

Community Integration

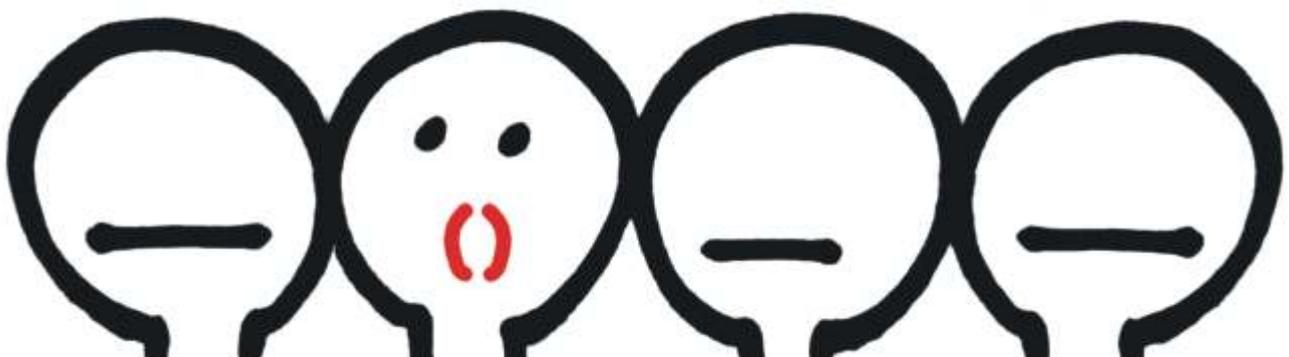


International Labour Organization

SCREAM

Stop Child Labour

Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media



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This booklet is part of the SCREAM - Stop Child Labour Education Pack. SCREAM stands for Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media. The pack was produced in 2002 as part of IPEC/ILO Project INT/99/M06/ITA funded by the Government of Italy.

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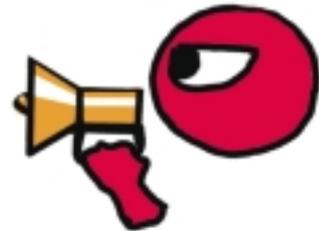
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Aim: Stimulate the interest and involvement of external communities in the child labour project.



Gain: Raises awareness of child labour among the wider community. Looks at how to involve other groups in such a way as to further provoke attention and interest in the project and in the issue of child labour. Reinforces the role of young people as agents of social mobilization and change.

Time frame

2–3 teaching sessions. It is difficult to put an exact time frame on this exercise as it will depend very much on your individual circumstances and what you decide to do in the way of awareness-raising activities. You may choose to have a special “child labour day” or conduct a series of awareness-raising activities over a period of a week. Note, however, that most activities of this kind require advance planning and preparation and allow enough time for this, as well as for the events themselves.



Note for the user

We recommend that this module be the last you implement, as it will be the culmination of all the activities you and your group have undertaken in the preceding modules. The platform of the SCREAM programme is community integration and awareness-raising. This module offers support to those who would like to take this concept as far as it can go and provide an opportunity to young people to assume a practical role as agents of social mobilization and change. It can be a powerful and exciting experience for them – it is definitely worth seizing this opportunity.

Motivation



The SCREAM modules are designed to actively involve young people in the global campaign to eliminate child labour. Through their own enhanced awareness, young people will become empowered to relay the message to their peers, their families and their communities. Throughout the implementation of the modules, we want young people to realize that they have a very definite role to play in eliminating child labour and that part of this role is their ability to reach out and touch the hearts and lives of other members of the communities around them and generate further support for their activities to help exploited children around the world.

There are many creative and innovative ways of integrating other members of the community into the SCREAM programme. You will already have discovered some of these as you implemented the other modules. For example, we often talk about external support, involving parents, other teachers or outside experts. We also suggest inviting local politicians, trade unionists, business leaders, NGOs and others to come and address groups on particular subjects or observe and participate in various activities. We talk about working with different media and preparing a media campaign. Even the module on drama is effectively about community involvement. Young people will be encouraged to perform their pieces of theatre for others in their community and are thus taking their message out to a wider audience. Other suggestions for ongoing community integration activities are detailed in the User's Guide.

This module aims to help you and your group organize a specific awareness-raising activity or series of activities. In Annex 1, you will find a case study of a community awareness week conducted during a pilot test of the modules in the Republic of Ireland.

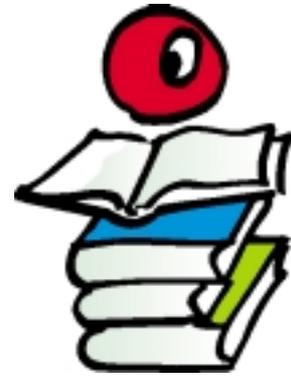
Preparation

There are many different ways of raising awareness within a community. A number of these can be found in the detailed case study in Annex 1. Activities will depend on individual contexts and environments. Factors such as tradition, culture, available resources, commitment and motivation will play a significant role in what you decide to do. However, the main point is that the young people in the group must be involved in the decisions.

Some of the activities that you and your group might decide to undertake may work even better with assistance from individuals from within the community. For example, if the group wishes to organize art workshops in local primary schools or to build a massive papier mâché sculpture, you might require assistance from local artists or art teachers. Encourage the group to be prepared to go out and contact others in the local community who can offer their skills and support to help in the awareness-raising activities. Perhaps a local artist was already involved during a previous module. If so, get the group to contact that individual again and see if he or she will help.

Music, song and dance are highly effective means of raising awareness within communities. Both as a form of artistic expression and a discipline, music acts as a unifying force, bringing together all ages and social groups in a fun and harmonious environment. Music and song have already been used to great effect in specific IPEC activities, for example, the creation of the song "Free the children" by schoolchildren in the Collège Gabriel Péri in France and the concerts given by the Suzuki Orchestra of Turin, Italy. In this way, young people are reaching out to the hearts of decision-makers everywhere.

In Annex 1 you will find an example of how local historians and academics were integrated into a community awareness-raising programme. Such persons can assist in roundtable discussions, media contacts and community



External support

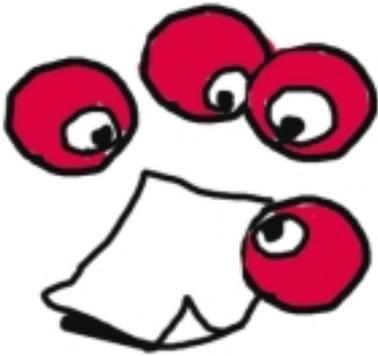


presentations. Your group might, for example, invite such an individual to act as an auctioneer to sell paintings by local primary schoolchildren on the theme of child labour.

Most communities have individuals with a wide range of skills, interests and professions. Most people respond positively when approached by young people to help in projects on humanitarian, development or social themes. It will also enhance the young people's social and communication skills.

Media campaigning

Emphasize to the group the importance of communicating with the media about their various awareness-raising activities. Refer them to the work they did for the Media modules, as this will support their efforts to communicate with the media during any specific awareness-raising exercise.



In particular, encourage the group to be bold in their contacts with the media. It can be relatively costly to have material published in some newspapers or to run a radio advertisement for an activity. If the group makes the approach in the right way, they might be able to persuade a newspaper editor, journalist or broadcaster to support their project and activity by offering space or air time at a reduced rate or even free of charge. They have nothing to lose by asking, and the media may respond well to such a worthy cause as the elimination of child labour. It could initiate a close relationship with the media that would provide a significant opportunity to promote the group's activities and project.

Activity one: Awareness-raising events

1-2 teaching sessions to brainstorm ideas and prepare activities, plus whatever time is required for the activities themselves

Initiate discussions with the group. Ask for their ideas and conduct a brainstorming session to develop ideas further. You will discover in this process that young people will come up with some original suggestions for

awareness-raising activities or events and they will also be quite ambitious and undaunted by the work involved. Once ideas are noted, discuss each of these in terms of feasibility, priority and acceptability to the group. The group must realize their responsibility not only in coming up with ideas but in developing them fully and putting them into action.

Below are some suggestions for awareness-raising activities. Annex 1 will also be useful for stimulating ideas and thinking of the practical issues and implementation. This is not an exhaustive list but will help to stimulate discussion and new ideas within your group.

- Pick a special day to conduct the awareness-raising activity. A good choice would be World Day Against Child Labour (12 June). Alternatively, you could choose the day of a vote in Parliament or local council chamber, a special United Nations day, International Labour Day (1 May), Human Rights Day or Mothers Day (perhaps to remember children who have no mother or who have been separated from their mothers). Planning awareness-raising activities around such public events will strengthen their impact on the community.
- Contact local primary schools and organize child labour workshops with primary schoolchildren. The workshops can be run by the young people in your group with assistance from you and other teachers, parents or members of the community. The workshops could focus on writing songs or poetry about child labour and then the entire group could go and sing or recite these on the steps of the local council buildings or in some very prominent public area so that the community see and hear them. Alternatively, the group could organize and run art workshops all day in primary schools. The paintings, sculptures or artistic creations on the theme of child labour could be exhibited to the community and/or sold in an auction to raise funds for child labour projects or organizations which work to eliminate child labour and help exploited children.
- Build a huge model or statue representing child labour in a prominent place in the community or school. The effigy (which could also be a totem pole) should be a



symbol of everything that is bad and harmful about child labour. The final activity should be for the young people to destroy the sculpture as a symbol. This act of destruction represents the young people's anger about child labour and towards those who perpetuate or remain indifferent towards it. The effigy should be built of something that can easily be destroyed, for example, papier mâché (a mixture of paper and glue that becomes hard when dry). The group could organize a ceremony during which they denounce child labour and then invite all the young people and children in the audience to come forward and help destroy the symbolic representation of child labour. They could even burn the effigy down as a symbol of ultimate anger and destruction. *Obviously, for safety reasons, this activity needs to be closely supervised!*

- Contact as many young people and children as possible within the local community, either through schools or community activities. Choose a day when they will all come together and make a long line in a prominent public place, for example, completely encircling the school or local council chamber. The line represents child labourers and some of the young people taking part can carry large boards stating, for example, that there are one hundred thousand times as many children working at that moment in different countries around the world. Other boards could have key statistics about child labour. The line could move around and develop a chant on the theme of child labour in order to draw the community's attention to their demonstration.
- Get the group to visit shops and businesses in the community to ask the staff if they know whether or not the goods they sell are produced with child labour. This can be done in the form of a survey or a meeting with an official representative of the business on its premises. The objective is to make businesses, employers, trade unions and the general public more aware of the issue and to make them think more about how the goods they sell or buy are made. The approach should not be aggressive, but polite and non-confrontational. Do not set out to create a scene.
- Design a special postcard on, for example, "Action for Child Labourers" and produce as many copies as



possible. The postcard should be addressed to a local or national politician and contain a message asking for attention to be given to the issue of child labour and action taken to eliminate it. The group should then go out into the school and community and approach people and explain the purpose of the postcard and ask them to support their campaign by signing and sending off the postcard. The postcard could be produced on brightly coloured card to grab attention, or have a funny or colourful design. You could also create a giant postcard and get members of the community to sign it and then hand it to local politicians. Another idea is to create a giant design and then cut it into jigsaw-style postcards to be sent out. The politician would then stick all these together to receive the full message. There are many variations on this theme.

- Work with the group to design a leaflet about their project with a large blank space on it. Distribute these leaflets to local primary schoolchildren asking them to draw quick, colourful and expressive pictures in the spaces. The group should then collect these and either design an art competition around them, send them to politicians to make a statement about child labour or sell them to the local community to raise funds for their child labour project, or a combination of all of these.
- Organize an evening event during which the group could conduct a variety of activities. For example, they could perform their own play written on the theme of child labour. They might exhibit paintings, sculpture or other artistic representations of child labour. They could sing songs written by themselves and others or show a video of the sculpture being destroyed by the young people of the community. Otherwise, the group could create some interactive displays about child labour or the project. Famous people or local celebrities or politicians could be invited to attend to arouse greater interest within the community. Another idea, as suggested earlier, is to organize an auction of works of art on the theme of child labour and invite a local or national celebrity to play the role of auctioneer.
- Establish networks of young people, both within the community, locally, nationally or even internationally, by building links with other schools around the issue of



child labour. Schools of all kinds, shapes and sizes, youth clubs, sports clubs, community clubs – there are any number of possibilities around which to create networks for young people to work together to help child labourers. Encourage the group to write to other young people, establish contact with a school in another country, get joint activities going, seek support, publicize what they are doing in the school magazine or local media, or organize an exchange visit or summer camp. Help young people to understand that the greater their number, the louder their voice will be.

Follow-up

Having implemented various awareness-raising activities, it is important to involve the group in the necessary follow-up. The first step should be the preparation of articles for the local and national newspapers. Follow-up articles should be completed and sent in quite quickly as the media does have a very short memory. A further article in the week following will remind the different communities of the events in which they participated.

There will also be a considerable number of thank you letters to write and these should be apportioned within the group. They should be sent to everyone involved in the day's or week's activities, people who provided services or products, supported events, took part in events, and so on. It is vital that the group understands that extending common courtesies to those who show their support will reinforce the commitment of these individuals. This is vital in an ongoing campaign.

The group should also be encouraged to write up their experiences and activities in a collective effort to create a tangible memory of the project. Split up responsibilities between the group to write up different activities, prepare a press clipping file, create a photo album, collect all artistic and creative writing submissions, and so on. Give them specific deadlines to complete their assignments so that they do the work before interest begins to wane. Such an archive should be kept and put on display in the local community for a time. The group could even consider developing an exhibition of this material within the school or community that could run for a week or so to allow people to admire the full extent and impact of the project.

Do's and don'ts

- Do make sure that every individual takes part in awareness-raising activities. If they do not show interest in a particular activity, talk to them and find out what they would like to do. Actively seek their input and their ideas and then work with them to realize these.
- Don't follow the case study attached to this module to the letter; it is just an example of what can be done. Let imaginations and creativity run free to come up with ideas that would suit your circumstances, environment, culture and traditions. The case study is meant to act as a motivator, a catalyst for the many ideas that exist and are waiting to be found.
- Do make use of a video or stills camera if available.
- Don't necessarily conduct too many activities to involve the community. Depending on time, resources and other constraints, you may prefer to organize only a few. Choose the ones best suited to the needs and circumstances of the group.
- Do use humour within the group to help sessions and exercises along.
- Do allow the group to decide what they would like to do and to assume their different levels of responsibility. Don't impose your will on individuals or the group. Reaching out to the community must be a joint effort.
- Don't allow individuals to criticize or mock others. Accentuate the positive in everything.
- Do allow banter, dialogue, teasing, jokes, humour and competitiveness if it can be controlled.
- Do use products of previous modules – collages, sculptures, drawings, poetry, stories, photographs, and so on – to decorate rooms where members of the community will gather, for example, a hall where a play will be performed, a room where an exhibition will be set up, a sports hall where an activity will be arranged.
- Do make sure that classes or other community integration activities are fully discussed and properly prepared.





- Do ensure that all activities are properly recorded and followed up.
- Do encourage the group to send thank you letters to individuals who have participated in these activities or events. Emphasize the power of good community relations.
- Don't put any young person in a situation in which his or her self-confidence may be undermined, particularly if he or she is not suited to the exercise, for example, teaching other children or performing in public. Every member of the group should be able to find a role in these activities. You should support this process and make sure all the young people are comfortable with their roles.
- Do ensure that all members of the group are involved in letter writing as this will help the development of personal, social and communication skills.
- Don't make community integration assignments or activities competitive.
- Do conduct a very thorough debriefing session after community integration activities. It is important for the group to be allowed to express themselves fully and openly after such exercises. They will be on a "high" after some activities and they need to be allowed to express any emotion they feel in the security of their group. This exercise will also enable you to assess their reactions and feelings and think about what the next steps should be, if any.

Final discussion

1 teaching session

Once community integration activities are over, assemble the group in the usual meeting room or classroom and ensure that there is a relaxed and light-hearted atmosphere. Include any external support person(s) you have used. Talk about the activities in which the group has been involved and encourage general discussion about them. Find out what they enjoyed most and where they were less enthusiastic. Let them express

themselves freely and openly on any related issue. Simply allowing them the freedom to talk and express themselves on the project as it progresses is enough to instil confidence and generate a strong bond within the group.

If you have video footage of any of the activities, particularly any drama, this is the moment to play them back to the whole group. It serves the dual purpose of putting the group in a more relaxed mood as they laugh at themselves and each other and of showing them how they performed in front of an audience or spectators. They will understand better the impact of what they have done and why people reacted in the way they did. It is a very empowering moment in the project. Encourage them to talk about what they have watched. Would they have done anything differently? Do they think they had an impact on the community? In what way did this manifest itself? Do they think they have generated good support? What can they do now to make the most of that support?



Look at the reports and articles that have been written. What are the group's reactions to these? Let them express themselves on the results. Ask them if they were happy with the follow-up activities? Do they see any other potential follow-up activities?

Lastly, it is important for the group to consider all their efforts in the light of the global campaign to eliminate child labour. Much of what they will have done will have been fun and they will have participated through choice. It does no harm to ask them to consider the plight of child labourers and to spend some time reflecting among themselves on the exploitation of children. Ask them to consider how they feel they have helped the cause of child labourers through their activities. Have they been able to raise some funds? If so, how do they think they would like to use these to help child labourers? Can they think of ideas? What do they think will happen now? Do they feel satisfied with what they have done? Would they like to try and do more? Do they think they will carry the lessons of the project with them through life and continue to pass the message on? Will it make them more aware of violations of human rights and the exploitation of children?

Use these last moments for personal and collective reflection on the project as a whole and the perception of the group on its value to them as individuals and a group.

Evaluation and follow-up

Measurable indicators for community integration activities are varied. Specific outcomes include:

- What ideas were developed.
- What activities were implemented.
- What follow-up was done.
- The extent of the involvement of the different communities.
- The level of awareness raised among the different communities.
- The media coverage of activities.



There are others, of course, but if the above indicators occur, the group will have performed well and you should tell them so. Awareness-raising activities, such as those described in the case study, can be quite interesting and a lot of fun for young people. They also reinforce the aims and objectives of the modules and can have a significant impact on those communities which are touched by it.

This module is most likely the last your group will implement. It is definitely a high note on which to end. It provides opportunities for the group to put into action the knowledge, skills and experience they have accumulated during the project. It provides you with an opportunity to assess the value of the work carried out and is the ultimate test of its success, as the platform upon which this pedagogical package is built is that of empowering young people as agents of social mobilization and change. How successful they are in taking their message out to the wider community will be a reflection of the impact of the modules and the work of both you and the young people. It is hoped that the overall result of this and all the other modules will be to change the attitudes and behaviour of not only the young people in the group, but also members of the wider community.

Annex 1

Community integration in the Republic of Ireland: A case study

Because there can be such diversity in terms of what can be done in different countries and settings, we have given here the example of a community integration exercise carried out during the test phase of the modules in the Republic of Ireland. From the start of the project, the general public was kept well informed of progress. Articles were published in the regional newspaper and local newsletter, and interviews were broadcast on local radio. As part of the educational process, the students researched the topic over the Internet, interviewed local politicians, and wrote to government and local authority representatives, trade unions and NGOs and various personalities.

They prepared a "child labour corner" in the local library, decorated it with posters and stocked it with books and brochures on child labour and related issues – a lot of these were found, referenced and provided by the library. It allowed the young people in the group and also interested individuals in the community to read around the subject of child labour and to discover what other issues might be related. It therefore broadened their perspective and supported the work of the Research and Information module. They performed a debate on the topic "That children belong in school not in the work place" for their schoolfellows and in the presence of a local county councillor. They organized a poster competition on the theme of SCREAM and helped judge the results. They held a fundraising disco in aid of rehabilitated child labourers in Nepal. They worked with a local author on creative writing and a local artist on creating a painted quilt on the theme of child labour.

In addition, these young people worked with a local theatre professional to produce their piece of drama on child labour. The performance made its mark on the students who took part as well as on their fellow students and the school's teaching staff. However, the school performance alone did not fully satisfy the objectives of raising community awareness and of giving young people the tools to take the lessons they had learned through the modules out to a wider audience. Once awareness had been raised among the group of young people and their creativity and dynamism stimulated, we felt it was important to give them an outlet to express their feelings and new sense of purpose. In addition, the project coordination team felt that the success of the

test phase should be shared with the community, and in particular with a broad range of educators, decision-makers and interested stakeholders, both from within and outside the country, in order to show them what young people can do given the right encouragement, commitment, support and pedagogical methods.

As stated in the User's Guide, educators and their groups should be ambitious. If educators are not ambitious and do not challenge their groups, then the process will not attain its full potential. Experience has shown that young people are quite capable of fulfilling the most ambitious of plans *providing* they feel that they have your support and confidence.

Therefore, in the case study in question, the educators discussed the issue of greater community involvement with the group. On the basis of these discussions, it was decided to round off the project by conducting a week of awareness-raising activities culminating in the performance of their drama piece in a local village hall and inviting the wider community to come and watch.

Awareness-raising week

The group was asked for ideas on what activities could be organized for the awareness-raising week and the programme below was established.

Media

Three forms of media were identified as a means of getting the message out to the community: parish newsletters, the written media and radio.

- **Church**

In Ireland, the Catholic Church still plays a key role in the community, particularly in rural communities, and in the country as a whole. Each parish produces a newsletter, in which the local priests were asked to include an announcement of the forthcoming events of the awareness-raising week. In addition, some priests made announcements at the end of the church ceremony.

- **Regional newspaper**

Articles on child labour and the project were published in the regional newspaper the week before the activities. In addition, an advertisement, designed with the help of a local graphic designer, was run giving the full programme of the week's activities.

As well as articles written prior to the awareness-raising week's activities, an article was also published after the events.

- **Local radio station**

A special radio advertisement featuring the voices of some of the students was broadcast for five days during the build-up to the awareness-raising week. The voices gave statistics on child labour and reinforced the idea that child labour continues to flourish because of society's indifference to the fate of millions of children.

Peer education

Education of the young by the young can often be more powerful and effective than anything adults can do. In this particular case study, members of the group were given the opportunity to implement one of the modules and become the "teachers" for a day.

The teaching sessions were arranged following meetings with the principals of two local primary schools. Two classes of 11- to 12-year-olds were involved for a 90-minute class session.

The module chosen was Collage. This is an excellent module to begin with smaller children. Each member of the group was given a copy of the module to study several days beforehand around which they planned their classes. In each case, one person tended to oversee the process and the others in the group helped the children in preparing their collages. Before commencing the module, the group introduced themselves and their project to the class and opened the floor to questions on the issue of child labour. They took charge of splitting the class up into smaller groups and made sure that the materials were all prepared. After each collage was produced, it was displayed on the classroom walls and the other groups were asked to guess the title. When it came to the child labour collages, each group was asked to explain its collage and why they had used the particular images. The works were kept and put on display during the special cultural evening at the end of the week's activities.

Of all the activities during the week, this was the one that illustrated most clearly how much this project had achieved, how empowered the group had become and how practical and broad the modules were. It gave a tremendous boost of self-confidence to those involved in the exercise.

Roundtable discussion

A public roundtable was organized on the theme: *"From the workhouse to the hiring fair: Child labour in the past in East Clare"* (East Clare is a region on the west coast of Ireland where the pilot test took place).

Although now a more prosperous and developed country, it was not so long ago that Ireland was poor and beset by the political and socio-economic problems that afflict many developing countries today. There are still people alive in the area who can recall being child labourers themselves. One practice was the "hiring fairs" in rural Ireland, to which farmers would come in search of cheap labour during the harvesting seasons. The children would be housed and fed and some small wages would be sent with them back to their families.

To establish this connection between Ireland's past and the present situation in countries where child labour is prevalent, the roundtable was hosted by two local historians and was chaired by a retired school principal. One historian spoke on the workhouses of East Clare and the other spoke about the hiring fairs. The event brought together old and young and bridged a gap of understanding and communication between the generations.

Celebrity soccer match: "Child Labour versus Global Indifference"

Some of the members of the group were football (soccer) fanatics and suggested organizing a celebrity football match. The objective was to bring together high-profile local personalities who would attract public and media interest in a fun and friendly atmosphere. Classroom discussions focused on which celebrities to contact and how. Personalities from the sporting world, such as Irish national rugby players, hurlers (the Irish national sport), soccer players and show jumpers, teamed up with other representatives of the community, including the principal and other teachers from the group's school.

For most of the young people involved, the match was a highlight of the week. Two teams, one called "Child Labour", which was made up of the students involved in the project, and the other called "Global Indifference", which was made up of the celebrities, came face to face in what was billed as "an unequal match". Despite the obvious superiority of the Global Indifference team, the game was engineered so that it ended on penalties with the last winning goal being scored by the Child Labour team, thereby sending out a message of hope that the problem of child labour can be overcome despite the odds. The referee for the game was a very well-known local sports personality and primary school teacher.

A local sports journalist was invited to take the role of match commentator from the sideline via a public address system. The journalist in question injected a great deal of humour into the game which was very important for all concerned. In addition, it provided a strong connection between the activity and the media. A photographer from the regional newspaper came to the game to take shots of the match and the personalities and young people involved.

Thanks to the media advertising, there was a large turnout of people of all age groups from the surrounding communities. Following the game, the celebrities attended a simple reception where the community, children and media could interact with them. It was a hugely successful event and it helped the group dynamic significantly by bringing the young people together in the team to defeat the opposition.

Drama

As the other activities took place during the awareness week, the group was also involved in rehearsals for their child labour play. The day before the main performance, the group performed in a full dress rehearsal in the evening to which the local community was invited. The drama was a very powerful piece and reached audiences at the most fundamental level. Some people were moved to tears, most were moved to silence. Many were uncomfortable. But every single member of the audience was forced to confront themselves in the course of the play.

In a further attempt to move the activities out into the community and to involve others, the group invited younger children from the local primary schools to act out the roles of different kinds of child labourers outside the village hall where they were going to perform their play.

Meanwhile, all the group were dressed entirely in black and wore plain white theatre masks (which they had made themselves with a local artist in a workshop). The masks represented the indifference of society to the pain and suffering of child labourers. They represented the faceless millions of children who suffer daily. They represented the fear and control of people in authority. The group had enjoyed learning about mask work in theatre and soon recognized the considerable power it enabled them to wield over others.

After a while, the audience, which had been gathering outside and observing the "street theatre", was allowed to enter the hall. Only one person was permitted to enter at a time and he or she would be escorted by masked individuals to a chair in random places around the hall. Couples were split up

(but small children were allowed to remain with a parent) and nobody was allowed to speak. If anyone spoke, a masked individual would approach and raise a finger in warning. The aim was to keep the audience under tension the whole time and to show them what small child labourers must feel when they are alone, confused, in the dark, split up from a friend or the family, surrounded by alien sounds and noises of work and told to do things by people with indifferent faces who do not care for them.

Inside, the walls of the hall were adorned with the work of a local artist. Included on the wall was the hand-painted quilt made by the group. The windows were blacked out with dim house lights only. The music, chosen to give an eerie effect, was played by young musicians from the local school.

Once the audience was seated, the masks assumed a position in front of the stage before moving to their final positions for the start of the play. As indicated in the drama module, the props were kept to a bare minimum. Therefore, the young actors remained in black and simply removed their masks back stage.

The young actors, the theatre director and the co-ordination team were approached by many members of the audience following the dress rehearsal, who wanted to tell them personally how they had felt and to give encouragement and support. Some people were so emotional they had difficulty in expressing themselves. The full impact of what they were achieving within their community was only just beginning to dawn on the group and they began to realize that the project had indeed enabled them to make a difference. It awoke a true feeling of pride and sense of achievement which will never leave them.

Cultural evening

The main activity of the awareness-raising week was the final performance of the play. This was done in the context of a "special cultural evening". It began with a performance of the theatre piece and ended with a celebration of Irish and world culture around the theme of child labour.

The evening provided a valuable opportunity to showcase the project and use it as a benchmark of quality in terms of what can be done when the imaginative, innovative and creative powers of young people are channelled and supported within the context of the global campaign to eliminate child labour. On this occasion, as a reception had been organized for guests, there was an additional sequence added to the end of the play, again designed to keep the audience under pressure until they entered the reception. Once they

left the stage, the group donned their masks once more and lined the road outside the hall on both sides. Then as the audience emerged from the hall they were confronted once more by the masks whom they had come to associate with the evil of child labour. The masked group then escorted the audience to the reception where they left them for good.

The group was again overwhelmed by the reactions of the audience who left the hall after the theatre piece in various emotional and reflective states of mind. Following the performance, there were speeches and presentations by a government minister, representatives from IPEC and a representative from the group of young people involved. The young people were exhilarated and very emotional about the whole experience. As for the guests, it soon became evident that the evening had had a formidable impact on all of them, including the key decision-makers, who expressed their willingness to support future development of the project.

In terms of media coverage, three newspapers, two national and one regional, covered the evening and the awareness-week activities. In addition, a radio journalist present that evening interviewed various special guests and members of the group. Extracts from these interviews were broadcast on the local radio station.

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