

Lesson title:

What kind of charity is Christian Aid?



This lesson considers Christian Aid's foundations as a Christian charity, with reference to biblical teachings. It explores the practical work Christian Aid undertakes to tackle poverty, drawing attention to the wide range of projects which Christian Aid supports through partner organisations in countries worldwide. It also encourages students to think about the current global pressures of climate change, poverty, food insecurity, plus the impacts of conflict and natural disasters.

Flexibilities:

The learning ideas in this lesson can be used as they are written, but they are flexible. You might like to try:

- simplifying the role play by giving just six projects and a budget of £50,000
- setting an extended writing task for high achievers, asking them to justify their conclusion with evidence and arguments
- asking students to consider the argument that as charities do work which governments should be doing, we should not support them
- engaging with real Christian Aid projects using the website christianaid.org.uk for research – the

eight we suggest are simplified and fictionalised to an extent

- asking high achieving students to take four real Christian Aid projects and write up reasons why they should receive support from a charity that is Christian, committed to the poor and global in scope
- further exploration on the web to compare these Christian Aid projects to those from a world development charity based in another religion such as Judaism or Islam
- drawing attention to Christian beliefs and teachings about money, poverty, generosity and equality in both the Bible and contemporary churches.

Good learning: what's working well here?

- Many students love role play
- Group work and dialogue helps students to encounter different views
- Decision-making and judgement tasks get pupils to 'come off the fence' and reason their own position
- The 'real life' pressures of charities having more needs than funds can get students interested as well as encouraging empathy
- Biblical and theological ideas are woven into a practical context.

Text and Beliefs

This work enables students to study some biblical verses about living well, and consider what they mean and how they can be interpreted.

Impact

Students examine the ways these biblical and spiritual ideas make a difference in the practice of Christian Aid, analysing and applying beliefs and values to 'real world' issues.

Connections

Students could be challenged to consider what impact these beliefs and values might have on their own opinions and behaviour: would the world be a better place if we all followed these teachings? In what ways? Would students want to work for an organisation that was committed to global justice?

Learning outcomes:

Emerging

- connect one biblical principle with Christian Aid's development work
- explain the aims of one Christian Aid project.

Expected

- explain how one Christian Aid project empowers a community
- offer an account of how funding decisions in a charity should be made
- explain how Christian Aid works in partnership with local groups
- explain how Christian Aid attempts to put its values into action.

Exceeding

- offer a view as to how far Christian Aid meets its Christian aims in the work it does
- offer a comment on how values are affected by issues of cost and practicality.

Teaching notes

Preparing for this lesson

You will find it helpful to think about what your students already know about global inequality and poverty.

Starter activity: Connecting Christian Aid's work with a vision of human life in all its fullness

- a) The starter sheet contains instructions for helping students to consider Christian Aid's mission in relation to Bible verses about peace, prosperity and love.
- b) RE and RME exams ask students to make connections and links like those made in this activity. A critique of simplistic 'proof texting' will be suitable for higher achieving students.

Main activity: Role-playing a funding committee

- c) Put students into groups of four. Give each group a copy of the Information Sheet, and provide each student with a Decisions Sheet to record their ideas. They should begin by reading two project ideas each, and defending these projects in the group, moving on to joint decision-making.
- d) Students will find it interesting to consider these questions about each of the proposed projects:
 - Does this project strengthen the poor? By strengthen, we mean giving poor people the power to thrive, to make decisions over their own lives and to have the rights they deserve.
 - Does this project enable people to help themselves, rather than making them dependent on 'outside do-gooders'?
 - Does this project work with the local environment and community?
 - Does this project promote peace, justice and/or the integrity of creation?
 - Does the project put Christian values into action?
 - Is this project in line with Christian Aid's mission statement? You will find this on the starter sheet on page 5 – you could copy this out and display it in the classroom.
- e) Students should consider all eight projects, and discuss and weigh up which of these would be the best ways for Christian Aid to enact its purpose. They can consider whether the biblical ideas and Christian values they have learned about will be fulfilled by Christian Aid's work.

- f) After students discuss the options together, they should complete the Decisions sheet, collecting ideas 'for and against' each of the eight projects, before coming to a final decision about how to allocate the limited funds available.

Controversy and debate

This activity is rather stylised, and the case studies are simplified/fictionalised so that they can be presented in a common, simple format, but the dilemma is interesting: limited charitable resources make for tough decisions. Encourage vigorous reasoning and argument, as this is where the learning happens! Please ensure that all students understand that Christian Aid builds careful partnerships with local organisations in the countries where they work. This means that, in reality, decisions about which work to fund are carefully researched and developed by experts in each area, working alongside partner organisations who understand local contexts and needs.

Taking it further

- g) Ask students to write a paragraph to answer each of these questions:
 - How far is Christian Aid a good example of Christian values in practice in today's world?
 - Should churches in the UK give more to Christian Aid than they spend on their buildings or their grounds? Explain your answer with reasons.
- h) Students write an evaluative essay explaining how Christian Aid intends to change the world, giving examples from the projects they have discussed.
- i) Students could take the finished sheets from the starter activity and use them as the basis for a 12-mark essay answer to this question: How effectively do you think Christian Aid meets its aims of enabling life in all its fullness?

Theological links:

Help students make links between Christian Aid's values and biblical principles.

For example, how do Christians see all humans? Is redemption open to all humans? How can practical support enlarge a community's chance of flourishing?

Discuss how much Christian Aid is guided by such principles, and how much by practical considerations?

Supporting the Christianity paper

This page summarises the ways in which this lesson contributes to meeting the requirements of the GCSE Christianity papers.

In the specifications

AQA

Christianity: Practices

- The role of the church in the local and worldwide community
- The importance of the worldwide church including: working for reconciliation; how Christian churches respond to persecution; and the work of Christian Aid.

Edexcel

- The role and importance of the church in the worldwide community; reconciliation; persecuted church; divergent Christian responses to teachings about charity; Christian Aid, what it does and why.

Eduqas

Christianity: Practices

- The worldwide church: working for reconciliation.

OCR

Christianity: Practices

- The role of the church in the wider world: reconciliation; the persecuted church; the work of Christian Aid; and different interpretation and emphases.

Glossary

Proof-texting is the practice of using isolated, out-of-context quotations from a document to back up an argument. This can happen with religious texts, when people 'cherry-pick' verses to suit their own agendas. It is something that students should be aware of.

Redemption originally meant 'buy back'. In Christianity, it means being saved from sin or

evil. Many Christians believe that Jesus' death represents redemption, that he 'paid for' our sin with his death, and that by following him we can save ourselves from our sinful state and from death too.

A **Militia** is a force made up of non-professional soldiers.



Starter sheet: Connecting Christian Aid's work with a vision of human life in all its fullness

Christian Aid's mission:

Bible ideas: How do they connect? Are any of these ideas relevant to a charity which is trying to make the world more fair, more peaceful and more equal?

'Christian Aid fights poverty, because everyone should have the opportunity to thrive. We work in partnership with churches, individuals and local organisations in communities worldwide, supporting people of all faiths and none to rise out of poverty.'

Jesus said 'Don't store up treasures for yourself on earth, where moth eats and rust ruins, but store up treasure in heaven...where your treasure is, there your heart will be too.'
Matthew 6:19-20

Jesus said 'I have come so that people may have life in all its fullness.'
John 10:10

Jesus said: 'Blessed are the peacemakers. They will be called God's children.'
Matthew 5:9

'God created humanity in his own image... and saw that it was very good.'
Genesis 1:27

'These three things really last: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.'
1 Corinthians 13:13

'What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if one claims to have faith but does no good deeds?'
James 2:14

Cut and arrange: Work with a partner. Cut up this sheet, and lay out the seven boxes onto a large sheet of paper, leaving spaces between each segment, with the statement about Christian Aid in the middle. Stick them down.

Link lines: Draw connection lines wherever you see a link between the ideas. Write onto the line the reason why you think these two segments are connected. A link might be about one word, or a big idea, or something else you think is relevant.

Round the class: Compare your finished pattern of links with another pair's work. What good ideas did they have which you missed? Add more ideas to your work.

Information Sheet: Funding meeting role-play

You will learn how Christian Aid works by role playing a project funding meeting. This is where staff at Christian Aid decide which development projects the charity should spend its money on. In a group of four, read aloud and discuss each of these eight requests to the charity to fund projects.

If you had just £80,000 to allocate, which ones would you prioritise and why? Each person in the group should choose two of the projects to present. You need to speak up for these projects, arguing the best case you can, trying to convince the others in your group to give money to them.

Wells for South Sudan

A partner in South Sudan is asking for £18,000 to provide new deep-bore wells in ten villages. These wells are needed as droughts in the area are getting worse, all as a result of climate change. This means there's less water to go around. The wells will be built and maintained by the communities, but they need some simple technology to set them up. The project will have health and hygiene benefits for about 12,000 people. The partner says: 'These wells will mean life to us. We will be able to water crops, provide for our livestock and have our own secure supplies of clean water to drink and to use.'

Girls' education in Afghanistan

A partner in Helmand, a province of Afghanistan, asks for £22,000 to maintain a school for girls who will otherwise be excluded from education and vulnerable to exploitation. The school was founded by Christians and offers education to all without discrimination, taking the poorest pupils first. The £22,000 grant will enable 60 pupils to be educated for the coming three years. The head teacher says: 'We believe that it is education that will enable our society to be more free and more equal, especially for those who are currently excluded.'

Bicycle ambulances in Kenya

In rural villages in Kenya, many people live far away from their nearest hospital. A bicycle ambulance – a bicycle with a stretcher-trailer on the back – can take a patient to hospital in just three hours, rather than the two days it might otherwise take them to walk there. Bicycle ambulances save lives. £10,000 will provide these for another 100 villages. The village elders say: 'Many Kenyan villages use their bicycle ambulances to prevent children being orphaned. Please help us to spread this work more widely.'

Anti-flood safety measures in Bangladesh

The poorest people in Bangladesh often live on islands in the river deltas, vulnerable to flooding as climate change raises sea levels. Christian Aid's partner there has a programme of flood defences which raises family homes and land above the flood levels. 2,000 vulnerable families have benefited so far. The partner is seeking another £25,000 to raise another 200 homes, helping 200 more families. They say: 'Flooding is more common than ever in this era of climate change, and the poorest people are always the first to suffer. This grant will save lives and establish livelihoods.'

Information Sheet: Funding meeting role-play continued...

Post-earthquake support in Haiti

Since the devastating earthquakes of 2010, many thousands of Haitian children have grown up in camps, without proper homes. Lack of resources and few opportunities have ruined lives: some 16-year-olds have slept in tents since they were ten. This project, which is run by churches in Haiti, offers young people aged 16-18 from the camps the chance to learn building trade skills, including brickmaking, carpentry and housebuilding, and also to build houses for their own families. It will benefit 120 young people over two years, and will cost £18,000. The churches running the project say: 'We believe in the God-given human dignity of every person, and we are sick of the waste of lives in the camp. This project is small but beautiful, and will change the lives of 120 families.'

Peace education in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

This project enables children and young people who have been kidnapped and made into child soldiers to return to a normal life. These young people have often been dragged into the ongoing civil war in the DRC, and have been forced to become gun users and killers while still children. This is a traumatic and deeply scarring experience. But Christian Aid's partners have developed a residential programme for young people coming out of child militias, in which they use drama therapy, art therapy and intensive group work. The programme leader says: '£24,000 will enable us to give psychological help to traumatised children and give them a chance to go home and pick up their lives, despite the damage of war. Our programme has worked for more than 300 young people. This grant will enable 150 more to benefit.'

Honey making and beekeeping in Mali

In western Mali, changes in weather and climate have made it hard to grow enough food in many villages. One thing that helps agriculture is good pollination by bees, and this also gives people the chance to make honey which they can eat and sell. Christian Aid has been approached by a partner to run beekeeping classes in 40 villages, and to operate a 'queen bee loan service' to set up new hives and bee colonies. The partner says: 'Families taking the training course can expect to make enough money to keep a child in school from the sale of honey, as well as contributing to improving the local ecosystem.' £16,000 will spread the project to 16 new villages this year.

Fundraising campaign in UK

Christian Aid is considering a new fundraising campaign. It would cost £10,000 to produce a new fundraising pack and to mail it out to churches, so that they could inspire their members to support Christian Aid's work. If 5% of the 5,000 churches mailed raise £200, then Christian Aid would make £50,000: a net gain of £40,000 to spend on other projects. Christian Aid says, 'The people who fundraise for us want to go the extra mile – to give their time as well as their money, so that others are also inspired to give. Fundraising is how we can continue to support our partners' amazing work, and it is something we must continue to invest in to ensure that we can support more people living in poverty.'

Decisions sheet: funding meeting role-play

We considered eight requests from partners today. We had £80,000 to support projects, but the funds requested totalled £143,000. This records my views about each of the projects and the group's decisions.

	'Yes' because / 'No' because...	Final group decision
Wells for South Sudan £18,000		
Girls' education in Afghanistan £22,000		
Bicycle ambulances in Kenya £10,000		
Anti-flood safety measures in Bangladesh £25,000		
Post-earthquake support in Haiti £18,000		
Peace education in the Democratic Republic of Congo £24,000		
Honey making and beekeeping in Mali £16,000		
Fundraising campaign in the UK £10,000		