

## **Take A Step**

This game is designed to show students the unequal playing field that is extreme poverty, wherein some will get benefits and others left behind based purely on the circumstances of their birth.

### **What you need:**

- Tape
- 20 x gloves, split evenly by colour (50/50). The two colours represent the two sexes (male and female)
- Symbols drawn on the gloves represent certain characteristics of their life and are as follows;
  - stars on each finger represent safety (thumb= extremely safe, middle finger= moderately safe, pinky= unsafe)
  - pencil = primary/ secondary education
  - graduation cap = university education
  - Healthcare (two pluses = full health care, one plus = basic health care)
  - Water droplet = access to clean water
  - Sun = drought
  - Three strokes = three or less children, 5 strokes/ tally = five or more children
  - Upside down triangle = minority ethnicity/religion
  - D = involved in democratic processes, V = allowed to vote but the process/system is corrupt.
  - Bowl of food = don't have to worry about meals/food
  - Dollar sign = food for the next two days

NB: use the more advantageous symbols on the coloured gloves representing males

### **Instructions:**

1. Place a long strip of tape in the middle of the floor, horizontally and have the students line up shoulder to shoulder, facing the front.
2. Randomly hand out gloves, (if less than 20, make sure the sex division is even as possible), and tell the students to look at the symbols, but don't explain what they mean. Ask them to compare with their neighbours and pay attention to where they each end up.
3. Read out the statements below.

### **Statements**

- If you have a white glove, you are a male, take one step forward. Purple gloves are females, take a step back.
- If you have a star on your thumb, you live in a stable, wealthy country and have never had to worry about your safety, take a step forward. Stars on the middle fingers, you have sometimes had to be cautious, but overall you have been safe, stay where you are. Stars on the pinky fingers, you grew up in a conflict zone or refugee camp, take a step back.
- If you have a pencil drawn on your glove, you attended primary and secondary schooling, take a step forward. If you have a graduation cap, you also attended university, take two steps forward. If you have neither of these symbols, you had to leave primary schooling to get a job to help your family, take a step back.

- If you have two plus signs, you have access to full health care, so surgery, dental, emergency etc, take a step forward. One plus sign, you have access to very basic health care, meaning antibiotics and anti-malarials, but not enough if you get very sick or have complications during pregnancy or badly injure yourself, remain where you are. Those without a cross, you have no health care at all, take a step back.
- Those with water droplets on your glove, you have easy access to clean, drinkable water and have no real risk of losing that in your future, take a step forward. Those without water droplets, you have to walk kilometres every day to find water, and even then, it sometimes isn't clean, take a step back.
- Those of you with a sun, you live in a drought, and therefore aren't able to harvest and sell or eat the crops you farm, take a step back.
- If you have three strokes on your glove, you are one of three or less children, take a step forward. If you have a tally, you are one of five or more children, take a step back.
- If you have an upside down triangle, you are a part of a minority, either religious or ethnic, and are being persecuted by your government and/or the majority population, such as the Kurds in Syria/Afghanistan, Tamil in South India and Sri Lanka and the Rohingya, in Myanmar. You may have heard of the Rohingya, they are considered the most persecuted people on earth, and we as a nation have refused to give them asylum. In their home country, they are refused citizenship (essentially making them country-less), stripped of the right to vote, forced from their home and are facing genocide. Take a step back.
- If you have a capital D, you are involved in democratic processes, take a step forward. Those with a capital V, you are allowed to vote, however the system is corrupt and unjust, remain where you are. Those without either, take a step back, you are not allowed to vote or be involved in any form of political life.
- If you have a steaming bowl of goodness, you know you will be eating meals and have no real risk of this changing, take two steps forward. Those with dollar signs, you have enough money for your next meal only, remain where you are. Those lacking both symbols, you don't have money for your next meal, nor any idea where you will get it, take a step back.

4. Discuss where everyone ended up (male elite and front, female poor at back). Ask students to notice where their neighbour from the beginning is and reflect on the follow up questions.

- What did you notice? e.g. males are better off, females furthest back.
- Did anything surprise you? e.g. education, inequality between sexes, any of the characteristics.
- Did this change the way you thought about poverty? e.g. what it involves (democratic processes), just how much can affect one's life (education, drought etc)
- If you mostly stepped back/ forward, how did you feel?
- Ask them to stand where they think we are in reality. Let them know we would be up the front.