

THE COMMUNITY GAME

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OBJECTIVE // To introduce participants to the realities of community destruction for resource extraction, and to learn about how DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE works with communities in defending their land and lives.

TIME // 1.5-2 hours

GROUP SIZE // 10-50 people

MATERIALS // Assortment of recyclable materials ... anything that can be used to build, and constructions materials such as glue, glue-guns, tape, paint, markers, etc.

PREPARATION //

- Ask a few leaders, students & their families, or neighbours to collect their recyclables for a few weeks: all kinds of cardboard, plastic, bottles, containers, toilet paper rolls, etc. All kinds of materials can be used in this game.
- Review activity, and prepare the leaders to join in the fun without giving anything away, and to be ready to respond to upset students after destruction.

OUTLINE //

*There are two parts to this activity. The **first** is an activity, where groups create a rural community. The **second** is a skit, where each small group will act out a different part.*

PART **1**

BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY NEVER DO THIS WITHOUT LOTS OF TIME TO DEBRIEF.

1. Divide participants and leaders into groups of about 5-6 people. Give participants about 45 minutes to build a town in a rural area, make farmland and trees. Put all the materials in one place and have a member of each group come to get whatever they want. Tell them to make it as beautiful as possible and to fantasize about a perfect community. Put on some nice, soothing music (classical, Enya, whatever).
2. Don't tell them what is coming next.

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3. Ask them to stop construction and then rotate the groups to different towns. Give them time to observe and appreciate the town.
4. Explain that they left their community because they work for a mining company. Their company has bought the rights to the minerals found under the community that they are standing in front of. E.g: A group leader runs into the room and commands, "This town is sitting on a huge reserve of gold and copper. As your boss, I order you to clear the land and develop a mine here." Give the participants 10-20 seconds to destroy the town to get to the minerals beneath. Put on some destructive music (Rage Against the Machine, Slipknot etc.)
5. Their work with the mining company ends. Send them back to their own community and give them 15 minutes to rebuild. Put the nice music back on. During the rebuilding, they may not have any new materials, only glue. They must use whatever is left from the destruction. Announce that their local water source has been contaminated by the mining activities and they must find a new source of water.

WARNING:
Some participants may be very upset. That is ok.
It is part of the activity, but be prepared to talk about that
and deal with these feelings.

6. DEBRIEF –
Start with questions like ...
 - How did you feel when you were building your community? Saw your community in ruins? Destroying? Rebuilding? etc.

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- What did you think about when you were destroying? Did you think about not doing it? Why did you do it? Why did you not do it? (Often there are some who refrain.)
- Did you try and defend your community from the mine? Why?
- Are there times when you need to disobey? Is it enough to not participate?
- What did your community look like when you rebuilt it?

These are only some ideas. They may also just want to talk.

KEY POINTS

- It is difficult for communities to recover after a mining operation (e.g.: water is contaminated, forests removed).
- Local people are often not consulted before mining operations begin
- Mining and resource extraction often leads to conflict within communities
- Civil disobedience
- Who benefits from company's actions? Who loses?

**We shall have to repent in this generation, not so much
for the evil deeds of the wicked people, but for the
appalling silence of the good people.**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Inspired by Cities Game, from Dave MacPherson, davemac_rmt@hotmail.com, Children's International Summer Villages (CISV), originally printed in THINKfast 2004.



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**PART
2**

**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE
DEFEND THEIR COMMUNITY**

A DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE PARTNER PROFILE

Tambogrande, Peru

A Positive Example of Community Action

This provides an example of what is possible when people defend their community from an impending mining operation and how funds raised during THINKfast are used to support communities like Tambogrande.

ACTIVITY: Let group know that The Communities Game isn't just a game, this kind of dramatic change happens in the real world. We're going to tell the story of Tambogrande together.

You'll need 3 small groups to act out one of each of the perspectives (people of Tambogrande, the mining company and DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE) and present to the larger group. Photocopy the scripts of the social situation and response and give each group one part. Each group can take 10-15 min to prepare their part. To make sure the groups don't forget any key details, you may want to provide a prop for each of the underlined words.

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Scripts of the social situation and response:

The perspective of the people in Tambogrande:

A Canadian mining company, Manhattan Minerals, is going to dig a mine right in the middle of our town. We were not consulted on whether or not we wanted the mine. The national government decided for us. We should be involved in decisions that affect our lives. Over 25,000 people live and farm in Tambogrande. This mine will destroy our community and our ability to live off the land growing limes and lemons. Eight thousand homes are at risk of being destroyed to mine the gold underneath. We are standing strong against the mine and are holding many protest marches despite arbitrary arrests, threats and the assassination of one of our community leaders. We will stand up so that our voices are heard. Manhattan is not welcome here.

The perspective of the Canadian mining company (Manhattan Minerals):

We have a right to extract minerals in Tambogrande. The government gave us rights to the land. We have the support of the Peruvian and Canadian governments because we are bringing development to Peru. Everything we're doing is legal, it's our land now. The mine will be good for them, we are providing jobs and we will raise their standard of living by taking them away from subsistence farming. The mine will bring nothing but good to the community.

Response by DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE:

For many years we have financially supported the local organizations in Tambogrande. They asked us to help them in their fight with the mine. Some of our members went to visit the community and we invited one of their community members, Marita Orbegoso, to do a speaking tour across Canada to inform people of her community's fight. During this time thousands of petitions were collected and many people became aware of Tambogrande's situation.



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On June 2, 2002, a referendum was held in Tambogrande to determine whether or not they wanted mining in their community. We paid for international observers to oversee the referendum. Thousands of residents arrived to cast their votes and an astounding 98.65 % voted against the mine. Even though 74% of the community had voted and had the whole process monitored by a team of international observers, those in favour of the mine dismissed it as an illegal action. The same day, the Manhattan shares dropped 53%. Finally, in December 2003 the government decided to end its agreement with Manhattan Minerals.

In 2006, we at DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE promoted our mining campaign that stated that the Canadian government needed to make the environmental and human rights standards for mining companies in the Global South mandatory, not voluntary. The ways in which the Canadian government supports international development needs to take into account how investing in the mining industry affects local populations. We need to ensure that the products and policies we support respect local populations and their environments.