole group will fit. After five minutes, test they can all fit in. You may like to 'test' further with wind (fan/hairdryer) or rain (water). Then spend a couple of minutes discussing the debriefing questions:

- How do you feel now about being in the city?
- What else do you need to create a home?
- What challenges do you face?

Make it harder: as soon as the shelter is built, tell them to get out and leave, or 'evict' them. Often those who live in *favelas* do not have any legal titles over the land, so can be evicted at any time. Thousands of families in Brazil were evicted from their homes to make way for the construction of stadiums prior to the 2014 World Cup.

Station 3 Discrimination

Set up: you will need a copy of *Station three card*, a ball, a balloon and a target, eg. a hoop, cardboard box or plastic bin.

How to play: give out *Station three card* and time to read. Divide the group into two teams – one representing those living in the *favela*, the other representing the wider community of São Paulo.

Give each team five throws (team members take turns). Give the team representing the *favela* residents a balloon. They will be at a disadvantage. The other team uses the ball. The team with the highest score wins a prize, eg. Fairtrade chocolate.

Afterwards discuss:

- How did having a ball/balloon make you feel?
- What if the discrimination was about something more serious, like whether you got a job or could go to school?
- What could the family you are representing do to stop the discrimination?

Make it harder: those living in *favelas* often face stigma. Show further preference to the other team by cheering them on and ignoring those representing the *favela* residents or alter the distance each team throws or the number of throws given.

Station 4 Work

Set up: you will need a copy of *Station four card* and some recycling materials, eg paper, plastic bottles, cardboard tubes and boxes, decorating materials, tape and scissors.

Alternatively, provide ingredients for a quick, simple no-bake dish, eg. decorating biscuits or making wraps. Or provide the ingredients and recipe for Brazilian sweet biscuits (video at cafod.org.uk). You will need 'currency' to 'buy' the products made, eg. Fairtrade chocolate coins.

How to play: give *Station four card* and time to read. Give the group five minutes to create an item from recycled materials or some food items to sell. Be prepared to 'buy' them for a nominal sum. You decide whether what they have made is of good enough quality! You have the power.

Afterwards discuss:

- What skills did you need to use?
- Was your item easy to sell?
- What will you spend your earnings on?

Make it harder: those working in the informal sector do not have the security of paid time off for being ill. They may not be able to afford healthcare. Halfway through, explain that half the group have become ill, so cannot work. They should go and sit or lie down quietly at the side for the rest of the activity.

**Debrief 10–15 mins**

It is really important to debrief properly so that the activity is more than just a game. Having done small debriefs of each challenge, allow young people to discuss their whole experience and link it to the concept of justice. You could use some of these prompt questions:

- How did you feel at different points in the game (eg. when you had to choose what to take, had limited resources to build your home, faced discrimination in the ball game or had to make and sell an item from recycled materials)?
- What does justice/injustice mean?
- What injustices did you face?
- How did you react to the justice/injustice that you experienced?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What would you say to, or ask, people who really live in a favela?

You could print these questions on different pieces of paper, asking pairs to take turns in choosing and discussing a question.

Remind that, although this was a game, some of the issues are faced by people in real life. Share the following information about Brazil.

CAFOD in Brazil

CAFOD has worked in Brazil since 1968. Brazil is in the top six economies in the world, yet around 12 million people live in *favelas*. This is nearly one and a half times the population of Greater London. People in *favelas* have few rights. Despite progress, they face many problems such as prejudice and discrimination, crime and violence, drug abuse, lack of access to education and healthcare, and danger of eviction.



However, some of CAFOD's partner organisations are doing a lot to help. For example, MDF (Movement for the Defence of Favela residents) in São Paulo works out what the key issues are for each family, such as water, electricity, sewerage and eviction. It helps communities to work with local authorities, government and businesses to improve living conditions for thousands of families. Infrastructure in *favelas* has increased significantly in the last ten years. In a recent survey, 80% of *favela* residents said they liked the community where they lived (rionwatch.org/?p=6913).

Find out more about MDF and life in the *favelas* of São Paulo by watching Maristely's story video at CAFOD's Youtube.

God and justice 5–10 mins

This activity explores God's justice, through scripture and Church teaching. Copy the *God and justice quote cards*. Either enlarge them and put them in the middle of your group, or cut them and put them in a hat. Make one for each young person. You may like to laminate the quote cards for young people to keep.

Invite the young people to choose a quote and quietly think about what it says to them today. Then offer them the opportunity to share their thoughts with another person. Finally, invite anyone who wishes to share their quote and what it means to them with the group. Or, ask each person to add to a poster a word or phrase that sums up their quote.



Explain that justice is fairness and equality, and more than that. Justice is making sure that all people are treated with dignity and respect, as part of God's creation. Justice doesn't only mean we share what we have, but that we restore to others what is rightfully theirs.

Building a 'just world' is playing our part in bringing God's Kingdom to earth, doing what we can to renew and restore creation. In receiving Confirmation, we commit to following Jesus' example and living as Christians. We accept the gift of the Holy Spirit to give us the courage and skills to live out this challenging task.

**Perfect world? 10 mins+**

This activity encourages young people to gather ideas from the previous activities and envisage a perfect community. Ask young people to gather into the small groups from earlier. Provide each group with a large piece of paper and coloured pens.

Explain that they have been travelling through space, light-years from earth, but their space ship has had a catastrophic computer malfunction. They have just done an emergency landing on an uninhabited planet. They are safe, but have no way to return to earth. They have decided to start a community on the new planet.

Explain that, taking everything from this session into account, the groups have five to seven minutes to design their perfect new community.

Challenge them to write a ten point charter explaining how people will treat each other. With more time, they can think about the buildings, what laws there will be and what will happen if someone becomes ill. Perhaps play *Wonderful world* by Louis Armstrong or Eva Cassidy during this activity. Allow each group one minute to feed back their ideas for a perfect new community.

**Prayer 5 mins**

Pray the Our Father; perhaps say a line each, with a pause for reflection between each line. You could listen to *As it is in heaven* by Matt Maher. Ask for God's blessing on the group as you work to reflect God's Kingdom of justice on earth.

What shall we do next?

- *Faith in action and the Holy Spirit* session.
- *Revolutionary service challenge*.
- Young people can find lots of ways to work for justice at cafod.org.uk