

ACTIVISM DODGEBALL

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OBJECTIVE // To generate ideas for group action for social change. To recognize that different actions target different audiences. To begin the group's follow-up on what they have learned.

TIME// 30 to 60 minutes

GROUP SIZE// Any

MATERIALS // GOOS (Good On One Side) paper; pens or pencils; 4 buckets/baskets; flipchart paper; markers/ pens; tape/clips

PREPARATIONS//

- Tear scrap paper into quarters.
- Make four labels ('Friends & Family', 'Businesses', 'Government', 'General Public') and attach each sign to one of the buckets/baskets.

HOW IT'S DONE//

1. Divide the participants into 2 teams. Give each team a pile of GOOS paper and some markers/pens.
2. Explain that there are lots of things that we can do as individuals to raise awareness about the issue(s) discussed (food sovereignty, mining, water, etc). Different actions are aimed at different audiences, like an ad campaign may be aimed at the general public while a product boycott would target a business.
3. Tell the group they are going to play a game of dodgeball to see how creative they can be in coming up with ideas to take action. Participants will have 5 minutes to write down as many ideas as they can – a different idea on each piece of paper – then scrunch them up into balls. Invite the participants to consider the four audiences of Friends & Family, General Public, Government and Business to help them think of different actions they can take. The more ideas the team has, the more paper balls there will be with which to play dodgeball!

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4. After the paper balls are formed, collect the pens and any unused paper, and ensure all participants understand the rules:
 - a. Each team throws their paper balls at the opposing team, aiming at the body rather than the head
 - b. If a ball is caught before it bounces, the thrower is eliminated
 - c. Loose balls on the ground can be picked up to be thrown again
 - d. Teams must stay on their half of the room
 - e. When persons are hit they should collect the paper ball that hit them and sit down at the side of the room. While seated, they should open the paper and read the idea for action, and determine who is targeted by the action: government, general public, businesses, friends/family
 - f. The game will end when all the players of one team have been eliminated
5. Play dodgeball!
6. When the game is over, have students collect all the pieces of paper and gather everyone around the buckets. Ask each person to read their action out loud and suggest the targeted audience (e.g. businesses, government, general public, friends/family). Seek thoughts and consensus from the group about which audience the action most directly targets, and ask the participant to dunk the ball into the appropriate bucket. You can ask them to throw it from a set distance or different points in the room.
7. (Alternative: have students stay seated where they were hit. Those who are still standing at the end of the game sit where they are standing when the game ends. The discussion proceeds, with participants throwing their paper balls from their seats toward the appropriate bucket – this can add points to change which team wins the game!)
8. Once all the paper balls are in the buckets ask the group to discuss:
 - a. What this game tells us about the actions for social justice we can take?
 - b. Why is it important to raise awareness among different kinds of audiences?
9. Have the group select one or two actions to do together to raise awareness on a particular social justice issue (e.g. food security), and begin preparations!

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KEY POINTS//

- Like any physical activity, there are certain necessary precautions to consider when playing dodge ball to ensure both safety and an inclusive and positive atmosphere. Anyone who cannot physically participate may act as a referee, a bucket guard, or can begin conversation about target audiences with those who are eliminated.
- If the group is particularly large and you have a large space, consider having multiple teams. A circle at the center of the room is off-limits, allowing all teams to play against all teams rather than just their neighbours.¹

1 Adapted from 'Youth for Fair Trade' Coventry Cathedral & Y Care International, Activity 11, Page 62.