

Ending Poverty, Enriching Children

INSPIRE. ACT. CHANGE.

**The Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Fourth Forum
16th – 19th June, 2012, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**



Consultations with Children on Poverty

Thanks to all committed GNRC members who undertook the consultations in the regions to ensure children's full participation. This compilation shows the outcomes and suggestion for concrete actions by children, which is only part of the rich reports from the regions. A copy of the full reports will be available at the meeting of the Organizing Committee.

Introduction

Driven by its commitment to ensuring children's right to participate and be heard in all matters affecting them - as grounded on art 12 of the CRC, the GNRC Coordinators agreed to conduct national consultations with children active in the network within each of the GNRC regions.

Purpose:

- to provide a space for children to acknowledge the way poverty is affecting children in their communities and voice their needs and ideas for action to change the situation
- to capture the concrete initiatives and steps/actions children will come up with to address poverty affecting children in their communities
- to further develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world's key challenges to end poverty affecting children

Methodology: Through a guided reflection and exploration, and an engaging dialogue among themselves and with members of their community, children are expected to express their views on how poverty affecting children in their local context and what changes should take place in order to transform those negative situations. As a result of the process they should be encouraged to identify how they can also contribute to bring about positive changes.

Expected Outcome:

The voices and input from children could be taken into account when finalizing the content and the program of the Forum and be used as support visuals during the Forum itself. It could provide valuable inputs for the discussions to be held during the Forum and enhance the participation and visibility of children at the Forum.

Consultations with children were held in 18 countries and the outcomes are compiled in this document. The report from Portugal is still missing and will be added later. The suggested interactive and participatory methodologies based on the Learning Process in the Learning to Live Together manual were used in some countries. Others used more traditional methodologies and the outcomes vary subject to the methodologies used. The compilation is designed to cover the summary of the children's input and recommendations and the quotes from children (where available) from each country. The full reports of each of the consultations will be available in hard copy at the Organizing Committee meeting for reference and consultation. In order for the whole GNRC community to get inspired by the outcomes of consultations, relevant information will be shared through the GNRC website and Fourth Forum newsletter.

A brief summary report on a brainstorming meeting on poverty which was initiated and organized by four youths of Myochikai, who have participated in the past forums or GNRC youth meetings, is attached at the end of the compilation. This is the preparation by the youth who will take the initiative of organizing the consultation with children in response to the call of the Forum Organizing Committee. A comprehensive report is available in Japanese.



- Total of 55 participants.
- Presence of children and young people aged from 12 to 18 years
- Three religious communities were represented:
 - Christian
 - Hindu
 - Islamic

Outcomes...

- Meaning of poverty to the Children
The two issues children recalled as soon as poverty was mentioned was **HUNGER & people begging for help**
- And how do they experience it?
Some said they have experienced it directly as they came from families below poverty line, some said they experienced it temporarily when they undertook voluntary fasts. Some said they experiences it indirectly while observing their friends or interacting with poor families.
- How is poverty present/experienced by children in their local context?
Again **hunger & deprivation** was constantly refereed to as they identified local situations affected by poverty...one eg : the number of children in government schools whose only full meal is the mid day noon meal provided by the government.
- Child rights & needs: what basic rights are they enjoying and which they are not?
The common rights identified enjoyed by children as identified by the participants include : right to play, right to opinion, right to food, right to education, care of disabled children
The rights they thought were violated by:
Hunger, violence against children, child marriage, lack of protection & secure environment.
- What are the reasons for this situation?
Poverty, Illiteracy , Corruption, high risk behavior including drinking, addictive substances, Apathy & lack of enthusiasm, harmful cultural practices like dowry, misplaced priorities.

- Why are there children suffering from poverty?
Because they are born into poor families, societal situations and lack of care, lack of awareness amongst parents on health & education, social stigma.
- What needs to happen for poverty to end?
Children in Poverty have to provide access to quality education & attention to prevent drop outs, child labour, child marriage, health care and above all have to provide them with a loving & dignified environment.
- What do children wish to see happening to change the situation?
A hunger free world, a world where children can study & be free of poverty, where young people will not be in conflict with law as well be not sexually exploited.
The children wish to be involved in affairs of the familyand to be supported when they want to do something.
- What can Children do for that change to happen?
They want to undertake initiatives of their own for the community, they hope to improve financial literacy & savings amongst themselves, they will make other children more aware about the importance of education and do concrete interventions like the food bank, etc.

Children's quotes...

- *"I felt hunger only when I fasted for a social cause and understood the pain of people in poverty. When I grow up I will be a doctor and serve the poor." – Ms.Keerthana, 13years old*
- *"We collected rice for those in poverty especially those living with HIV/AIDS. We, as a group of children are working towards such solution for poverty .if more children elsewhere do the same, we can address poverty effectively". – Mr.Arunkumar, 14years*
- *"Poverty is a cycle, where it leads to itself" – Mr. Karthikraja 13years old*
- *"In our village poverty causes school dropouts, child labour, early marriage and forces people into stealing. Now I want to find the solution for this situation" -Ms.Nivedhita, 14years*





- Total of 60 participants
- Presence of children and young people aged 12 to 18 years
- Four religious communities were represented:
 - Christian
 - Muslim
 - Buddhists
 - Hindus

Outcomes...

Before the consultation on Saturday children were shown videos and power point picture on how Nepal has to suffer due to poverty. A group of student from Hindu Vidyapeeth - Nepal School visited the nearby slum area to understand better how people are suffering. **Stela Shrestha**, one of the students who went to slum area says, 'it made me feel very sad to learn about these people as they have very bitter life. I promise not to waste food after seeing the misery of these people.' It was a silent walk through the slum area as we did not want to hurt the core of the heart of the same human with asymmetrical opportunity. Highlight on the theme of the program of the day by Jagannath Kandel with reference of Absolute and Relative poverty. Ghanshyam Yogi illustrated few bitter reality of the Nepalese rural poverty. Vishnu Bhakta Dangi introduced GNRC and its activities. Through a power point presentation he shared messages of 'No accurate parameters of happiness'. There was a meditation session (Self reflection) with message of putting one in other's shoes where participants were given time to reflect after the session of putting oneself in other's shoes. 'Take time to hear; it's the source of intelligence,' Vishnu Bhakta Dangi further illustrated through power point, 'No religion wants its devotees to fight in the name of religion.'

Children's quotes...

- *Ms. Sudeeksha Basyal, Grade 8*
Poverty's physical level can be minimized, so we should all work together to reduce it.
- *Ms. Srijana Pokhrel, grade 8*
We should not only learn that poverty is extreme form of violence but we should learn the root cause of the poverty and eradicate it.
- *Mr. Kishor Shahi, grade 7*
There could be many forms and causes of violence, I believe education which poor deprives leads to increasing violence as education can provide knowledge enhancing the mindset of the people.
- *Mr. Bibek Yogi, grade 9*
One of the best ways to reduce violence is to provide rights equally to both men and women.
- *Mr. Umanga Dahal, grade 9*
There should be balance between the rich and the poor as lack of opportunity increases poverty.
- *Ms. Riya Subedi, grade 7*
Differences in thought can generate war and war can lead to poverty. So, we need to settle down the variation on thoughts making common ground for humanity and need to work united.
- *Ms. Stela Shrestha, grade 9*
Government should provide employment to its people so that poverty can be reduced.





Outcomes...

- Total of 16 participants
- Presence of children and young people aged 15 to 18 years
- Three religious communities were represented:
 - Christian
 - Buddhists
 - Hindus

- Message given – You should not mock people and bully them because of poverty. That would affect them mentally. We should live in harmony the rich or the poor.
- ‘Education, values, discipline, morals, spirituality, people you hang out with might be components of poverty. Basically poverty is not only money.
- Unequal distribution of resources :
 - Causes : Salary gap & Education – If parents get a bigger salary the children get a better education and if they are poor not. Higher income people waste food.
 - Development is centered in one place such as Colombo
 - Class division and how it fuels slavery in work places. Big shots work less. The lower position workers do the work. Class division triggers slavery. Property ownership is also there.
 - Causes – class division, centred development, Income gap
 - Distribution of resources is bad
 - Development of rural areas is less
 - Labour of the country is not utilized to its full potential
 - Sanitary and health facilities not distributed well.

- Violence and War :
 - Effects – children becoming orphans and losing out on opportunities.
 - Missing out on education because of the War, Lives getting destroyed, and losing out opportunities, chemicals from war making children sick, psychological effect of a drab desert environment. no future farming.
 - Causes : competitive leadership and conflict/ party leadership. Violent thoughts, environmental disasters connected to the war,
- Poor governance :
 - Effects : Education gap; not enough teachers because of governance. Not enough resources, disparity in distribution. Poor administration because other countries to interfere in governing. Forces of the powerful countries damage the culture.
 - Causes : Rural areas don't get enough teachers because of governance.
 - Open/Free economy makes it easy for investors to come here and monopolize. Takes away the opportunities of Sri Lanka.
 - Strategic and planning disparities in Sri Lankan governance. Useless policies and politicians trying to make profit ruining all economy.

Children's quotes...

- *The world of children should be beautiful but sometimes not. I am sad because some children are used as slaves and not getting an education. But happy because some children are happy and enjoy their lives.*
- *Child abuse : I felt sad and felt people should do things for them. But she felt lucky that she has a family.*
- *A bomb blast in Baghdad reminded me of our own war experiences and I thought they may have written songs about just as our people did – Mentioned a song. 'Ruduru sulange'.*
- *If we are not divided as races, we can be a rich country.*
- *Let children who have to work get free and they can learn and enjoy life do something about it.*
- *Even Japan was affected by world war but they are developed country. We did not go through that but we are still poor why is that?*
- *Indian slavery article makes me think that UN convention is not enough but we should implement those rules in provincial and country levels.*
- *We think of Africa when we think of poverty. Poverty is everywhere mostly in Asia pacific. I think it is because of corruption. The rich get poor to get into poverty. People are forced to adapt corruption because of poverty. One way to reduce poverty is reduce corruption.*
- *We as children should make beautiful world of children beautiful. Even though Buddah said : to make the world beautiful we should give everyone basic human rights such as residence , land. The government should make that possible. All parties should engage in poverty discussions and not only globally. to eradicate poverty.*





➤ Total of 20 participants

Outcomes...

- *Giving tuitions to the government institutions students in grade 1-5 in the villages or under develop areas nearby once or twice a week.*
- *To print some notebooks to sale with pictures of children and logo of GNRC youth, and from the profit will buy certain development books for children.*
- *Sign Hope hands for the children to the different villages to stop violence against girl child. (Also done this in our workshop).*
- *Interfaith games and events organizing for poor children.*



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA



- Total of 20 participants
- Presence of children and young people aged 11 to 20 years
- Three religious communities were represented:
 - Muslim
 - Catholic
 - Orthodox

Outcomes...

➤ ACHIEVED CONSULTATION OBJECTIVES

- The topic of poverty in Bosnia and Herzegovina is real but „subtle“, because no one talks about it. It entails. Most children suffer, and for the first time they have expressed their fears and attitude on the consultations that were never expressed before, for the simple reason that „they are children and this is the theme for the "Big", the adults“.
- The topic was a challenge for facilitators and for the participants, but the end result was unexpected. The present fears and containment in children have resulted in such a rich sharing of experiences and emotions, which did not leave anybody indifferent.
- Zejna, a twelve year old girl from Mostar, has defined poverty as „her personal need to beg, because her mother is sick and hungry“, so it means that she takes care of her mother, and her dreams, her opportunity to enjoy Childhood is now on "hold."
- Ivan, a thirteen year old boy, said that for him, poverty is „when they don't have parents“ which can conduce us to an indicator of poverty and the indifference of society. Ivan still wonders „why his dreams are gone“, and if he is guilty of anything.
- created a dialogue in the context of "poverty in Bosnia and Herzegovina" and discover what that affects them all, and they identified the problem, and propose potential solutions
- I want to be (child's dream Declaration in BiH) symbolically called "No Limit my dreams!"

Children's quotes...

- *“We want laugh, happiness, happy childhood”*
- *“Workshops, consultations are our fortune today but we want more, we want a brighter future”*
- *“The happiest man is one who makes more people happy”*
- *“We want peace and security, better living conditions, standard”*
- *“We want conditions for education, food and clothing, home and family and a place to play”*





Outcomes...

Contributions :

- The incapability to access basic human needs such as food, clean water, health services, shelter, clothing etc.
- Over 100 million children worldwide are living without shelter
- Most victims of Poverty, dying in masses from hunger are children and women.
- Poor nutrition from Poverty results in major diseases with no access to health services. Poor nutrition affects the development of children contributing to poor performance in educational environments. Additionally, educational systems for children and access to quality education are reduced.
- Poverty accelerates conflicts and wars when people scramble for resources.
- Poverty eradication should focus on providing land to poor people since use of land is the main tool in combatting poverty.
- Tanzania is worsening in aspects of combatting poverty -the difference between the rich and the poor is high and if not handled could lead to conflicts
- Habit of Tanzanians against reading needs to be changed.

- 79 Peace Clubbers
- Presence of children and young people aged 14 to 18 years
- Two religious communities were represented:
 - Christian
 - Muslim

Children's quotes...

➤ Quotations from children (translated in to English)

Nickson Sunday (Azania Secondary School)

- It is not true that our poverty is caused by laziness of African people, history shows Africans were made slaves working but not gaining the rewards.*
- The problem here is how the national cake is distributed, it should be distributed for all and our industries should be revived.*
- The studies in all levels should be conducted in our national language, international language hinders us much.*
- The infrastructure rehabilitation should be highly prioritized.*

Nasra Salehe (Zanaki Secondary School)

We have the problem of understanding our rights which goes at par with our responsibilities, in our schools for instance, students are complaining of a lot of things, but themselves are failing even to clean their toilets which is their duty.

Bakar (Benjamin Mkapa Secondary School)

We are failing in focusing and emphasizing in imparting education to our children (prepare them well since childhood). In Japan, children are equipped and become able to be employed when they reach 15 years of age.

Zuberi Juma (Mnazi Mmoja Secondary School)

We should make sure ourselves that each and every person is paying all taxes required, and then make proper follow-up on the usage of our taxes.

KENYA, UGANDA AND SOMALIA



- Total of 700 participants
- Presence of children and young people aged 14 to 18 years
- Two religious communities were represented:
 - Christian
 - Muslim

Outcomes...

➤ Contributions

- Violent conflict is a major cause of poverty. Poverty also caused violence. IT is a vicious cycle.
- When parents cannot meet the needs of their children they react through insulting and physically abusing their children.
- Children from poor families have not been able to perform well in school compared to those from more endowed families due to long absence from school and low concentration levels.
- Number of Street children increases under circumstances of high poverty levels
- Due to lack of protection street children suffer all forms of abuse.
- Corruption in government has prevented children from accessing basic needs like health services, food, education etc

Children's quotes...

- Quotations from children (translated in to English)
 - **Brenda Anena (Gulu, Uganda)**
I applied for funds to support my High school education from a funding institution, yet even with my exemplary performance of a First Grade, I did not succeed. It seems poor children are not listened to and no one speaks for them.
 - **Ali Hassan Nune (Somalia)**
I see other children wearing good clothes, I wish I could be like them but I have no parents to support me and even what to eat is a problem. Adults must try to stop wars because they affect innocent children.
 - **Hosea Kiplimo (Kenya)**
Drunkardness has made parents not to care about their children's needs. Governments needs to help by burning alcohol intake

ARGENTINA



- **Total of 60 participants**
- **Presence of children and young people aged between 10 to 21 years**

Outcomes...

Outcomes

What do you think of poverty?

- I hate poverty, I want to study to progress . I want to be a lawyer or a professor of mathematics, have my house, kids, car, labor. It's ugly to be poor.
 - I do not want to be neither poor nor rich, I want my money ... to have my house, my things, children.
 - I wish I had a good job, and buy things for my house at least buy products to help.
 - Some young people in our group say that in our country there is poverty and suffering on all the natives of our country.
 - It also affects people in the neighborhoods of villas. It shows in food, in schools, not so much access to technology.
 - Young people have not covered all the rights they deserve.
 - For example, there are no health facilities or hospitals that cover the right to health in the way it should be. We have the need for better education in schools.
 - We need more security, better work. Work is appreciated and our time too.
 - A better home environment, with greater harmony.
- Sport-spaces are lacking.

Is it done everything possible to eradicate poverty?

- No, the politicians just do their job, they don't deal with everything.
- They suck because I do not know where they live, have a silver band there must be justice for the kids.
- Have interest ... but a judge earns \$ 23,000 per month, and a deputy, \$ 35,000 per month and we earn \$ 1200
- Many times they prioritize access to technology (phones, netbooks, etc.) but not to good nutrition and /or education.
- The government says that there is no poverty because they gave notebook in some schools, but then most do not have internet access or how to pay.
- it is convenient for the government that young people take drugs, have robberies, are not educated, and that there isn't good education because then we DO NOT think, which is what they want!
- The government does not seek equality for all.

Mention 5 or 6 things that would allow to identify a poor.

- Lack of food. The rubbish for food.
- Not having a house, or live in a box ...
- Lack of hygiene affects the health ...
- Collect little work or no work worthy.
- Not having proper education (not just giving the school).

What is the major cause of poverty?

- Inequality.
- Having a poor family ... you do not study ...you do not have work you have no money you have no food ... !This is a chain of poverty ...
- Having a poor family but bad job you can study but you will still in poverty ...
- Problems in the country ... such as war.

Children's quotes...

If you were President ... could you do something to eradicate poverty?

I would give houses.

- *Would talk to a company to provide work for those who do not study ... and force them to consider.*
- *I would go to the bottom of the neighborhood ... and make homes.*

Video available at this link

<http://gnrc-argentina.blogspot.com/2012/02/mensaje-de-adolfo-perez-esquivel-para.html>



- Total of 15 participants
- Presence of children between 7 and 13

Outcomes...

Meaning of Poverty:

"This picture means poverty because people have become homeless."

"This picture means poverty because after the earthquake, people became homeless, without clothes and so is poverty."

"This picture means poverty because forests are burning and will not have any tree later."

"This picture means poverty because the grandmother is in a foundation and earthquakes happen when you drop the house and go to foundations and eat delicious food."

"This picture means poverty because sometimes there are fights in the houses and the people leave the house and then left homeless and have to be abandoned sleeping in the street."

"This picture means poverty because my mom went to Africa and there children had nothing to eat, had no shoes or husks like us, they used bottles instead of shoes and had to seek food in the garbage"

"This picture means poverty because they have nothing to eat"

"This picture means poverty, because they were locked, if came out the mine could die, and having nothing to eat in the mine"

"This picture means poverty because they have no shoes, his clothes torn, and their faces are sad."

Children's quotes...

How they would change the situation of poverty

"In order not to burn the forests and trees, you should go to turn them off and burning trees. Also not to do campfires, do not play with fire, so as not to ignite the trees. "

"The president has to give them homes, food and other things, so I send a letter to the president to help people ... but not only the president but they also all people, helping for example when they have clothes instead of give away give to people who do not have and are poor "

"I would trade it with friends ... would invite to my house to feed them and for them to sleep, and buy them clothes,"





Outcomes...

- **Total of 20 participants**
- **Presence of children and young people aged 13 to 20 years**
- **Five religious communities were represented:** Community Bahá'í, Centro Bartolome de las Casas of the Catholic Church, Lutheran Church, Muslim Community, MEC: Salvadoran Christian Student Movement .

- Government should create more jobs.
- Promote health campaigns in the most remote places.
- Improve the quality of education.
- We need more green projects:
- Governments should avoid wars:
- More support from local governments

RESULTS

- Provide more employment opportunities and to help with values. Hector.
- Create programs for teachers to improve a better education. Hugo.
- Involve young people in workshops and training organizations and churches. Blanquita.
- The government should provide a space for vendors instead of taking away their jobs. Camila.
- Reduce global pollution. Decentralize world's resources. Reduce poverty through new energy sources. Carlos.
- Make medical campaigns for poor people and generate employment in order to buy medicines. Claudia.
- Education is the basis of all problems, we have to provide a moral and intellectual education. Fatima.
- Incorporate ethics training projects but not during school days but make it optional. Ariel.

What poverty means to you?

- *"For me, poverty is lack of the minimum necessary for a person to survive." (Charles 19)*
- *"Not having the necessary resources to live." (Fatima 13 years)*
- *"For me there can be two types of poverty: material and spiritual." (Camilla 15 years)*
- *"Lack of resources for living and lack of self esteem, because as they have to live on, is sad." (Ariel 14)*
- *"When a child is working instead of studying." (Blanquita 20 years)*



ECUADOR



- Total of 31 participants
- Presence of children and young people between 14 and 17 years

Our

- Children have, from their own lives, direct experience and a clear notion of poverty and its consequences, but not on its causes. However they have professional ambitions, and a consciousness of solidarity with those who live in an even more difficult situation, like the disabled and children living on the street.
- Children are aware that we must demand that their rights are upheld, but that there are also responsibilities to fulfill and their first commitment was: "Do a good use of study and the opportunity to study."
- In its socio-economic environment: there is low educational level of parents, poor accountability from school children, a high unemployment and underemployment, lack of health services, overcrowding (80 percent of households are composed of 7 persons and living in small spaces, the family includes grandparents, uncles, cousins), harmful use of alcohol, family breakdown (especially as parents leave the family and go with another partner), child abuse, family violence, attitudes of acceptance of the violence, antisocial personality disorder.

Children's quotes...

- *"The poor have no financial resources to survive and not to starve. This is the first thing people need, have what to eat"*
- *"Not having a place to live or to eat," Children indicated that 60% of parents are renters, versus 40% who own, but indicated that the owners made it with effort and have debts of the houses"*
- *"The poor people don't have money to health care, they cannot pay the doctor"*
- *"People steal and consume drugs because they don't have what they need."*
- *"People who don't have (money), they feel bad, because they see others that have"*
- *"Poverty makes people beg"*
- *"The poor have no money to put their children into school and send their children to sell candy or beg in the streets."*
- *"No one knows about our life conditions" (meaning that they suffer great poverty).*
- "They don't have what to eat, therefore go to bed without food"*
- *Parents of poor children are unemployed.*
- *"They don't have where to live" (lease and the few money they have is used to pay the rent)*
- *"They have no clothes" (their mothers look for used clothes)*
- *"Families are separated because of poverty"*



GUATEMALA



- Total of 27 participants
- Presence of children and young people aged between 12 and 20 years old



Outcomes...

- We had the opportunity to see that poverty is not determined only the economic factor, but also by a series of social and emotional circumstances that have to do with states of mind, that some times does not allow the improvement.
- Caught a lot of attention when we talked about things children don't have the house, but that would like to have. The first three things that came out in unison were: potable water, showers and more rooms, with the clarification that they would like that each of the brothers and sisters had their own room with furniture, good bed and clothes. Followed by these three needs they evidenced the need to study. According to most of the group, poverty lies in the lack of educational opportunities.
- In Guatemala we have a high percentage of families living in poverty and extreme poverty, this has been the result of public policies that favor big business and that do not allow the opportunity for growth of small and medium enterprises. Most of the girls most felt the need to have their own business from which can benefit their families such as a shop, a tailor, or a corn mill, but which can also turn benefits for the Community.
- According to the first youth survey conducted in 2011, the state does not recognize the youth as a priority, although young people aged 15 to 19 years an amount of 4.2 million represent 28% of the total population. (First national survey of youth in Guatemala Enju 2011).
- **Who live with you/children?** There are some families consisting of father, mother and brothers, but there are some other families where we observe a lack of parents and stepparents. There are also children living only with grandmothers, uncles and nephews. The number family members goes from 5 to 14 people, including parents and siblings.
- **What Children miss the most in their houses ?** Potable water; electricity; paved roads; more rooms; Good bathrooms (toilets); Showers for bathing; a garden; furniture (tables, wardrobe, etc.); A house with two or three levels, with more rooms; more land.
- **What they would also like to have ?** Refrigerator; Washer; Kitchenware (juicer, pots, etc.); Computer & Internet; sewing machine; TV + DVD; Iron (for clothing)

Children's quotes...

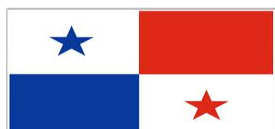
Some poverty definitions

- *When there is no work, when the mother dies and children are left alone with no one to care for and feed or study.*
- *When one of us get sick and have no money to go to the doctor;*
- *The poverty that we have is feel/ have in when we have to go to the river to have shower.*
- *It could be violence between ourselves, because we do not help each other.*
- *It is when you have no money, work or food.*
- *People are not poor just because they have no money. We can find richness in nature and in our family love.*
- *When you have a simple house (small and made of wood), wood commas, no furniture, no money, no potable water (you have to go to the river) and when there are no streets.*

Do I think I am poor? Why?

- *I think I'm poor because I have not much knowledge and I have no study either.*
- *I think I am poor because I haven't much education.*
- *I think we are not poor because we have everything necessary to cover our basic needs.*
- *I think I am poor because I have no father. He just send us money.*
- *I'm not poor because we have where to sleep and what to eat, there are children who do not have parents.*

PANAMA



- A total of 18 participants

Outcomes...

What must take place to end poverty?

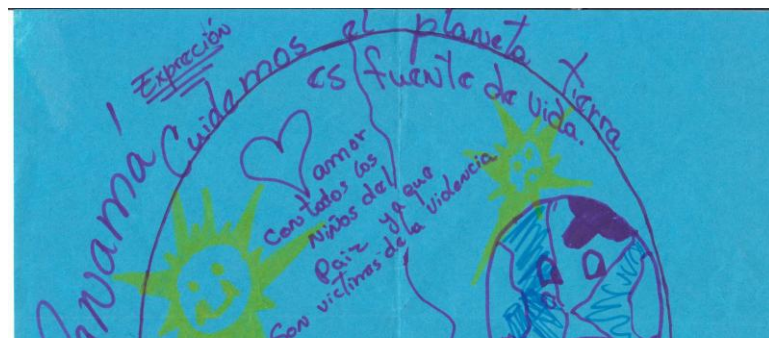
- A world march in protest of the governments to better distribute wealth and to have jobs for all.
- Providing good education for the poor and the rich.
- That the basic basket is not so expensive.
- Raise money to help poor
- That all children can eat well, to be healthy.
- Make missionary journeys of children with good education, to the poor areas to teach children.
- Encouraging children to study.
- Organizing communities so they get interested in working for the welfare of all.
- Motivating young people so they don't enter into gangs.
- That every person who has a little, share with the ones who have nothing.
- Making social activities we can help children in communities.

What can we do to make this change take place?

- Motivating young people of my community to form a group and to develop small projects to teach children their rights, encourage them to study and fight for their dreams and what they want to be when they grow up.
- Helping kids in my neighborhood on the homework.
- Whenever my parents go to a Super Market, collect 2 or 3 dry food to make a bag of food and give it to a child who does not have.
- Show films so that children do not spend much time alone.
- Ask my parents to make a room in our house for a poor child who has no family in order to make him living with us.
- Share a grain of love with others, especially the poor.
- Talking with the kids in my neighborhood and school telling them that is worth studying and behave well to become good people.

What does Poverty means to you?

- *The lack of a home with Mom and Dad*
- *When children have to work to help at home*
- *When you have to walk long distance to go to school.*
- *Eating one meal a day, without meat*
- *When you don't have a bed to sleep*
- *The constant struggle of parents for find/ earn money to get some food*
- *View malnourished children*
- *When there is never a birthday celebration*
- *When you never get gifts or celebration at Christmas*
- *Sleep with hungry*
- *Do not wait for the birthday party. I have never eaten sweet or cake*
- *A way of life, caused by the lack of financial resources*
- *When children suffer from diseases*
- *When you have to work to have the essential for live and help the younger siblings*
- *Children who use drugs*
- *Children who sell drugs*
- *How helplessness you feel when your parents do not have financial resources for basic needs*
- *The sadness of parents and children.*





- A total of 18 participants between 13 and 16 years old
- The participants were Muslims and Christians aged 13-16.



Outcomes...

- If you are poor, you labour more and you might get ill more often.
- Hope is very important. Lack of hope is a kind of poverty.
- Life has to be variant. If everyone is rich then life will be dull. Maybe poverty is a positive thing.
- Being loved and respected can be regarded as being rich.
- We have to help people in need, no matter what that need is.
- Poverty has a lot to do with how you distribute available resources. Some people get a lot and others very little.
- Desperation is the most dangerous thing.
- Causes of poverty are not always structural. A natural disaster could cause sudden poverty and destitution.
- One solution for poverty is to love the other and be just with everyone.
- What opportunities you have can determine whether you stay in or escape poverty.
- What we should work for is justice. If we have justice, poverty with end.
- The problem is that rich people are greedy. There is actually enough for everyone on earth but greed is always there.
- Being poor is not only not having food. What we should be concerned about is spiritual and ethical poverty; how financial poverty breeds crimes and disrespect of the law and ethical values.

What we see of poverty on the surface is very little. The problem is like an Ice-berg in the ocean. The peak is small and that's what we see. The dimensions, causes and results are very big and that's hidden under water.

Children's quotes...

How do you see and experience bad governance?

- Injustice in treatment in schools and amongst children.
- Discrimination against certain groups like the disabled in some schools and communities.
- Youth in Jordan don't enjoy equal opportunities in education and employment due to corruption and bad governance.
- What adds to the effects of poor governance is the indifference of leaders when confronted. Bad governance seems to be the norm.
- Discrimination against some students in schools, especially the disabled, mostly by students, but sometimes by the systems and regulations.
- Corruption and bribery in the workplace and in various establishments.
- Inflation because of unjust economic systems which is contributing to child poverty.
- Children and youth don't have arenas and channels to communicate with decision makers.

What do you think needs to be done to solve the problems of bad governance?

- Urging people to be more spiritual and ethical in their decisions and behaviors.
- There should be right upbringing for children and awareness for youth.
- Enhance quality control and anticorruption measures in all fields.
- Raise awareness about the importance of good governance and constructive change
- As children, we can start with ourselves by doing what's ethical and right, as well as doing our duties to their perfection.
- To be just and fair in everything.



- 30 children and youth from various Schools and religious communities in Cairo. Participants were Muslims (Sunni), Christians (Coptic Orthodox, Arab Orthodox, Coptic Catholic, Roman Catholic, Anglicans, and Protestants). They aged 14-18



Outcomes...

Recommendations and action plans on both elevating poverty in their communities, and on their GNRC future work and organization.

- Visits to poor and unplanned districts to know more about their real life and circumstances.
- Organize campaigns to gather donations for the poor.
- Organize seminars and talks to raise awareness for parents and youth.
- We ask for a training on various skills as a GNRC youth group in Egypt.
- Work with children using games and activities to educate them about ethics and values.
- Raise awareness about the bad effects of TV and Movies on the attitudes of children towards violence.
- Study more about Human Rights and raise awareness about them.
- Follow-up workshop for this workshop in a few months (preferably in the summer vacation).
- Create a Facebook page to be connected and organize our work.
- Create a Facebook page for the group to connect, be in touch with the regional secretariat and the GNRC as a whole.
- Starting from July 2012 (Summer vacation), start regular meetings and activities. Preferably every fortnight.
- Create groups in our own organizations to be teams of work for GNRC in Egypt.
- Various initiatives to help the poor and gather donations.
- After organizing the group, we aim to create pressure on our local leadership and government to push for child issues and rights.
- Make our group more inclusive by including members of the Baha'i faith in Egypt.

Children's quotes...

The participants defined Poverty as follows:

- Poverty is to lack financial, social and emotional assets and resources. It's the most important problem in Egypt. 40% of the Egyptian population is under the poverty line.
- Poverty is Tyranny; it's not having your basic rights.
- Poverty is social injustice.
- Poverty is being hungry, cold, with no accommodation or good health.
- Poverty is not having your basic needs. Charity can help but it's not the only way. I think actions should take place on higher levels.
- Being poor is to lack something. It can be money, it can be education, and it can be care and love.
- Poverty is when parents can't afford to spend on their children and families. It can be because of rising costs of good, or lack of planning and awareness by the people themselves.
- Poverty is when you lack anything important; it doesn't have to be money.
- Poverty is when you don't have enough food, no health services or care, and no house to live in.
- Being poor is to lack your basic needs and what lets live with dignity.
- Poverty is the feeling of helplessness and inferiority. It's when you can't even afford to eat or dress well.
- The poor person is the person who his rights have been taken away. The poorer person is the person who even does not know his rights. Poverty is actually a state of mind.
- Poverty might be a cause of disorders and physiological harm for children. No one has everything; everyone lacks something and is poor in some sense. That's why we should complete each other and help each other.
- A person might not have a choice in being born poor but he has a choice in dying poor. People can escape poverty but they need education and empowerment.
- Poverty is to feel that you lack something. It can be money and financial assets. It can also be spiritual poverty; not to be able to connect with people, empathize and love. It can also be ethical poverty and lack of values.



- 30 Children and youth from five GNRC youth groups across Lebanon.
- Muslims (Sunni and Shia'a), Christians (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Maronite), and Druze

Outcomes...

A group of participants took the responsibility to offer ideas for sustainability of GNRC work in Lebanon and to give general recommendations. Their recommendations were as follows:

To consider this group present as a core group for GNRC youth in Lebanon. To be responsible of coordinating our work and sharing our experiences.

We ask that we have a follow-up workshop in six months to evaluate our work and plan forward.

We recommend that this core group gathers every month in a shared activity.

We ask from each regional group to spread the vision and mission of GNRC and include more children and youth in their work.

Participants of this workshop will have the responsibility to prepare a report of activities to the core group, which, in turn, will report to the GNRC National Committee.

Children's quotes...

Poverty is....

- no balance in distributing what each person needs, even within families.
- the status of the person who is deprived from his/her basic needs, finding himself having less than everybody else. It can also be cultural and mental poverty, where there is no education and a lot of unemployment.
- the deprivation of basic needs that allow you to live in dignity, financial like not having a house or food, or educational and mental like not having skills or education. Poverty can also be spiritual and ethical like not having manners, respect or responsibility.
- not to be able to secure your basic needs.
- not to have a place to live and lack of money. It's when you can't live in dignity.
- when a person finds himself lacking something vital.
- when a person doesn't have clothes or a place to live. But also it's to lack care, love and a family to protect you.
- not to have equal opportunities and rights like the others. It's to feel oppressed.
- to lack something. It can be money, social life or spiritual and cultural guidance. It has very bad effects on the personality especially for children.
- to live less than everybody else, to feel alone and helpless. Financial poverty can lead to mental and poverty and lack of education and awareness. It goes in circles. Also, it depends on your country. If your country is rich, you can be rich easily.
- not to have enough money
- lack of resources, but it can also mean the bad distribution of resources
- for children not to have their rights
- to be sad, if you're not joyful and peaceful inside then you're poor.
- injustice
- not being able to reach your potential
- not only a personal problem; it's a big social problem
- to be worried about your future



- 34 children and youth from various regions in Sudan.
- Muslims (Sunni), Christians (Coptic Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestants).

Children's quotes.....

Outcomes.....

The Groups recommended:

- Encourage education especially ethics education.
- Be just and ethical. Start with one's self and help others to make ethical decisions.
- Organize charity events, campaigns and fundraisers to help the poor and needy.
- Raise awareness about poverty and its dimensions and implications.
- Governments should provide good services to peoples and respect their rights.
- Break the divide between poor and rich children by organizing common activities, open days and shared visits to places and organizations.
- Encourage family values and protect the family as a building unit in society.
- Sharing of experiences and more communication amongst everyone
- Organize training workshops for children and youth in Sudan at least twice a year.
- More participation of children and youth from Sudan in Regional and International Workshops.
- The group recommends that it joins the GNRC Youth Net more effectively and be in touch and communication with other youth from all around the world.
- Workshops to be held for parents, educators and teachers on Child Rights and Ethics Education.

The participants defined Poverty as follows:

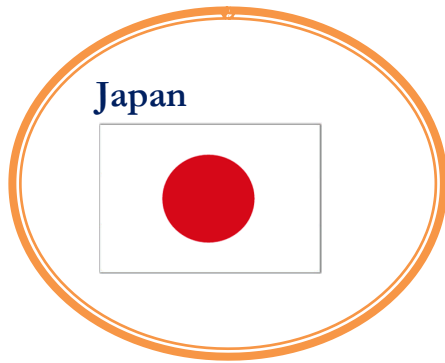
- Poverty means that you don't have money; you lack your basic needs. Also being poor doesn't have to be about money only. You can be poor with information or experiences.
- Poverty is not having anyone to care for you. You might be without family or with no friends. It affects you physically and emotionally. It is also about not having money and you needs, like in Darfur, poor children are in the streets where they suffer and get abused.
- Poverty is not having basic needs like food, house, clothes and proper education. A lot of people are fortunate and they have resources but some are really unlucky and they don't have their rights.
- Being poor is not being able to afford food. Everything else is not as important.
- Poverty is not to have resources or maybe these resources are not distributed in a good way. Sudan is a poor country but it has a lot of resources. The problem is that these resources are exploited by a small number of people while other people live in poverty.
- Poverty is to have no one to give you money or buy you what you need. It's also not to be able to work.
- Being poor is not being able to afford your everyday needs; the things that allow you to live well and be respected.
- The poor person is the person who doesn't have someone to care for him. No family and no guidance. This can result in the person being lonely and sad.
- Poverty is not to have financial means. It has a very bad effect on children in particular because it can lead to malnutrition and lack of education.
- The poor person is the person who doesn't own anything. It can lead people to do unethical behaviors like stealing and cheating.

Outcomes.....cont'd

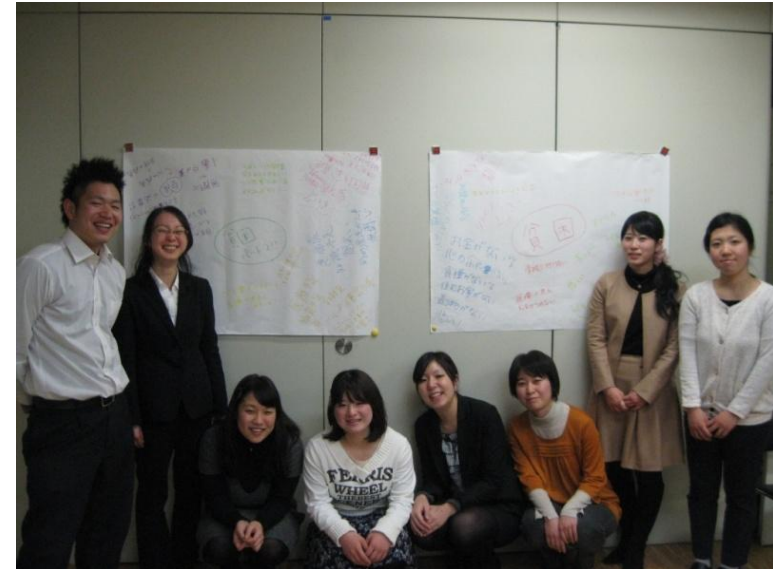
- We ask for more support for GNRC Sudan so it can celebrate the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children (DPAC) every year in an effective way.
- More training for Children and youth in Sudan.
- More workshops in different schools and in different regions in Sudan.
- Encourage children and youth to participate in these workshops on all levels.
- Times and details of future workshops to be in line with the academic year and vacations so a bigger number of children can participate.
- Establish a fund for GNRC Youth Net in Sudan to support future activities.

Children's quotes..... cont'd

- Being poor is not having enough money to buy good food. It's also not having a family to love you. A person can also be poor if he/she doesn't have friends-
- To be poor is not to have power and rights.
- Poverty is not having your basic human rights like care, education and health services.
- Poverty is to lack something important. It can be money, education or even dreams and aspirations.
- It's when someone lacks basic human needs. This includes nutrition, health care, safety, education, and accommodation.
- Child poverty is not having anyone to care for the child, not having games or toys... also some children don't even have food or houses.
- The poor person is the one who has enough money only for today. He is afraid of tomorrow and doesn't have security.
- Poverty is when the person doesn't have the means to earn money to afford his needs. It's being helpless and oppressed.
- Poverty depends on what country, region or culture you are from. People who have 20 Sudanese Pounds [around 5 USD] are not poor in Sudan, but they will be poor in Japan.
- Poverty means not having a future, not being empowered or educated.
- Poverty is a social problem that can lead to other problems like crime and diseases.
- To be poor is not to have enough money to secure the basic needs.



➤ 7 youths from Myochikai



“Richness of the Spirit”

When I visited the Republic of Vanuatu, which is called “the happiest country in the world,” in February 2011, I felt “richness of the spirit” of people there in comparison to “poverty of the mind” of people in Japan. As the country is a largely Christian nation, people’s lives are filled with the spirit of Christianity. I felt the greatness of religions by witnessing people sharing food, caring for each other even though they are strangers, and so on. I think that we, people who believe in a particular religion, should spread influences of religion and importance of prayers.

What is the poverty relevant for all people?

I visited Bangladesh in the summer of 2011. Large buildings are located right beside the slum district. Why does the gap between the rich and the poor exist in the same country? While wealthy people have plenty of money to spend on themselves, people in the slum district facing food shortages. We must know the current situation, the fact that the gap is still expanding because of poor governance, and we have to find the way to solve those problems together. At the same time, we should express our opinions and thoughts in view of “who, how, and when resolve poverty?” Does poverty exist in Japan? Are we not related to poverty at all? Is poverty far from us?

Poverty in Japan

In Japan, the number of children who can not have adequate food, education, medical care, and love is by no means small. “Child abuse” is one of the biggest issues in Japan. “Neglect” is the most negative impact which influences children.

- 1) Keeping children imprisoned in the home (prevent from going to school against the will of children)
- 2) Preventing children from seeing doctors even they have significant disease

Deficient development due to the lack of love

Some children do not grow enough even if they have adequate nutrition. It shows that, not only the nutrients of food but also love is important for children in process of growing.

Some children have lack of self-affirmation, self-confidence, or abilities to build personal relationships, and try to solve problems by exercising brute force. There are possibilities to intergenerationally repeat abuse because they are emotionally immature and have learned a way of child-raising through their experiences of abuse.

It can be said that “poverty of the mind” is the current situation, people think that we are not related to those problems, the existence of children who are forced to live with poverty – not having adequate education, food to live, medical care, or love from families who should be trusted the most, or being worried about influences from wars and conflicts everyday.

Self-affirmation is the feeling of, “I am an important human being,” “I am worth living,” or “I am needed.”

The percentage of junior high school students who answered “yes” to the question, “do you think that you are a bad person?” is the following:

China 11.1%, USA 14.2%, Japan 56.0%

Although there are differences among countries in terms of nationalities and cultures, it is very serious to see children’s low self-affirmation in Japan.

As the mental issues cause violence or lack of education, abuses should be deemed as poverty.

what can we do to help children?

The presenter urged participants to demonstrated examples of current problems actually happening around children and possible assistance by using drawing papers to make people feel more familiar with poverty – what kind of life children live around the world, what can we do, how can we show our care for children and how can we make it happen.

Examples that the presenter mentioned include ‘Every five seconds, one child dies from a curable disease or food hunger, which means a Jumbo Jet filled with children falls every hour.’ ‘With 100 Japanese Yen, one person can receive medical care for diarrhea and bronchitis in Afghanistan’.



Comments by participants

- “The discussion made me realize that the poverty has a wide range of dimensions.”
- “The phrase, ‘the best nutrition for human beings is LOVE’, was very impressive for me and inspired me to live my life with love.”
- “At first, we did not think that abuse and poverty have any common points. However, as we saw presentations and exchanged opinions, abuses and mental issues are very serious problems of poverty in Japan.”
- “We think it is important to know what kind of poverty issues we have in Japan and do something before taking a proactive stance on problems in the world. I would like to look at other problems beside the issue of abused children.”
- “I have learned a lot how our fund raising can contribute to aids for children around the world, which made me look back how I should spend money and live in daily life”.