

Activity 16 Fair Photos, Unfair Lives?

Aim: To explore the reality behind images of life in the Global South

Age: 8+ **Time:** 30 mins

Materials: Paper and pens, a selection of photographs from the photopack, newspapers

Preparation: The group should be familiar with the youth-friendly version Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages, so perhaps do the Activity 'Holiday Snaps' or 'Picture This' first.

What to do: Warm-up

Ask for two volunteers to be the campaign managers. Break the other participants into smaller groups. Distribute the photos evenly among the smaller groups. Tell them that the campaign managers will call out one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs – see Activity 6), and the groups have to choose the best image from their photos that could be used to support that Goal. For each round, give the teams 30 seconds to choose an image from the ones they have. The teams then display their images together. The campaign managers choose which one they think best promotes the MDG in question. That team gets one point. If necessary let them explain why they chose a certain image. The team with most points at the end of the 8 rounds is the winner.

Step 1: Ask the young people to imagine photos that they might see here in Ireland of the Global South. Ask them to describe what the images and photos look like, e.g. the place, gender, age, health, expressions and so on of those in the photo.

Step 2: Show the group some examples of images that development organisations use in advertisements and campaigns (see photopack). Ask them what they think of these photos. Ask them to describe what the images and photos look like, e.g. the place, gender, age, health, expressions etc. of those in the photo. Why do NGOs use them? What do they achieve?

Step 3: Ask the group what types of images they prefer? If you worked in a development organisation which would they use? Which type of photo represents the real situation? Imagine you have to represent your life in one photo/image, what sort of image would you choose - a happy or sad image? A picture with other people or alone? A picture with your friends or your family? A picture in Winter/Summer? An up-close shot or from a distance?

Step 4: Break into groups of 4 or 5 participants. Give each group a photo to work with from the photopack. Ask the group to talk about what the rest of this person's life might look like. What does the picture not show us? What is missing from this photo? If we think aspects of their lives might be unfair or difficult, what makes it that way? Ask them to think about this person's family, home, education, health, job, friends, community, town, country, government etc. Let them discuss this for a few minutes.

Step 5: Then ask each person in the smaller group to choose one aspect of this person's life and to imagine it in as much detail as they can. Ask them to draw a picture of this part of their lives. When the group has finished working, there should be 4 or 5 different drawings of different aspects of the life of the person in the photo. Hang them on a wall around the image of the person.

Debrief: Look at what the other group has created. Were there similar aspects to the lives you drew? What was different? What were the positive parts of their life? What was negative? Do you think the person has a comfortable life? How does their life differ to yours? Why? Is this fair?