### ABOUT TRÓCAIRE

‘Trócaire’ is the Irish word for compassion. Trócaire was founded in 1973 by the Catholic Bishops of Ireland with two aims:

1. **To support people in the wider world who are living in poverty.** We work with local and Church partners in over twenty countries in Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. We respond to injustice and poverty, offering support in a spirit of solidarity regardless of race, religion, gender or politics.

2. **To educate people in Ireland about global justice issues.** Within Ireland, we raise awareness of the root causes of poverty and inequality, and we empower people of all ages to take action for a more just and sustainable world.
Languages in Guatemala and Uganda

Background Information about Guatemala

Nearly seventeen million people live in Guatemala. The name ‘Guatemala’ comes from a Mayan word meaning ‘land of the trees’. Guatemala gained independence from Spain in 1821. The population of Guatemala is comprised mainly of people of Spanish descent and of indigenous Maya people. Spanish is the official language. Additionally, twenty-two Mayan languages and two other indigenous languages are spoken.

The family featured in Our Land lives in the Polochic Valley in eastern Guatemala. This has been the home of the Maya Q’eqchi people for hundreds of years. Living on the land is a fundamental aspect of traditional Maya culture; however, indigenous farmers are being evicted from their ancestral lands to make way for industrial biofuel crops, mining, hydroelectric power and motorways.

Background Information about Uganda

Nearly forty million people live in Uganda. Uganda gained independence from Britain in 1962. There is a range of tribal groups in the country, each with their own traditions and languages. English and Swahili are the official languages. Additionally, forty local languages are spoken. Most of the population live in rural areas and depend on farming the land to live healthy and happy lives.

The family featured in Our Land belongs to the Luo tribe in the region known as Acholi Land, in Northern Uganda. Under the customary land tenure system in this region, women have the right to land; however, male clan leaders often do not respect this right, leaving female-headed households vulnerable to being pushed off their land.

Land Issues in Guatemala and Uganda

Across the countries where Trócaire works, more than half of the population depends upon land. Land means a home, a livelihood, security and even life itself.

However, as the global scramble for land intensifies, increasing numbers of poorer people are being pushed off their land. In Guatemala and Uganda, the two countries featured in this resource, Trócaire is working with local organisations to support people’s right to stay on their land. For more information, see: trocaire.org/whatwedo/wherewework
Our Land provides an opportunity for young children to explore the theme of land, in the context of their own lives and the lives of two families, one from Guatemala and one from Uganda.

Starting from the children’s own knowledge and understanding of land, this resource investigates how land allows us to have a good life – physically, socially, culturally and spiritually. The resource then explores, at an age-appropriate level, the idea of land as a human right.

Our Land supports the aims and principles of Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework (ROI) and the Preschool and Foundation Stages of CCEA Curriculum (NI).

Our Land can also be used to support the Junior Primary Curriculum (ROI) and Key Stage 1 (NI). Suggested extension activities for junior primary pupils are provided throughout the resource. Junior primary classes who wish to further investigate land and human rights are invited to supplement this resource with some of the activities in Trócaire’s senior primary resource for 2019, Our Land Our Rights, available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights
Our Land encourages children to think about diversity, equality and inclusion at local and global levels. Working through the learning experiences in the resource, children will be enabled to:

- Explore their own lives and the lives of other children
- Develop an awareness and appreciation of the wider world
- Value social and cultural diversity
- Understand universal basic needs and rights
- Take action for a more equal, inclusive and sustainable world

Supporting children to be comfortable with difference

The photographs and activities in this pack may prompt some children to ask challenging questions about difference. An anti-bias approach to diversity, equality and inclusion encourages adults working with young children to critically reflect on their own attitudes towards difference, as a necessary first step towards creating a learning environment that celebrates diversity and proactively addresses discrimination and inequality. The Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education (DCYA, 2016) outlines the anti-bias approach and provides useful advice:

‘Giving children opportunities to talk about differences and similarities in an informal way allows them to explore difference with natural curiosity. The way in which adults engage with that curiosity is vital in terms of supporting children’s attitudinal development around diversity, equality and inclusion.’

‘Be honest and accurate in answering children’s questions about difference. Make sure you give accurate, age-appropriate information, and if you don’t know how to answer the question, tell the child you will find out and come back to them.’
Opening Activity: Change places if …
This short activity introduces the theme of land. Form a circle and ask the children to change places if: you have helped in a garden; you have slept outside in a tent; you have climbed a tree, etc. You can use any statements that relate to outdoors, nature and land.

Round: One thing I like about being outside …
Using the talking stick, invite the children to add a few words to the sentence, ‘One thing I like about being outside …’ The talking stick is passed from hand to hand around the circle until it comes back to the first person. Only the person holding the talking stick is allowed to speak. Everyone else is encouraged to listen carefully. Children can pass if they do not wish to speak.

Open Forum: Introducing María and Patricia
(Note to educators: You may wish to divide up the following activities over the course of several Circle Time sessions)
Explain to the children that you are going to learn about some children who live far away. Ask the children to name some places that are far away. Help the children to locate these places on a globe or world map. Locate Guatemala and Uganda on the globe or map, put sticky stars on them, and connect them to Ireland with a piece of ribbon. You can discuss how you could get to Uganda and Guatemala and how long the journey would be. Junior primary pupils can do more extensive map work, including calculating approximate distances.

You could use a ‘Me on the Map’ diagram to help children to situate themselves in the wider world.
After locating the countries on the globe or map, share the photos with the children. Start with Photocards 1, 2 and 3 of María, her family and community in Guatemala. Read out the information on the reverse of the photocards, and use the questions as a stimulus for discussion. Talk about María’s life and why land is important to her. Note that you will be using the photos again in Learning Experiences 2–5, so you do not need to cover all aspects at this stage.

Repeat for Photocards 4, 5 and 6 of Patricia, her family and community in Uganda. Junior primary pupils who would like to learn more about the communities can use the photocards in the senior primary resource, Our Land Our Rights (available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights).

Invite children to suggest ways in which Patricia and María’s lives are the same/different to their own lives; for example, ‘Patricia and I are the same because we are girls, but different because she is seven and I am five.’ Junior primary pupils can be encouraged to make more complex comparisons, such as, ‘María and I are the same because we both help by washing the dishes, but we are different because I wash our dishes inside in the kitchen and she washes her family’s dishes outside in the stream.’

**Closure:** Share a poem or song about outside. Suggestions: A poem from Out and About by Shirley Hughes or Hopscotch in the Sky by Lucinda Jacob.

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**Curriculum Links:**
- Aistear – Communicating; Exploring and Learning
- Primary Curriculum – Geography: Human Environments; Language Learning and Development
- NI Preschool – The World Around Us; Language Development
- NI Foundation/KS1 – The World Around Us; Language and Literacy
LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2: LAND GIVES US FOOD

ACTIVITY 1: What Food is This?

Out of sight of the children, put some vegetables with distinctive shapes or textures into a pillowcase. Gather the children together. Invite one child to reach into the pillowcase and feel an item, describe it without looking at it, and guess what it is. The child then pulls it out of the bag and the group discusses:

• How does this vegetable grow – under the ground, on the ground, high above the ground?
• How is this vegetable prepared? Do we eat it raw or do we need to cook it? If it is cooked, how does cooking change it?
• What does this vegetable taste like? (Share a sample if appropriate)

After discussing all of the vegetables, you can move on to the fruits. Out of sight of the children, prepare a few plates of fruit. Each plate should have one fruit with a distinctive smell. Cut open the fruit to heighten the smell. Cover each plate with a tea towel. Gather the children together. Produce one covered plate and ask for a volunteer to guess the fruit by smelling it. You can blindfold the child and then remove the tea towel from the plate, so that the other children can see the fruit. Ask the blindfolded child to guess the fruit. If he/she needs help, the other children can give hints. When the fruit has been guessed correctly, discuss the same questions that you used for the vegetables.

ACTIVITY 2: Amazing Maize – Guatemala

Explain that in María’s community, maize (corn on the cob) is very important. Every community has a special field, called a ‘milpa’, where maize plants are grown. People in Guatemala have depended upon maize all through their history. They say prayers for a good growing season before they plant the maize seeds, and they offer thanksgiving when they harvest the maize. When the ears of maize are ripe, María’s father and brothers cut down the maize. María and her sister Jessica help their mother to prepare the maize to make tortillas. María’s family eats tortillas every day.

a) From ear to mouth

Watch the maize slideshow. Talk about each step of growing and harvesting maize, and then discuss the steps involved in preparing maize for the family meal. Emphasise that everyone in the family helps with the maize in some way. After watching the slides and discussing, work in small groups to sequence the maize cards.

Junior primary pupils can add written descriptions. Use the recipe to make tortillas. If you do not have cooking facilities, buy some pre-made tortillas, and prepare beans and tomatoes to go with them.

b) Art, music and movement

Start by making maize plants from newspaper. Using three sheets of newspaper per child, paint one side of the newspaper green, and when it is dry, paint the reverse side green as well. For each plant, place three painted sheets on top of each other. Roll them into a long tube and tape the join. Make a
few cuts down the top of the tube to create leaves. Clear a space in the classroom or outside and ask the children to gather together, holding their maize plants. Invite the children to imagine that they are maize plants growing in the ‘milpa’. Encourage them to move their bodies and their painted plants in response to the following questions: What is it like as they grow under the hot sun? How do they feel in a big rainstorm? What happens as they grow up and up? What happens to them when they are ripe and harvest comes? As the children move, you can play Marimba music from Guatemala.

c) Conclusion
Conclude by discussing why maize is so important to María’s community. Look at the final slide in the maize slideshow, which depicts a service in which the people in María’s community are giving thanks for a successful harvest of maize. You can see the dried husks of maize next to the candles.

ACTIVITY 3: Gardens and Markets – Uganda

a) In the Garden
Explain that Patricia’s family grows a lot of food in their garden, including cabbage, tomatoes, cassava, yams, okra and sweet potatoes. They pick papaya and passion fruit from their trees. Look at the photos in the slideshow and identify as many foods as you can. Discuss whether any of these foods grow in Ireland, and if so, have the children seen them growing? Refer to the questions from Activity 1, on the tastes, textures and smells of fruit and vegetables.

b) To the Market
Although Patricia’s family grows most of the food that they eat, their mother, Evelyn, goes to the market once a week. During the school holidays, Patricia sometimes goes with her mother to the market. It takes them about an hour to walk there. Look at the photos and see if you can identify what foods from the land are on sale at the market. Which foods have you seen before? Which ones are not familiar? If you can, visit a local market and make a list of locally grown foods that are for sale. Alternatively, invite a local farmer, beekeeper or other producer to visit your class. Junior primary pupils could do some research on locally produced foods.

c) Carrying it Home
Explain that for the long walk home from the market, Evelyn carries their purchases on her head. Show the slide of Evelyn carrying cassava on her head. Gather together some fruit and vegetables, along with some bags, a basket, a rucksack and a box. Experiment with different ways of carrying things and discuss which ways work best for different types of loads. Discuss which ways would be best for carrying your shopping if you were walking, on a bicycle, on a bus, in a car, etc. Talk about carrying something fragile, like eggs. What do you need to do to make sure they do not break? Role-play a market scene, with some children taking the role of stall holders and others taking the role of shoppers.
LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3: LAND IS WHERE WE EXPLORE AND PLAY

ACTIVITY 1: Imitating Nature

- Put on suitable outdoor clothes and go to a place where the children can wander safely on their own.
- Ask the children not to speak to each other, but quietly walk around, observing their surroundings through sight, sound, movement, smell and touch.
- Once they have found something interesting, they should stay still and observe even more carefully, and then try to imitate the sound, movement, feeling, etc.
- Gather the children together and invite them to share their imitations.

ACTIVITY 2: Listening to Land – Uganda

- Explain to the children that you are going to listen to some sounds from the land in Uganda. Play the four audio clips on the first four slides. After each clip, discuss what the children think they heard. Junior primary pupils can write down their guesses. Play the clips again.
- Show the next slide, with the four images. Can you match the images to the sounds? Junior primary pupils can try this with a partner and share with the class. Then look at the final four slides, which match the sounds and sights.
- Discuss how these sounds and sights are the same/different to sounds and sights in your locality.

ACTIVITY 3: Playing on the Land – Guatemala

Watch the video of María and her friends playing outside at home and also doing PE in school. Ask the children if they know any games that are similar to these games. Discuss how the games that they play are the same/different to the games María and her friends play.

Look at Photocard 2, and examine María’s leaf pinwheel. How do you think she made it? Outside, you could find sturdy oblong leaves and try to make a simple pinwheel by tearing the leaf and inserting a small stick. Junior primary pupils could draw and write instructions for making the pinwheel.

Curriculum Links:
Aistear – Exploring and Thinking; Well-being
Primary Curriculum – Geography/Science: Environmental Awareness and Care; Music: Listening and Responding; Physical Education
NI Preschool – The World Around Us; Physical Development and Movement
NI Foundation/KS1 – The World Around Us; Physical Education

YOU WILL NEED
‘Listening to Land’ PowerPoint (available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights).

YOU WILL NEED
‘Games from Guatemala’ video (available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights).
ACTIVITY 1: Our Community … A Long Time Ago

Invite a grandparent or an older person who has always lived in your local community to come in to talk to your group/class about land in your community in the past. Ask them to bring photos if they have any, or you can search online for relevant photos. Some points they might discuss include:

- What did the community look like when they were young people? Were there fewer houses and buildings? Were there more fields and green areas? What were the roads like? Did lots of people have cars?
- Did many people work on the land as farmers or in other land-related jobs? What jobs did they do?
- What animals lived on the land – farm animals, pets, wild animals?
- Was there a special part of land for the community? A park? A place near water – a sea, river or lake? A mountain or hill? Were there any particular days in the year when people went to that special place?
- Are there old stories that they know about the land in the area?

Make sure you leave time for a question and answer session. Junior primary pupils could follow up on this session by talking to an older person in their family or in their neighbourhood, and reporting back to the class what they learned. Make sure that children who are newcomers to your community are encouraged to share stories about places, near or far, where their parents or grandparents grew up.

After listening to your local story about land, explain to the children that they are going to listen to two more stories about land, one from Guatemala and one from Uganda. You may want to tell only one story per day.
ACTIVITY 2: A Creation Story from Guatemala

Begin with a recap of your learning about maize and why it is so important to María’s community (from Learning Experience 2). Then explain that you are going to tell a very old story from Guatemala. It comes from the *Popol Vuh* (pronounced pōpōl’ vōo’), which is a sacred book for the Maya people. It is a story about how the first people were made.

First came the earth, then the mountains, rivers and forests. But there was no sun and everything was dark. Animals came next and each was told where to live: the lions and tigers in the mountains, the birds in the trees, the fish in the sea, just as they live today. But none of the animals could talk, so the gods decided to create people.

The first people were made of mud, but they were soft and fell apart at the touch of water. So the gods decided to make the second set of people, this time of wood. They were stronger but they didn’t have any feelings, so the gods sent a great flood and they all were drowned. The third time, the gods tried to make people from plants and trees and this nearly worked but still they could not speak. These are the monkeys we see today.

The gods decided to try one last time, this time using maize. The grandmother of the gods ground the maize into a paste and from this the first true men and women were formed. Soon there were many people on earth. They were people of different colours, speaking many different languages.

The earth was still cold and dark, so the gods made fire next. Finally, they made the sun, moon and stars. The animals and people sang their thanks to the gods.

After reading the story, answer any questions the children have about it, then discuss:

- How did the story make you feel?
- Talk about the materials used to ‘make’ people – mud, wood, plants, trees, maize. Talk about the qualities of the materials; for example, strong or weak, heavy or light, easy or difficult to shape, etc. What material would you use if you wanted to make the shape of a person?
- Have you heard any other stories that are like this story? Tell us about similar stories that you have heard.

Ceremony giving thanks for the maize harvest, Polochic Valley, Guatemala.
Photo credit: Manuel Morillo
ACTIVITY 3: The Chief and the Hippos

Explain that you are going to tell an old folk tale from Uganda. It is about some very helpful hippos.

Once upon a time, there was a Chief in Uganda who loved animals very much and made a law to protect them. No man was allowed to kill an animal in the forests or jungles or swamps. This made the animals very happy.

One day the Chief wished to send an important message to his friend who lived on the other side of a big river. The Chief sent his messenger off, but that day there was a huge storm, and the canoes that people used to cross the river were washed away. When the Chief’s messenger arrived at the riverbank, there was no way for him to get across. He sat down sadly and wondered what he should do. Then an old hippo came up and asked him, ‘What is the matter?’ The man said, ‘I am the Chief’s messenger, and I am meant to take an important message to his friend on the other side of the river, but the storm has swept away the canoes.’

Then the hippo said, ‘Wait until the storm is over and we will help you to cross the river.’ And he went away and called all the other hippos together, and they came to where the Chief’s messenger waited. When the storm was over and the sun shone brightly again, the hippos went down into the water. They made a floating bridge with their bodies and the Chief’s messenger crossed safely over the river and delivered his message. Then he crossed safely back and went home.

And now if you go to this river, you will see a notice that says, ‘Visitors are requested not to shoot the hippos.’ On nights when the moon shines over the river, the hippos climb slowly up the bank and read this notice and rejoice, for they remember the days of the good Chief who protected the animals, and they think that he has come back to rule over the land.

After reading the story, answer any questions the children have about it, then discuss: How did the story make you feel? What animals live in our area? How do they help us? How do we help them? What happens if people and animals stop helping each other?

After discussing the story, watch the short video clip ‘Safari’ (available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights) to see some other animals that live in Uganda.

ACTIVITY 4: Visual Art

Recap the stories in Learning Experience 4. Discuss what the stories told us about land, what it means to us, who we share it with and why we need to take care of the land. Provide paint and paper and invite the children to paint a creative response to the stories. You could incorporate some natural materials from the land; for example, you could use sticks, leaves, feathers, pebbles, etc. to apply the paint and/or to include in the finished artwork.

Curriculum Links:
Aistear – Communicating; Identity and Belonging
Primary Curriculum – History; Story; Language learning and development; Visual Arts
NI Preschool – Language Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; The Arts
NI Foundation/KS1 – Language and Literacy; Personal Development and Mutual Understanding; The Arts
LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5: WE ALL NEED LAND

Circle Time Session

Opening Activity: Change places if …
Repeat the activity from Learning Experience 1, but this time add some statements that relate to your learning from this resource; for example, ‘Change places if you know a game that is played in Guatemala.’

Round: We all need land because …
Using the talking stick/speaking object, invite the children to add a few words to the statement, ‘We all need land because …’ If possible, record responses, as they will help you to plan your game for Trócaire Game Changers (see p. 15).

Open Forum:
Brainstorm the question: What would happen if we didn’t have land? You could explore secondary questions such as: What things would you no longer be able to do? How would you feel if you lost land that was important to you? You might use some props relating to the previous learning experiences; for example, some food from the land, or photographs of María and Patricia and their families.

Junior primary pupils can explore land in relation to basic human rights and the Global Goals (see information box below). How does having land help us to have a happy and healthy life, a clean and green planet, and a peaceful and equal world? You also could discuss reasons why land might be taken away from people (for example, if land is being sold for development, or because of conflict) and what impact this might have. Bear in mind that this could be a sensitive topic for some children. If your class is interested in further exploring land and human rights, you could adapt some of the activities in Trócaire’s senior primary resource, Our Land Our Rights (available at: trocaire.org/education/landrights).

Closure:
Share a poem, song, story, or painting about the importance of land. Suggestion: Jeanie Baker’s storybook-without-words, Window.

Background Information for Educators

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development

From 2015–30, Ireland has committed to work with governments and citizens of nearly two hundred other nations to end all forms of poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change, while ensuring that no one is left behind. There are seventeen Global Goals in all. For more information about the Global Goals, visit: un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ For lesson plans on the Global Goals, see: worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/

For young children, the Global Goals can be summarised into three goals, framed in terms of basic human needs.

A HAPPY AND HEALTHY LIFE

A CLEAN AND GREEN PLANET

A PEACEFUL AND EQUAL WORLD

Curriculum Links:
Aistear – Communicating; Identity and Belonging
Primary Curriculum – SPHE: Myself and the Wider World: Developing Citizenship
NI Preschool – Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Language Development
NI Foundation – Personal Development and Mutual Understanding; Language and Literacy
TAKE ACTION: BECOME A TRÓCAIRE GAME CHANGER

At Trócaire, we know that games are a great way to learn and to share your learning with others. That’s why we are inviting your group/class to become Trócaire Game Changers! There are three steps:

**Step 1**
Drawing from your learning in *Our Land*, create a simple game (or adapt an existing one) to highlight the message, ‘We all need land.’ You can make any type of game; for example, a guessing game, a card game, a photo jigsaw puzzle, a singing/rhyming game, a jumping game. Let your imaginations run!

**Step 2**
Invite another group/class to play the game with you. Document this by taking photos or by video-recording.

**Step 3**
Download the entry form at: trocaire.org/gamechangers. Complete the entry form, and submit the form, your game and any additional information to Trócaire by Friday, 12 April 2019.

Although there are prizes for senior primary and post-primary students, Trócaire Game Changers is not a competition at early childhood level. The emphasis is on participation and inclusion. ALL children who enter a game will receive a Trócaire Game Changers certificate and badge. We can’t wait to see your entry!

Jessica (12) from Honduras plays a game to learn how to respond to a flood in her community. Photo credit: Santiago Agra Bermejo
Trócaire is the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland

For a range of resources exploring human rights, climate change and social justice issues, visit: trocaire.org/education

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