

Donor for a Day Workshops Final Report

Sponsored by Charlie Goldsmith Associates
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Charlie ██████████
Goldsmith ██████████
Associates ██████████



Aid Works

Donor for a Day Workshops – Final Report

'I learned that choosing whether or not to assist a country is a delicate matter, which many factors can influence.'

School student



Introduction

Charlie Goldsmith Associates (CGA) sponsored Aid Works to run a series of workshops called '[Donor for a Day](#)'. The workshops provided an interactive taster on the aid sector, for pre-university students, giving them a basic understanding of international aid work, a flavour of what it is like to work in an emergency and links to relevant university courses.

In 2015, these workshops have become especially relevant, with mainstream news focusing on military solutions to complex emergencies, and little information about the work the UK government and charities do in contending with humanitarian needs.

The workshops

The world is becoming more complex, with an increasing number of emergencies, violent crises and people in need of aid. Many young people are passionate about humanitarian issues, playing an important role in fundraising activities and raising awareness, but crises such as the Syria or South Sudan are hard to understand.

Lively and interactive, a session on 'The Big Debates' challenged students' perceptions of foreign aid by debating current hot topics in the news. These were updated for every workshop to engage the students to the fullest extent possible. In the 'You are the Donor' session, students worked in groups as a UK government task force to decide how to allocate foreign aid in a fictitious conflict that has led to a refugee crisis. See Annex for the workshop factsheet.

'I really liked the debating because you can see what other people have considered and thought about.'

School student

In a final session we discussed potential university courses linked with aid work, to show how multi-disciplinary the sector is and to encourage students into further education.

The workshops were aligned with the UK government-supported concept of global learning¹ for children. We provided:

¹ <https://globaldimension.org.uk/glp/page/11255>

- + A critical examination of global issues
- + An awareness of the impact an individual can make
- + Optimism and action for a better world.

We offered a product and approach to engaging students that no other international development training organisation provides.

[Mo and Mia](#) facilitated the workshops, supported by a team of student outreach officers recruited from local universities.

The schools

In 2015 CGA provided funding to run workshops in three schools. We worked with the Outreach Activities Manager from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Sheffield to contact local schools in deprived areas that would most benefit from the workshops. As a result of this, we leveraged funding from the university for one extra workshop – because this was a direct result of the CGA funding, we have included all four schools in this report.

We offered the workshops to a range of schools. Those that expressed interest were assessed to see where we could make the most impact.² The assessment used the following tools:

- + The HEFCE POLAR³ score, which shows participation rates of young people in higher education;
- + The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), the official measure of relative deprivation; and
- + The schools' Ofsted⁴ inspection reports, which provided contextual information about students at a given school.

The schools selected were: Handsworth Grange Community Sports College, Firth Park Academy, Retford Post 16 Centre and Fir Vale School. All four have low POLAR and IMD scores, and high numbers of students from ethnic minorities, students who speak English as a second language, students supported by School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and/or students eligible for free school meals.

Our impact

'It was really interesting to look at the different aspects of how aid money is distributed.'

School student

Student evaluations

- + 100% said that they found the workshops interesting
- + 93% said that they learned something new about aid work
- + 86% said that they thought they could make a difference to ending poverty
- + 91% said they felt they had more self-confidence
- + 100% said they felt more motivated to do well in their school/college work
- + 96% said their knowledge about university had increased
- + 61% said they felt more confident about how well they would fit in at university
- + 96% said they would like to do similar workshops again.

² Five additional schools were turned away

³ HEFCE – Higher Education Funding Council for England; POLAR – Participation of Local Areas classification

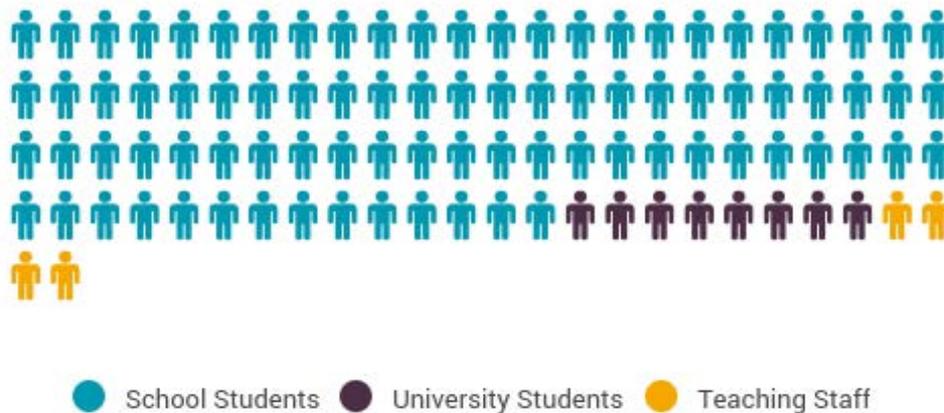
⁴ Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Beneficiaries reached

A total of 86 students from years 9 to 13 participated across the four workshops, along with four teaching staff. Eight university students supported us in the Outreach Team, which provided them with valuable work experience and a total of 45 hours of paid work.

Figure 1 Breakdown of workshop participants



Workshop highlights

The Big Debates

'I was quite shocked at what a small amount of money we give as a country.'

School student

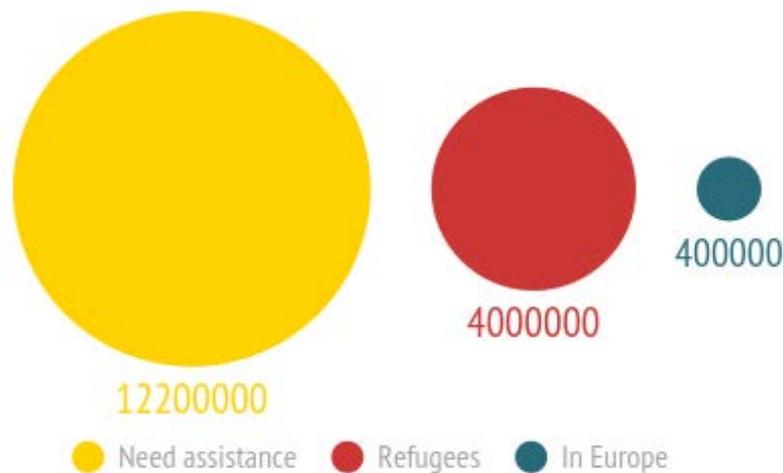
'The Big Debates' activity was popular with all the students, who were not used to being asked their opinions in the classroom. They really enjoyed expressing their own views and challenging those of their classmates. Over the course of the debates, a number of key learning points were made that led to many students changing their opinions. In particular:

- + All students overestimated how much money the UK government gives in overseas aid. Equally, they learned that the UK provides a lot of non-monetary support.
- + Comparing the affected population of the Nepal earthquake in April 2015 to the population of Yorkshire/Derbyshire/Manchester changed many students' minds about whether we should help countries that have experienced a disaster.
- + One of the most hotly debated topics was the issue of refugees, and how we might best help Syrians affected. Students made brilliant arguments, which really made their classmates think about alternative points of view. There was great surprise that only 10% of Syrian refugees have come to Europe, again highlighting the way media skew our perception of situations.
- + The students gained a perspective on UK media coverage; they noted that the media does not always portray things accurately.

Example of key facts in the debate

- + *The Syrian conflict has been raging for more than 4 years*
- + *12.2 million people need assistance in Syria*
- + *4 million are refugees in neighbouring countries*
- + *Only 400,000 are seeking assistance in Europe (see Figure 2).*

Figure 2 Syrians affected by the war in October 2015



You are the Donor

'I learned that there are no right or wrong answers to what is best for different countries and different situations.'

School student

For the 'You are the Donor' refugee simulation, the students raised some excellent points, including the role of religion; whether a local NGO might be partial to the conflict; the long-term effects of giving to government/local organisations vs. international ones; the expertise and knowledge of different recipients; the dangers of giving a small organisation a large amount of money; and potential corruption. Some students questioned the efficacy of aid – is it working if we're still in some of these countries years later?

Linking to university courses

'We got to work with people who've been to university and have lots of advice.'

School student

We ran sessions on links to university courses to show the multi-disciplinary nature of the sector. Given our focus on under-privileged schools, we worked with the University of Sheffield to provide key information about going to university.

52% of students' parents/guardians did

Among the students surveyed, 52% said that their parents/guardians did not go to university, so the workshops' positive messages about going to university, which reduced fears about barriers such as tuition fees, were a bonus. Members of the Outreach Team had informal one-to-one conversations with school students during the workshops, another unique opportunity. Students also had lots of questions about being an aid worker. Many were surprised to hear that you could get paid for the work and make a career in the sector – this is something that is simply not discussed as a career path in schools.

not go to university

Teachers' feedback

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from all of the schools. Teachers told us that the workshops supported them in fulfilling their curriculum requirements for global learning and sustainable development, while also helping to prepare students for their Geography GCSE decision-making paper.

'The Donor for a Day workshop was extremely informative. The decision-making part of the session was brilliant for getting the students to think about the complexities underlying aid – the discussions that they had were also really good for getting them to think more about the mechanics behind decision making.'

Greg Spicer, Subject Leader Geography, Handsworth Grange Community Sports College

'I honestly thought that the session was fabulous – incredibly informative, interactive and the kids thought it was great – certainly made them think! They all commented that it must be very difficult to decide who gets money and who doesn't.'

Beci Easton, Lead Teacher Geography and Humanities, Firth Park Academy

'A lot of the students who are a bit more shy did well speaking in front of a large group. On the other hand, the boys – who usually mess around a lot – were taken out of their comfort zone and were unusually attentive! The students did well justifying their opinions and it really made them think about their answers.'

J. Chapman, Fir Vale School

Firth Park School took our workshop a step further and students presented a summary of the workshop at their school assembly, sharing the debates discussed and questions raised with the whole school.

Visibility

We have acknowledged CGA's generous support on our website – in a news article, using CGA's logo on our Get the North to the South page and including CGA on our Links page. We have also mentioned CGA on social media (Facebook, Twitter), in our newsletter, and in all the workshop materials, including factsheets, certificates, workbooks and presentations. We will also publish this report online with CGA's logo.

The future

'I enjoyed learning new things I won't learn in school.'

School student

Thanks to CGA's support, we have been able to offer a product and approach to engaging students that no other international development training organisation provides. We are open to suggestions on how to expand or continue the scheme in 2016.

A natural progression to increase reach is to produce an online version. The workshop's interactive nature, particularly the 'You are the Donor' session, can be replicated in a web app enabling a national audience, providing a reusable resource which can be updated regularly.

All of the teachers requested further workshops, to open the opportunity to more students from their schools. Firth Park's work, in creating a presentation for a school assembly, will be a prerequisite for school participation in future workshops, to promote peer-to-peer discussions and information sharing.

We have approached Sheffield City Council to discuss how Aid Works could help with anti-extremism strategies and promoting British values, because we believe that the workshops are a way to promoting positive means of helping overseas. We submitted a follow-on workshop proposal to the council called 'Affecting Change in Conflicts'. The current budget cuts councils face mean that no funding is available to continue running the workshops.

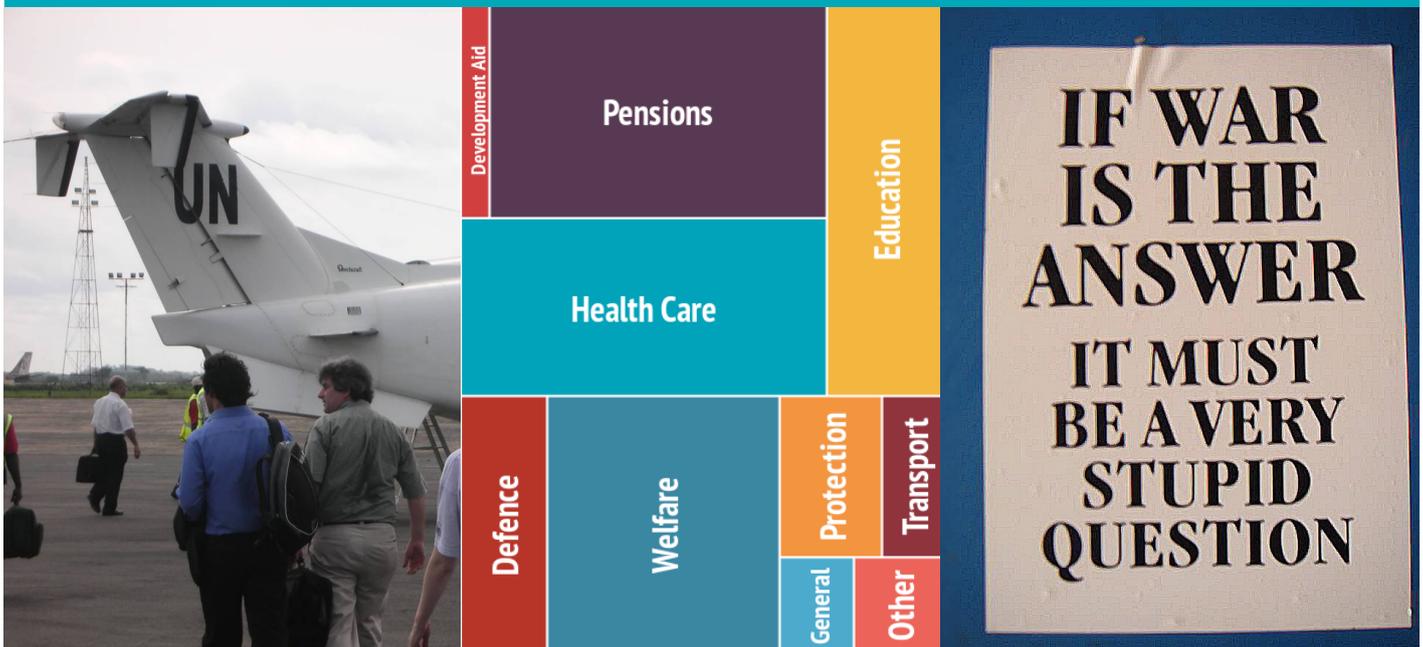
86% of participants said that they thought they could make a difference to ending poverty.

In any future workshop designs we will make sure that discussions and activities are aligned with the UK government's new aid strategy released recently.

Annex



An introduction to the aid sector



The world is becoming more complex, with an increasing number of emergencies, violent crises and people in need of aid. However, the work done by the UK government and charities in international development can seem far removed from our daily lives in the UK.

Many young people are passionate about humanitarian issues, playing an important role in fundraising activities and raising awareness.

This half-day workshop provides an interactive taster for pre-university students, giving them a basic understanding of international aid work, a flavour of what it is like to work in an emergency and links to relevant university courses.

What does the workshop cover?

- The workshop is based on current global events. It will cover:
- the definition of international aid with examples
 - current global debates
 - the role of the UK government and donors
 - the role of charities and local actors
 - an assessment of a fictional crisis.

By the end of the workshop students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of international aid
- Form opinions on how and why development support is provided
- Practice core skills around problem solving, numeracy and communication
- Learn about courses and careers linked with development work
- Meet aid workers
- Be inspired about the difference we can make!

How is the workshop structured?

The workshop is very interactive. We ask students to voice their opinions and engage in debates about recent global issues in the news. We then take them into a simulation exercise where they will assess the needs of a fictional crisis and decide how best to respond.

Is this workshop for me?

The course is designed for pre-university students and can be adapted to take into account the local university courses available or topics linked to their studies.

How do I book the course?

We run this course upon request. If you are interested email us on info@aidworks.org.uk

What other courses are available?

For schools we also run a 2 hour course called "Shelter in Emergencies". For older students, we run a one-day course called "Careers in Aid".

See www.aidworks.org.uk for more details.

NORTH + SOUTH

This workshop is part of our Get the North to the South initiative, bringing development skills and knowledge to the North of England, and sharing them with the world.

Aid Works helps organizations in Africa to strengthen their systems and supports local and international development workers to reach their potential.

Supported by:

Charlie Goldsmith Associates