

## Humanitarian Aid Action Guide

### 1. Become Interested

The first step towards making a change is to become better informed. That's why we encourage you to think, seek information and exchange views. Here are some ways you can do that.

- Look for as many sources of information as you can. Be curious. Have you read an interesting article in a newspaper? Keep on searching. There are many more sources of information besides just the mainstream media. Organisations working on humanitarian issues within your country have a vast amount of knowledge.
- React when you observe anything that undermines somebody's dignity, particularly that of victims of armed conflict and natural disasters. Do not allow expressions of hostility, aggression and xenophobia to go unchallenged. Object to them publicly, but take care not to place yourself in danger.
- Be compassionate. Stop and think how people affected by a humanitarian emergency may feel, and think about the types of support being provided by both local and international organisations. Don't be afraid to ask your teachers, friends and family "Why?" many times. Try to connect single events with other global issues (such as climate change, economic development and armed conflict).

### 2. Raise Awareness

Plan a project that gets your friends and others better informed and involved.

- First, find friends in school or your local community who share your interest in the issue.
- Identify a suitable adult to support you. This could be a teacher, a relative or another responsible adult. Identify any links you may have with community groups or local media. They might be able to help get your messages out.
- Remember, your action doesn't need to cost you anything. The most important thing is to have a good idea and work with a group of people who are passionate about changing things. If you do need financial support, you can always ask your school or local businesses. Speak to a responsible adult to help you with approaching the relevant people.



*Natalia Łątka/PAH, Cracow, March 2015. Walk for Water" organised by volunteers in Cracow*

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### 3. Get Planning

If you already have a group to take action with, you should now decide on the type of action you want to take. There are plenty of ways to get involved. Here are some ideas:

- You could set up a book club where you can discuss books which highlight the effects of humanitarian emergencies around the world. For example, 'With Syrians on Their Escape to Europe' by German journalist Wolfgang Bauer has been translated into several European languages.
- You could organise a film evening and have a conversation about what you have seen. For example, UNICEF has produced three short animations called 'Unfair Tales' about the impact of the Syrian conflict on children.
  - Malak and the boat: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UMjSZaMY2Y> (1'57").
  - Ivine and pillow: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3scOr\\_d9Dwo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3scOr_d9Dwo) (2'35").
  - Mustafa goes for a walk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mfkYtZkPVO> (2'15").
- You could organise a fundraising event to support a local or international humanitarian organisation working to provide aid to countries affected by a humanitarian emergency.
- You could find an activity or game that would help you learn more about the topic. For example, there is a version of Oxfam's 'Vulnerability Game' (in English), which places you in the role of a humanitarian worker, in this schools resource: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/south-sudan>.

### 4. Influence

No matter if you live in a big or a small city, if you are 13 or 17 – you still have a responsibility for the world you live in and you can influence politicians' decisions. There are many actions you can take.

- If you spend time on social media, express your opinion on humanitarian emergencies by sharing and commenting on articles. Make sure you stay safe online.
- Prepare a petition to show your solidarity with people forced to flee conflict and disaster and call for action. Hand it to local authorities, Members of Parliament or members of corporate governing bodies. You can find many templates on the internet which will help you to put your thoughts into formal language.
- Work with friends to write an article or make a film about the types of humanitarian aid needed and/or being provided in countries affected by humanitarian emergencies.
- Show others that young people are concerned about these issues.

PAH, 2012. Volunteers at OPENER FESTIVAL in Poland, 2012.



Other ways to get involved:

- The Syria Campaign: <https://thesyriacampaign.org/>.
- Young Pioneer Disaster Response. Volunteers who rebuild damaged infrastructure after natural disasters: <https://ypdr.org>.
- UNICEF Children on the Move: 'What Can I Do?': [http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/childrenonthemove/90514\\_90528.html](http://www.unicef.org/emergencies/childrenonthemove/90514_90528.html).