



# Nouroudine's Story

**Aim:** that participants begin to understand who is responsible for child labour

**Age:** All

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Materials:** Story box, art materials and paper.

## What to do:

Break into three groups and give each group a copy of Nouroudine's story. One person in each group reads the story.

## Nouroudine's Story

Nouroudine is 11 years old, but small for his age. He is from Benin in West Africa. One day his uncle sold him to a man going to Nigeria. He had to sift sand from gravel in a quarry. There were lots of other children there. At night he slept on sacks of corn in a warehouse. Once his boss hit him on the shoulder with a spade. He started crying and the boss asked him why he was crying, he hadn't hit Nouroudine hard. Then he hit him again, harder this time. Nouroudine managed to escape after three weeks. He made it back to his village, but it wasn't long before he was on the road again.

His mother goes back and forth between Benin and the Ivory Coast, where she works on cocoa farms. She paid a man to take Nouroudine there. He was going to work on the farms with his brother. She said she'd come later. There are an estimated 10-15,000 child labourers on farms in the Ivory Coast, one of the region's richer countries and the world's biggest cocoa producer.

A bus carrying Nouroudine and 23 other children was stopped before it left Benin. A number of people were arrested, suspected of being involved in child trafficking. Nouroudine says, "I miss my parents. When I get home, I'll tell my father again that I want to go to school. I don't ever want to go abroad again."

Source: The Irish Times, 14/5/01

Imagine you are Nouroudine.

- How do you feel: when you are working in the quarry?
- When you return home?
- When you are on the bus travelling to work on the cocoa farm?
- Using a long roll of paper such as wallpaper or sheets of paper taped together, draw or paint Nouroudine's story.
- What do you think will happen to Nouroudine now?
- What would you like to see happen?
- Are there any similarities between Nouroudine's story and young people working in Ireland? Why? If not, why not?