

Section 3: Images and Messages in an Unequal World

Activity 12 **Holiday Snaps**

Aim: To explore where our images of the Global South come from and introduce the Dóchas Code of Conduct on images and messages.

Age: 10+ (8+ for Steps 1-3)

Time: 30-40 mins

Materials: Blank paper, art materials and blutac; the youth-friendly version of the Dóchas Code of Conduct on images and messages (see Section 4) and an outline of the African continent (located on Page 15)

Note to leader:

This activity explores Africa as part of the Global South, but other places and regions could be used instead such as China, Asia, Mexico, Latin America, India etc.

What to do:

Step 1: Make sure everybody is sitting comfortably. Tell the group that they are going on a journey and they should close their eyes and listen to your instructions;

You are somewhere in Africa - Picture your surroundings - What time of the day is it? What time of the year? What is the weather like? What kind of plants and trees can you see? - You walk through the scene - You see some people - What are they doing? - What do they look like? - You take a photo of your surroundings – remember the details you see through the lens - You come across some houses - What do they look like? - How big are they? - What are they made from? - You enter a house - What is it like inside? - What are people doing? - Now you're back in Ireland, open your eyes.

Step 2: Distribute sheets of paper and markers. Ask participants to draw the scene they photographed. Encourage them to draw what they saw in their own mind and not to be influenced by other people's drawings. There is no right or wrong. Encourage them not to compare their drawings until they are finished.

Step 3: If everyone agrees, display all of the pictures for people to see. Participants don't have to share their images, if they don't want to.

Debrief: Ask them what do the pictures have in common, e.g. are they urban/rural, of people/animals etc? Do you think that everywhere in Africa is the same? Are the pictures fair/balanced? Where did you get your image of Africa from?

Step 4: Display the youth-friendly version of the Dóchas Code of Conduct on Images and Messages from Section 4. Copy the checklist below onto a flipchart. Ask the participants to take a look at their own pictures and read the checklist. Afterwards ask if anybody felt they could answer Yes to all the questions? Where did difficulties arise?

Checklist:

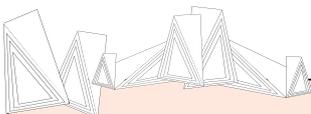
- Would the people in your picture be happy with the way their home is presented? YES / NO
- Is the image a fair picture of the people? YES / NO
- Is the image a fair picture of the place? YES / NO
- Can you name one reason why you think people live this way? YES / NO
- What is it?

- Do the pictures respect people's feelings? YES / NO
- Is it necessary to use a photo of a person or could you get the message across using words? YES / NO
- Does the image help us to understand the situation better? YES / NO
- How would you feel if you were the subject of this photo and you knew it was being shown to thousands of people? YES / NO

Debrief: Do you think the media or development organisations are always fair in the way they show Africa and other parts of the Global South? Do you think people in the Global South are shown in a way that they would be happy to be seen? Do you have a preference of what kind of images appear about you on social networking sites like Facebook or Bebo? How many of you have deleted a photo of yourself because you didn't like it or didn't want others to see it? Do you think everybody should have the chance to choose which images of them are shown in public?



DID YOU KNOW? Dóchas is the umbrella body which represents Irish development organisations. In 2007, Dóchas member organisations adopted the Code of Conduct on Images and Messages. The Code gives guidance to organisations on how to use images (such as photos) and messages (such as slogans and campaigns) in a way which is fair to the people involved. See www.dochas.ie for more information.



DID YOU KNOW? In April 2010, the BBC broadcast a documentary called 'Welcome to Lagos'. Search for it on YouTube. The documentary portrayed the life of some people in Lagos - a city of about 9 million people in Nigeria - who earn their living by picking through rubbish dumps and selling what they can. Some people criticised the documentary as being an unfair portrayal of the city of Lagos as it focused on one aspect of life there. It gave the impression that this is all that Lagos was about. What do you think? What would a documentary about your hometown look like?



DID YOU KNOW? What is an NGO? NGO stands for non-governmental organisation. NGOs may also be referred to as development organisations and charities.