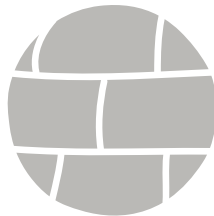


LESSON
4

ISSUES IN CONFLICT:
STREET CHILDREN



LESSON 4

ISSUES IN CONFLICT: STREET CHILDREN



OBJECTIVES

- 1 Examine the different ways that children's rights are protected, the actors involved and their roles
- 2 Learn how children's rights can be compromised by conflict and what they need if they don't have a safe place to live
- 3 Reflect on the similarities and differences between life in the UK and life for street children

Learners also get the opportunity to work in small groups and consider the ways in which they can support their peers in countries affected by conflict.



RESOURCES



In the classroom

- ➔ A set of cards from the worksheet 'Who keeps children safe?' for each pair of learners, cut up so learners can match them
- ➔ 'Street Children's Stories' worksheet printed for learners



On screen

- ➔ Street Children of Bangui from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](https://www.youtube.co.uk) (then search term War Child UK)



KEY TERMS AND QUESTIONS

What is daily life like for street children?

SOCIAL SERVICES

HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION

Who are the key actors in Child Protection and what are their roles?

CHILD PROTECTION

GOVERNMENT

What do children need to ensure they can have a childhood?

STREET CHILDREN

RESPONSIBILITIES

What do children in the UK have in common with a street child?



ACTIVITIES



Starter game

5 – 10
minutes

Working in pairs, learners use the *'Who keeps children safe?'* worksheet to match the different actors in child protection with what their responsibilities are, using the cut-out words and statements to help. Try to get learners to make the link between child protection, family, and the importance of a safe place to live, by asking them – what might be the consequences if one of the actors in child protection failed to do their job because of conflict?



Main activity

40 – 45
minutes

Explain to learners that ending up living and working on the street is one potential result when children aren't protected. Ask learners:

- ❓ *What does the term 'street children' mean to you?*
- ❓ *What do they think life might be like for a street child? What would they miss out on? Would their lives be worse or better than living at home?*
- ❓ *How similar or different do they think a street child's life might be to their own?*
- ❓ *How many street children do they think there are globally? (around 100 million)*

Learners watch the first 5 – 6 minutes of *'Street Children of Bangui'* from the War Child UK YouTube channel, and look for clues as to how the young people ended up living on the streets. What do the young people say about their families?

In groups of 4 – 6, learners then re-watch the short section of the film – this time, they choose a situation or anecdote from the stories to create a freeze-frame or short role-play, based on an aspect of life for street children in Central African Republic.

They have 5 – 10 minutes to prepare their performance then share with the rest of the group.

Now that learners have examined the different challenges that street children face, they can discuss some key questions about life for street children:

- ❓ *How can war and conflict make things even worse for street children?*
- ❓ *What might happen to them?*
- ❓ *What sort of help, support or change might they need? Help from the other countries like the UK is often called 'humanitarian aid' or 'international development'*

On the board, make a list of the types of intervention and support that learners have mentioned.

Learners then read the *'Street Children's stories'* on screen or printed out and discuss them either in groups or as a class, using some questions to help:

- ❓ *What did their experiences as a street child have in common with the boys in Bangui? Was there anything different?*
- ❓ *Did the changes in their lives match the types of support that learners mentioned beforehand? What was different? What do they think about the support they received?*
- ❓ *What does the support they received have in common with the things that children have in the UK to keep them safe?*



10 minutes

Plenary

Now that learners have found out about life for street children and the sort of support they need, they could **reflect on how conflict intensifies the challenges children face, and how this affects the kind of support that is needed.** *What do they think they could do to help street children?* If there's time, use a short news report from the War Child UK YouTube channel called 'War Child: Al Jazeera interview on CAR crisis' to facilitate this discussion.



Further resources

You could share with groups or the whole class some different perspectives on Child Protection and the issue of street children, for instance:

Film: 'Midnight in Kinshasa – Helping Street Children Stay Safe' from the War Child UK YouTube channel [youtube.co.uk](https://www.youtube.co.uk) (then search term 'War Child UK'). This video examines the impact War Child projects are having on street children's lives in DRC.

Written article: Learners could look at 'What happens in conflict-affected countries' from the Child Protection section of War Child's website, for a fuller examination of how communities, families and government can break down in the face of war and conflict [warchild.org.uk/issues/child-protection](https://www.warchild.org.uk/issues/child-protection)

Websites: [streetchildworldcup.org](https://www.streetchildworldcup.org) or [streetchildrenday.org](https://www.streetchildrenday.org). Learners could look at one or two resources or films from either website and examine why they think street children might want to have this kind of event, what they might get out of it, and whether learners think it's a good idea or not.



Further learning

Using the 'street children's stories' worksheet as a starting point, learners write the 'day in the life' of one of the children, from before they came into contact with War Child, and after. They could split the page in half and write the different days, and then compare them to see what impact War Child has had on their life.



Further action

Learners think about the question 'what makes you feel safe?' and complete a creative activity based on War Child's 2014 campaign 'Draw me to Safety' in collaboration with iconic fashion designer Stella McCartney. They create a piece of artwork answering the question 'what makes you feel safe?'

Children who are part of War Child's projects in conflict countries took part and their pictures, along with European entries, can be seen on War Child UK's Pinterest site [pinterest.com/warchilduk](https://www.pinterest.com/warchilduk)

Are there any similarities between what makes young people in conflict countries and the UK feel safe? (This activity would also work well to replace the role-play activity in this lesson if there isn't enough classroom space.)

Check out War Child's current campaigns, share your voice and get involved at [warchild.org.uk/campaigns](https://www.warchild.org.uk/campaigns)



WHO PROTECTS CHILDREN?

Copy and cut up enough sheets for each pair of learners to sort them into sets: actors in child protection and their responsibilities.

★ Family	Safe home ✓
★ Government	Education ✓
★ School	Knowledge about rights ✓
★ Community	Safe environment to play in ✓
Write laws to protect children ✓	Loving environment ✓
Skills so children can protect themselves from harm ✓	Provide legal protection of children's rights ✓
Basic needs like food and clothing ✓	Social services to step in if something is at risk of going wrong ✓
Chance to socialise and learn right from wrong ✓	Sense of belonging ✓

STREET CHILDREN'S STORIES

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TESTIMONIES

Abbas and Matteen from Afghanistan

What are you doing when the sun comes up?

Abbas, 15, and Matteen, 14, already work. They're good friends. They work together on the streets doing odd jobs and selling whatever they can to help make money for their families, who struggle to earn enough to buy food and pay for the basics like school and medicines. Matteen's parents died when he was quite young, while Abbas' father is addicted to drugs. The boys earn around 60p a day working from 6am till late in the evening.

What's the most exciting thing you've ever done?

Matteen's brother-in-law, Sher Khan, asked the boys if they were interested in learning how to ride motorbikes. This was an exciting prospect for the boys and they started taking lessons from Sher Khan. As he taught them to ride bikes, he became one of the boys' best friends, and he convinced them that if they could steal a motorbike, he would sell it and give them a portion of the profits. One morning Abbas and Matteen found a motorbike parked in front of a restaurant with its keys still in the ignition.

What would make you risk everything?

The boys saw a chance to earn some extra money and make their friend happy. So they stole the bike and rode it over to Sher Khan's house. But Abbas' dad spotted them going in, and later on, he confronted the boys about the bike. Abbas and Matteen admitted stealing, and Abbas' father made them

promise to return it straight away.

When was the last time you did something you regretted?

The boys went to retrieve the bike from Sher Khan's house, but Sher Khan wasn't happy about the prospect of giving up the bike and threatened to report the boys to the police. Abbas and Matteen decided to ignore Sher Khan's threats and took the bike back to the restaurant anyway. It must have taken a lot of courage to return to the scene of the theft. Suddenly, the police arrived and arrested them.

Have you ever felt like it's the end of the world?

The boys were taken to a children's jail, called a Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre. Abbas' family were horrified about what he'd done. Both boys were stuck in the centre while the case went to trial, and for a while the future looked very bleak for the two friends.

Have you ever had a second chance?

Luckily, Abbas and Matteen weren't sentenced to time in prison, and finally they were released when the trial ended. After the trial, War Child workers met with Abbas' family and eventually his family agreed to take Abbas back into their home.

With War Child's help, Abbas is learning to read and write in a War Child education centre. Matteen didn't even have a family to go back to. With War Child's support he moved to a local orphanage, where he is going to class. Life is still tough but thanks to War Child they're slowly turning their lives around.

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STREET CHILDREN'S STORIES

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TESTIMONIES

Abbas and Matteen from Afghanistan (cont...)

And as for Sher Khan, Abbas and Matteen filed a police report about his involvement in the bike theft. He was arrested and now he's in jail.

What do you collect?

Football cards? Lego? Badges? Key rings?

When Faheema was 12, she used to collect rubbish.

She should have been in school. Instead she spent her days walking the streets, going from bin to bin. She was looking for paper to use as firewood so she could bake bread for her family. And for plastic bottles she could wash and sell to local shops. Her family had nothing to survive on, so they had to let Faheema work on the streets.

Dressed in dirty rags, she was often violently abused by the street boys. There was no one she could turn to for help.

Have you ever meet someone that changed your life?

Here's the part where Faheema's story changes. Up until recently, life had dealt her a rotten hand. But one day she was handed a lifeline by one of War Child's outreach workers who found her and took her to their drop-in-centre. It's a warm, safe haven from the dangers of life on the streets.

She comes to the centre regularly and attends the literacy and numeracy classes. She also uses the children's club where

she can play with toys and, for a few hours a week, enjoy the simple pleasures of childhood.

War Child's team are working with Faheema's parents and are helping them find ways of earning more money so they don't need to send Faheema back onto the streets.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

App developer? Nurse? Film star? Chef?

Faheema's future is in the balance. Hopefully one day she'll go back to school and get a proper education. But this is a War Child story not a Walt Disney one – and they don't always end happily ever after.

Maybe she will go on to become a teacher. Faheema has dreams just like any other teenager. But maybe, despite her best efforts, conflict in the country will force her family back into the clutches of poverty and she'll end up as a 21 year old rubbish collector...

Abbas, Matteen and Faheema's names have been changed to protect their identities.