

‘Be an African Family’ role play activity

This activity helps your pupils to think about what life might be like for an African family living in poverty. It involves group work and group decisions, giving lots of scope for discussions during and after the role play.

Each sheet below describes the situation that a rural Ugandan family finds themselves in. In table groups, or ‘families’, pupils need to decide on the best course of action, giving reasons for their decisions.

How to run this role play:

- tell pupils that they will work in groups as families and need to discuss the decisions together. They will also need to nominate a spokesperson for the group for the feedback session.
- allocate the family sheets to table groups of about 5 or 6 pupils (note that the sheets are different and allocate them according to ability and be sensitive regarding the situations that the families are in).
- give family name stickers to each group to help them feel part of the ‘family’.
- describe the activity by running through a sheet with pupils and give them 15 minutes for discussion.
- go around each group, offering suggestions and challenging decisions.
- using the extra sheet at the base, give to the NADUKIS who then give the bottom half to the MUBITAS, highlighting the transforming power of a gift of livestock and training from Send a Cow.
- ask families to give feedback to the rest of the class and allow other pupils to ask questions about the decisions made.

Points to highlight:

- there are added ongoing benefits to owning livestock, such as manure production and milk etc.
- going to school is essential if children are to break out of the poverty trap.
- working in a town can be very dangerous and children may be forced to stay somewhere against their will.
- help the pupils be realistic about other money making ideas!

(Amounts of money in Ugandan Shillings have been simplified for this exercise.)

You are the NADUKI family and you live near Mbale.

The Family - Your family consists of your brothers and sisters, who are the children sitting around you, your Grandmother and some orphans that you have taken in. Your father died of Tuberculosis a few years ago and your mother died in child-birth, so you have to manage to survive by yourselves. The oldest child tries to help keep you fed and clothed, but it is hard work.



You all help each other as much as you can by fetching firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the cow and looking after the garden. You also all go to Primary school (except the eldest who stays at home and works), but you have to pay for books and pencils.

Food - In your garden you have planted sweetcorn, onions, groundnuts (pea-nuts), cabbages, cassava and spinach. You also have some trees which grow avocados and bananas and an old cow, which only gives 1 litre of milk a day.

Most of the food grown is eaten by the family, but some is sold at the local market. Last year was a good harvest and the family earned 1000 Shillings by selling fruit, vegetables and milk - just enough to meet the family's needs.

The challenge

- This year the rains have been unpredictable as the climate is changing. Many of the crops that were planted died as the soil was too dry and lifeless. The family only managed to earn 800 Shillings.
- Now your Grandmother is ill and needs medicine to keep her alive and your cow needs some care from a vet.
- To pay for everything that the family needs, you need to earn 250 Shillings somehow.

How will you find the extra money? What will you do?

You have several choices. You could...

a) Miss a term at school to help grow fruit and vegetables	Saving 30 per child
b) Eat less food	Saving 20 per child
c) Lend the cow to a neighbour	Saving 100
d) Send one of you into the town to try and earn money	Earning 60 per week
e) Work in a neighbour's garden and miss time at school	Earning 30 per week
f) Decide on another plan...	Earning...

Extra facts: Milk sells for Sh 5 per litre. Working in town can be dangerous and there is a risk that a child sent there may not return.

As a family, you need to decide what you are going to do. There will be advantages and disadvantages to whatever you do, write these down and choose a spokesperson who can tell the rest of the class about your decision.

You are the ODOKE family and you live near Mbale.

The Family - Your family consists of your brothers and sisters, who are the children sitting around you, and your Dad and Grandmother. Last year, your Mum died of AIDS and now your Dad has to work hard to look after you all, including your Grandmother.



You all help each other as much as you can by fetching firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the chickens and looking after the garden. You also all go to Primary school (except the eldest who stays at home and works), but you have to pay for books and pencils.

Food - In your garden you have all worked to plant sweetcorn, onions, millet, beans, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. You also have some trees which grow bananas and you own an old cow, which only gives 1 litre of milk a day but also gives manure for growing vegetables.

Most of the food grown is eaten by the family, but some is sold at the local market. Last year there was a good harvest and the family earned 1000 Shillings selling vegetables and milk - just enough for the family's needs.

The challenge

- This year the rains have been unpredictable as the climate is changing and the seedlings you sowed died. The family only managed to earn 800 Shillings.
- Now your Grandmother is ill and needs medicine to keep her alive and the price of foods such as rice have doubled.
- To pay for everything that the family needs, you need to earn 250 Shillings somehow.

How will you find the extra money? What will you do?

You have several choices. You could...

a) Miss a term at school to help grow vegetables	Saving 30 per child
b) Eat less food	Saving 20 per child
c) Lend the cow to a neighbour	Earning 100
d) Send one of you into the town to try and earn money	Earning 60 per week
e) Work in a neighbour's garden and miss time at school	Earning 30 per week
f) Decide on another plan...	Earning...

Extra facts: Milk sells for 5 Shillings per litre. Working in town can be dangerous and there is a risk that a child sent there may not return.

As a family, you need to decide what you are going to do. There will be advantages and disadvantages to whatever you do, write these down and choose a spokesperson who can tell the rest of the class about your decision.

You are the MUBITA family and you live near Mbale.

The Family - Your family consists of your brothers and sisters, who are the children sitting around you, your Mother, Father, Grandparents and some orphaned cousins who you have taken in. Your parents try to help keep you all fed and clothed, but it is hard work.



You all help each other as much as you can by fetching firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning and looking after the garden. You also all go to Primary school, but you have to pay for books and pencils and often have to miss days as you have to help with the jobs.

Food - In your garden you have all worked to plant sweetcorn, onions, millet, beans, cassava, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. You also have some trees which grow bananas and you collect manure from neighbours' goats and cows to help your vegetables grow.

Most of the food grown is eaten by the family, but some is sold at the local market. Last year there was a good harvest and the family earned 300 Shillings (about £10) selling fruit and vegetables - just enough for the family's needs.

The challenge

- This year the rains have been unpredictable as the climate is changing. Many of the crops that were planted were washed away by heavy rains. The family only managed to earn 200 Shillings.
- Now your brother is ill and will need medicine to keep him alive, costing 50 Shillings and the price of rice has doubled.
- To pay for everything that the family needs, you need to earn 200 Shillings somehow.

How will you find the extra money? What will you do?

You have several choices. You could...

a) Miss a term at school to help grow vegetables	Saving 20 per child
b) Eat less food	Saving 20 per child
c) Send one of you into the town to try and earn money	Earning 60 per week
d) Work in a neighbour's garden and miss time at school	Earning 30 per week
e) Decide on another plan...	Earning...

Extra facts: Working in town can be dangerous and there is a risk that a child sent there may not return.

As a family, you need to decide what you are going to do. There will be advantages and disadvantages to whatever you do, write these down and choose a spokesperson who can tell the rest of the class about your decision.

You are the AKELLOS family and you live near Masaka.

The Family - Your family consists of your brothers and sisters, who are the children sitting around you, your Mother and some orphan children that you have taken in. Your Dad died of AIDS a few years ago. Your Mum tries to help keep you all fed and clothed, but it is hard work.



You all help each other as much as you can by fetching firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the chickens and looking after the garden. You also all go to Primary school, but you have to pay for books and pencils.

Food - In your garden you have all worked to plant sweetcorn, onions, millet, beans, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. You also have some trees which grow bananas and you own three chickens, which lay two eggs a day and give manure for growing vegetables.

Most of the food grown is eaten by the family, but some is sold at the local market. Last year there was a good harvest and the family earned 300 Shillings (about £10) selling vegetables and eggs - just enough for the family's needs.

The challenge

- This year the rains have been unpredictable as the climate is changing. Many of the crops that were planted were washed away by heavy rains. The family only managed to earn 200 Shillings.
- Now your brother is ill with Malaria and will need medicine to keep him alive, costing 100 Shillings.
- To pay for everything that the family needs, you need to earn 200 Shillings somehow.

How will you find the extra money? What will you do?

You have several choices. You could...

a) Miss a term at school to help grow vegetables	Saving 20 per child
b) Eat less food	Saving 20 per child
c) Sell the chickens	Saving 50 per chicken
d) Send one of you into the town to try and earn money	Earning 60 per week
e) Work in a neighbour's garden and miss time at school	Earning 30 per week
f) Decide on another plan...	Earning...

Extra facts: eggs sell for 2 Shillings each. Working in town can be dangerous and there is a risk that a child sent there may not return.

As a family, you need to decide what you are going to do. There will be advantages and disadvantages to whatever you do, write these down and choose a spokesperson who can tell the rest of the class about your decision.

You are the KWAPUTS family and you live near Masaka.

The Family - Your family consists of your brothers and sisters, who are the children sitting around you. Your father died of Tuberculosis a few years ago and your mother died in child-birth, so you have to manage to survive by yourselves. The oldest child tries to help keep you fed and clothed, but it is hard work.



You all help each other as much as you can by fetching firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, taking care of the chickens and looking after the garden. You also all go to Primary school (except the eldest who stays at home and works), but you have to pay for books and pencils.

Food - In your garden you have all worked to plant sweetcorn, onions, millet, beans, tomatoes and sweet potatoes. You also have some trees which grow bananas and you own three chickens, which lay two eggs a day and give manure for growing vegetables.

Most of the food grown is eaten by the family, but some is sold at the local market. Last year there was a good harvest and the family earned 300 Shillings (about £10) selling vegetables and eggs - just enough for the family's needs.

The challenge

- This year the rains have been unpredictable as the climate is changing. Many of the crops that were planted were washed away by heavy rains. The family only managed to earn 200 Shillings.
- Now your brother is ill with Typhoid and will need medicine to keep him alive, costing 50 Shillings.
- To pay for everything that the family needs, you need to earn 150 Shillings somehow.

How will you find the extra money? What will you do?

You have several choices. You could...

a) Miss a term at school to help grow vegetables	Saving 20 per child
b) Eat less food	Saving 20 per child
c) Sell the chickens	Saving 50 per chicken
d) Send one of you into the town to try and earn money	Earning 60 per week
e) Work in a neighbour's garden and miss time at school	Earning 30 per week
f) Decide on another plan...	Earning...

Extra facts: eggs sell for 2 Shillings each. Working in town can be dangerous and there is a risk that a child sent there may not return.

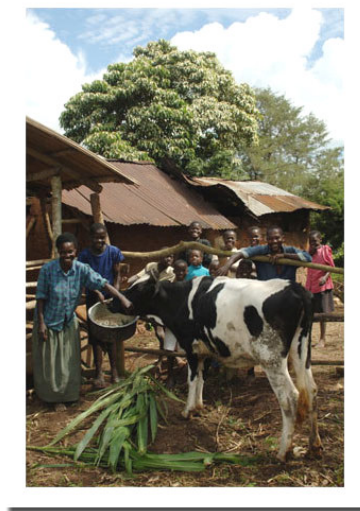
As a family, you need to decide what you are going to do. There will be advantages and disadvantages to whatever you do, write these down and choose a spokesperson who can tell the rest of the class about your decision.

NADUKIS

You are part of a group that will be working with Send a Cow. The group has decided that you are very needy as there are so many children to look after. They can also see that you have enough resources to be able to look after a cow.

This means a huge change for you.

As well as being given a cross-bred cow, you get training in how to make compost and liquid fertiliser and shown how to use manure on your land, as well as how to make bag and keyhole gardens that grow lots of crops.



This means that:

- You now get twice as many crops from your land, as the compost, manure and new types of gardens help the plants grow well and hold rainwater in dry weather. So you sell extra fruit and vegetables, **giving you Sh 2000 in the coming year's harvests!**
- The cow gives about 12 litres of milk a day and the whole family has milk to drink. **You can sell eight litres of milk a day at the local market, for 5 Shillings a litre.**
- You agree to pass on the first female calf to another poor family, who also receive the same training and benefits that you received.

Please now cut the bottom section off and pass on your female calf to the MUBITA family.

MUBITAS

The NADUKIS and you are part of a group that has been working with Send a Cow. They were given a dairy cow and training by the charity. Their cow has now had a female calf, which they are passing on to your family!

Before being given the calf, you get training in how to make compost and liquid fertiliser and about using manure on your land, as well how to make bag and keyhole gardens.



This means that:

- You now get more than twice as many crops from your land as the compost, manure and new types of gardens help the plants grow well and hold rainwater. So you sell extra fruit and vegetables, **giving you 1,500 Shillings in the coming year's harvests!**
- Next year your calf will be able to give you about 8 litres of milk a day and the whole family will have milk to drink. You will be able to sell five litres of milk a day at the local market, for 5 Shillings a litre.

In time, your calf will grow up and have a female calf that you can also pass on to another poor family, who also receive the same training and benefits that you received.