



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition July 2014 Issue 89



Yearly Meeting Gathering: I matter – I change the world

Getting ready

“A child was talking after meeting about war. I don't really remember the specifics of it. I know we were talking about Syria, and about people who live in areas affected by wars. She felt very strongly that something should be done to stop war; ...an idea emerged from this conversation about what she would like to do”.

Children from an early age are sensitive to issues of violence and can be aware of conflict and war. They develop a strong sense for what is utterly wrong if it happens to another human, an animal or their surroundings. Growing older a child looks increasingly beyond its own close-by environment and into the world. The mass and multi media of our time allows this to an extent unknown a few decades ago. Empathy and compassion are expressed in the immediate wish to help and bring about change. If another being suffers one needs to help *now*. Adults and children will often experience ‘time’ and ‘distance’ differently.

As grown ups we need to take seriously those in the process of growing up, and to look for ways to engage with children's deep concerns and their wish to actually do something now. This needs to be well researched, swift and also carefully reflected upon. It is a key experience for a child to be listened to and supported in an age appropriate way to bring about change. This is mirrored in this issue's title: *I matter – I change the world*. The underlying idea is, as much as I matter so do you - and we take each other seriously. In this way we can take steps together towards the vision of the world as a better place.

Gather

Me and the world – the world and me – people around me

Resources: a round rug or piece of cloth; some simple wooden, plastic or cut out card figures (see sidebar for source of wooden figures); a map of the earth from Additional Resource 89.A.

Have a period of welcome and gathering with everybody together: toddlers, small children, young people and adults. Have the round rug or piece of cloth waiting for everybody to sit around, holding each other's hands and welcoming each and everyone by name. Ask each person to say their name and then that of the person sitting on their right hand side

Start by laying out an inner circle of figures -1st circle for family, a 2nd circle for friends and neighbours and a 3rd circle for people's town or village. Finish this period by placing the map beside the circles.



Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Underpinning references

Quaker faith and practice 23.19: Social justice

To order wooden figures for the Gather activity go to: www.stmichaelsworkshop.co.uk/ and click on *Godly Play* and then on *Autumn Vol 2 page 2* to see the figures.

Engage

These ideas offer ways to talk about and play with the idea of 'neighbours' on a personal level but also starts to make links to the wider world.

Me and the world - who is my neighbour? Creating a web of links and thinking.

Resources – wooden, card or plastic figures; balls of wool; additional circles of fabric if needed for working individually or in small groups.

Continuing to use the little figures (see *Resources* and the third paragraph in Gather in this issue) – you may need some more so that each person can have some or you could just work with the circles you have laid down if your group is not too big. Say something like: 'let's think about people we are linked with'. Use a phrase like 'you are joined to.... because....' to help children with their thinking. Ask everybody to share their thoughts and make links between figures in their different circles. There should be one figure that they decide is themselves. The links can be laid out with pieces of wool. Laying out links will create a network, showing that and how we are all interconnected with one another. It might be that some children have family and friends abroad. Children might also talk about school, Quakers or people that children's families support elsewhere in the world.

A song. Sydney Carter *'When I needed a neighbour were you there?'*

Sydney Carter's song fits really well into here. Enjoy singing together! The words are on *Additional Resource 89.B*. It doesn't need to be perfect, but it is good for the soul. Sing it quite fast not slowly as some hymn recordings have it – someone in meeting will know the tune if you don't or you can find a version online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTV9OrIV1hY . This song could be understood as an invitation to reflect on: when we have been good neighbours. The 'I wonder questions' lend themselves to be used here, verse by verse. This should show us and remind us of what we are already good at and already doing!

I wonder...

...when were you a good neighbour?

...when did you help someone who was hungry or thirsty?

...when did you help someone shivering to get warm?

...when did you ask someone in to shelter them from sun or rain or?

...when did you help someone to become better when he or she were ill?

...if you ever feel you don't know how to help, wheredo you get help from?

Say that that the man called Jesus and others thought that if we do maybe even a little of these things the world begins to become a better place. This 'place', this dream has been called the Kingdom of Heaven, God's Kingdom or the Peaceable Kingdom – see sidebar for details of a book called *'The Peaceable Kingdom'*. It wasn't meant as something to wait for but to happen right here and now through us.

We might not now use the words about 'Kingdom'. Ask the children what they would call a place where the dream came true that everybody was a good neighbour or friend to everybody; where nobody suffered from hunger and thirst; where everybody had a home; where someone ill would have people to make them better. There are some Biblical quotes on *Additional Resource 89.C* that might be used in this session.

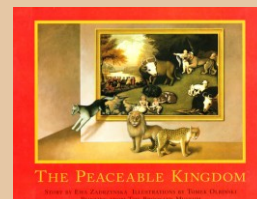
Talking about things children might worry about because of the news.

Children's families might have links to others somewhere else in the world who they support or help. Children might feel strongly not only about people but about animals or nature too. There might be something in the news that they have heard that they want to ask, talk about or do something to help. Just ask some questions to draw out any ideas children have. You might want to put sticky dots onto the map (*a map of the earth is on Additional Resource 89.A*). to show where the places are that children care about. Children may also want to help a friend, someone at school or in their family.

References & other resources

The Bible Matthew 25.35-36:

"for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."



The Peaceable Kingdom: Story by Ewa Zadrzyńska available from different booksellers online

Additional Resource 89.A, 89.B, 89.C can be found at: www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

References & other resources

The Hebrew words for neighbour and enemy/evil one have the same consonants, differing only in the vowels. This can lead to the understanding and questioning of:

'You should love your neighbour/enemy as yourself.'



Additional Resources 89.C, 89.D, 89.E and 89.F can be found at:

www.quaker.org.uk/resources-children

Respond

How you decide to work with Respond has very much to do with the children coming together in your Meeting, the projects local Friends are involved in and most important the questions your young Friends have! This should be your compass and the ideas below are only signposts as to where and how one could move along. And then – let your own lives speak and live adventurously...

Me and the world 1- I, you and we matter – we have changed the world.

A step at a time. Talking and hearing about what we and other people do. Invite someone from your Meeting to come along and share with your Children's Meeting what they do, where, how and why they are taking their step to make the world a better place.

Me and the world 2 – I, you and we matter – we want to change the world.

This continues ways of looking at examples of what others have done that might be helpful or inspiring, that might lead us to say – I want to do something like that. This can develop from questions, worries and concerns the children have. Here is an example of what one child was able to do:

Busking for the Red Cross – young children earn money to buy food for the Red Cross. See *Additional Resource 89.D*. Read the story on the Additional Resource sheet to the children. What comes across really well in this example is the fact that three children made a decision, prepared all they needed and ran the whole thing themselves. Probably this is why Maya, who wrote the piece, thought that it was one of the best appeals done at Meeting. It is good to feel that children can actually do something however little it might appear.

Find out more – become inspired – feel encouraged – think about what you would like to do.

Resources needed: big sheets of paper, drawing pens and pencils.

As preparation read *Additional Resource 89.F* about what Leicester Meeting did to plan an appeal. This appeal came about as a result of the conversation mentioned in the first paragraph of Getting Ready on page 1.

If you haven't had the conversation with children suggested in Engage – *'talking about things children might worry about because of the news'* - about things that children are bothered about or interested in helping about then do so. After talking give children big pieces of paper. Ask them to write or draw a word or a picture about one thing they would like to help with, to stop or to make happen in the world – it can be to do with anything that concerns them – big or small – local or global – about people or the earth.

After they have done this ask them what it is they would like to do or achieve and if they have any ideas about how to do it – encourage ideas; as they come the children should write or draw them onto their sheet – making a mind map. Ask if there is anything that might stop them doing what they want to? Help children plan what they might do.

This is meant to be a serious activity with the intention of making things happen. Younger children might want to draw something about somebody or something they would like to help (or who has helped them too). This is very much the beginning of a discernment and planning process. Children can share what they have begun to think about, discern with other children if they wish.

A story to end with. *Every child deserves a smile.* Another positive story about finding a project and starting a campaign and building bridges of support. See *Additional Resource 89.D*. A teenager Shivani, with family roots in India, raises money for an orphanage in Rojkot, India. You could tell the story or read the poem as an ending to your session.

Reflect

The material in this issue may be too much for one session only and can be used for children's work throughout a month or even a longer project.

It is important to find a way to make this last part of your children's worship as constructive and encouraging as possible. Remember, if you are working over some weeks, you might want to use a similar setting each time to link sessions with each other. This issue has been about feeling compassion and becoming aware; about helping children recognise that they are already doing something; do celebrate this! It has, hopefully, been about helping children about discover that they want to set out to start something new; be open to what finds them.

I matter – I change the world

Say something like: 'the fact that you are you and are here has already changed the world. Together we can try to live the dream of beginning to make this world a better place. For people, animals, nature...'. All can gather in a circle once again, keeping a period of silence.

If you have a Buddhist meditation gong (singing bowl) you can use it to start and end a quiet time with its sound.

You might want to read the following:

"We offer the merits of our silence to all beings and that the world will become a better place."



Materials available online are:

Current issue Additional Resources Sheets

An easy to use plan for a Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all age Meeting for Worship

A topical activity – this time about a campaign against the use of drones

Also a 'How to use *Journeys in the Spirit*' guide; a link to special issues; an archive of previous issues; a discussion forum and a link to the *Journeys in the Spirit* Youth edition.

Go to:

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren and choose from the range of links in the sidebar.

Review

What went well?

Make notes of what remains to be done with any of the children's ideas and projects?

Take time to talk about the session with other volunteers.

There is a time for sadness and shock, for empathy and helplessness, for compassion turning into informed action. Have space for each of these, for yourself and for those children and young friends you are guiding.

Remember the fact that you are you and you are here has already changed the world.

This issue was written by Beate Dehnen and edited by Chris Nickolay and Howard Nurden. Chris Nickolay wrote the Topical activity.

Issue 90 is the first in a new series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title, '*Living a transformed and transforming life*'. Available from 1 August 2014.

Issue 91 is the second in the series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title '*Equipping children for ministry*'. Available from 2 September 2014.

Issue 92 is the third in the series about *Living as a Quaker*. It has the title '*How differently Quakers live.*' Available from 1 October 2014.

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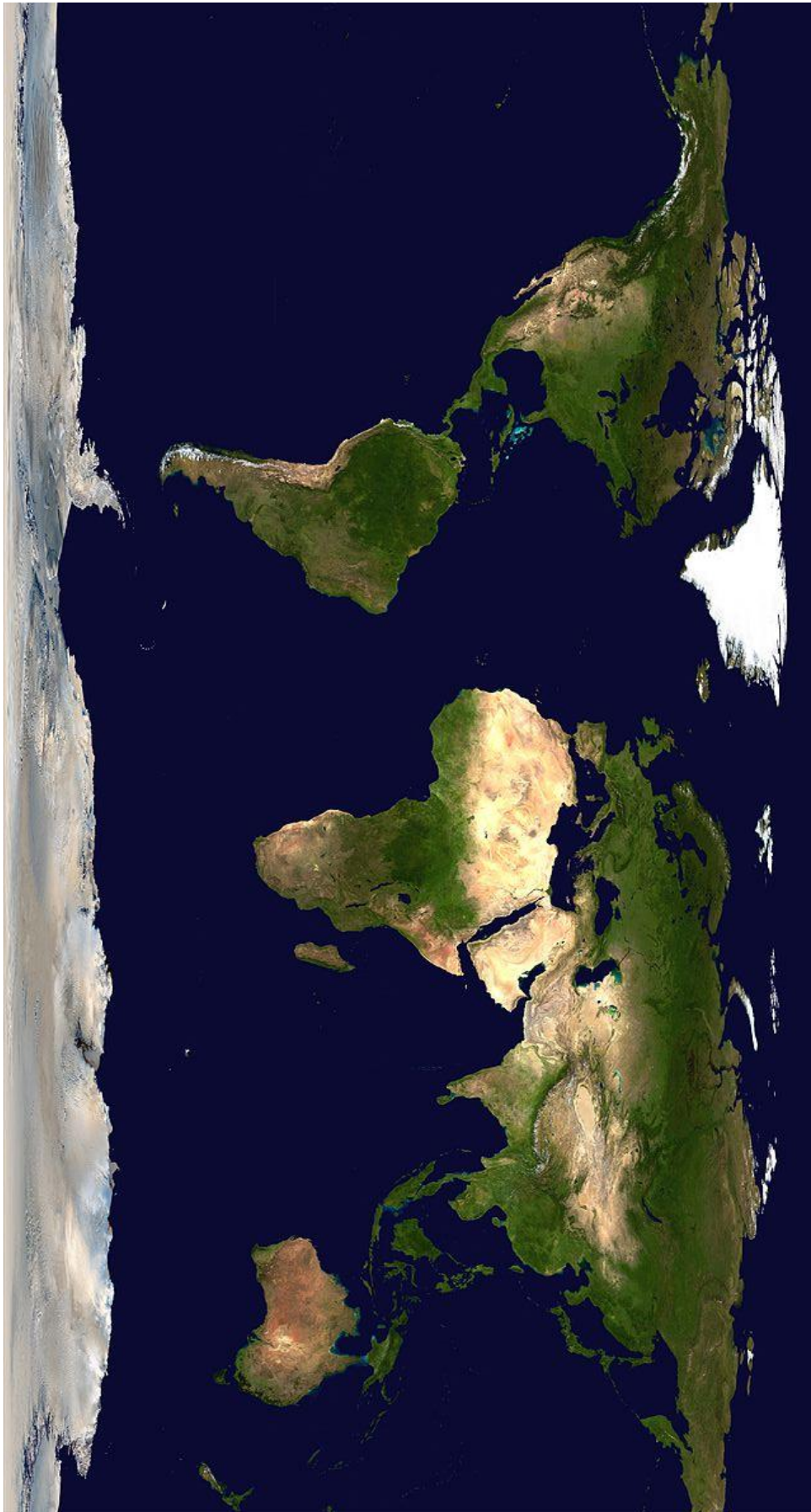
Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 89.A



Gather





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 89.B

Engage

A song



1 When I needed a neighbour were you there, were you there?
When I needed a neighbour were you there?

Chorus - and the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
were you there?

2 I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?
I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?

Chorus

3 I was cold, I was naked, were you there, were you there?
I was cold, I was naked, were you there?

Chorus

4 When I needed a shelter were you there, were you there?
When I needed a shelter were you there?

Chorus

5 When I needed a healer were you there, were you there?
When I needed a healer were you there?

Chorus

6 Wherever you travel I'll be there, I'll be there,
Wherever you travel I'll be there.

....and the creed and the colour and the name won't matter,
I'll be there.



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 89.C

Respond

A song Biblical quotes



Matthew 25.35-36

For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.

Proverbs 25:21

If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat;
and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink.



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Additional resources 89.D



Respond Me and the world 2 – we want to change the world

Busking in the Quaker Meeting House Garden – by Maya in Leicester



I don't know exactly how long ago, two friends of mine and I did this fund raising busking. It must be about 3 years ago. It started when I had decided that I wanted to do something for people in need. So Johanna, Jonathan and I came up with the following:

The three of us planed everything. We had drawn a poster and written that we were raising money for poor people. One of the Sundays after Quaker Meeting we wanted to raise money: playing our violins in the garden under the big tree.

When we left children's meeting we went and took two violins and the poster to the tree. We stuck the poster to the trunk of the tree although the blue tack didn't hold very well. We took it in turns to play all the tunes and melodies we could play without a music book or anyone's help.

One of the violin cases was positioned so that people from the Quaker Meeting could throw in money. I can't remember

how much but we raised enough money to buy some food. With this money we went, together with one of our dads, down the road from the Quaker Meeting House to a shop and bought as much rice and oil as was possible.

We put the rice and oil into the red box at the Quaker Meeting House where food was collected for poor people.

I must say it was better and more fun than ordinary appeals!

Maya





Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

Additional resources 89.E

Respond

A story to end with



Every child deserves to smile

BY SHIVANI

POEM READ AT LEICESTER QUAKER FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE
TO APPEAL FOR MONEY FOR THE ORPHANAGE IN INDIA, RAJKOT



A girl a boy, a damaged eye,
A broken future- a tragic lie.
These two children sit and wait; hoping for money, till it's late,
Beg all night and beg all day, it's their only option, their only way.
But it's not just three, it's not just four- it's hundreds thousands, many more!

To create a future you need a friend; to create a future we all depend;
Depend on love,
depend on care;
Gain a sense of knowledge, with clothes to wear.

A city in India;
Not big, not small,
Holds an orphanage, out on call,
Takes in children who need that hope,
To help them through, to help them cope.
Learn to read, learn to write, learn to sing and live without fright.

Today I hope that we all donate, though not just with money, just to help create-
Create a smile by learning more, create a smile by making sure,
That you're aware of what I want to do- and that you become aware we can make a dream come true!

So today lets hold in the light the children who have had to live IN fright, Or, perhaps lost their loved ones-
who are no longer in sight.

Let us cherish those who work, amongst the orphanage sensing change.
Every child deserves to smile, everyday, all the while.
So let's support this working home, and come together so that they are no longer alone!

You might need to adapt some of the language in Shivani's personal story.

'In December 2012 I travelled to India. The last time I had made a visit was when I was six. As a Quaker myself, the Leicester Quakers agreed instantly to support me and to help me raise money for a local orphanage In Rajkot, India. The CND who campaign for an end the use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction also allowed me to run a stall at their yearly garden party after agreeing I halve the money I raise between both causes. In total I raised £300 throughout the year of 2013.

On 17 December 2013 I put my plans into action and made the long journey to India. The 10 day visit itself was both an emotional and worthwhile experience. The orphanage was dedicated to helping babies as young as one day old to young adults. Spending time with the children in the orphanage, and having the opportunity to play the flute gave me the chance to realise how much this home was changing and improving the lives of those in its care. Before I had taken on this adventure I had set my mind on getting to know their individual

stories. The children seemed really content with what they had which I found made me speechless- especially Seeing them happily write with pencils the size of your littlest finger.

When offering a young boy a new pencil from my pencil case he instantly refused and it took me several attempts to persuade him he should take it- he treasured this gift.

Many of the children were unsure of how long they had been at the orphanage and several of the girls had high hopes and ambitions and had chosen to study in schools which teach in English not their home language Gujarati, hoping this will give them an opportunity to travel as they grow older.

The vast amount of questions I was asked fascinated me but in comparison to children here in British schools, these children didn't know much about life outside where they lived.

"Sister what sort of food do you eat in Britain"

"Sister do your friends know about this home and our lives"

My arrival at the orphanage seemed to make certain children react in different ways. When giving the children new stationary in one instance a boy took a pencil, placed it in his bag then told me I had forgot to give him a new pencil- I did not blame him, these children were so thrilled to receive something so small.

I volunteered in the orphanage independently and travelled with my parents. It was my own choice to give up Christmas to do this. But there was one significant difference between the children and myself. I had come with parents, if it wasn't for my parents I would not have been able to travel nor make a trip to India- the children of this orphanage did not have parents they could lead a steady life with, but I did.

Before I came back to England I gave the donation that I had managed to raise for them, they were really appreciative and thankful to those who had kindly contributed towards the cause. Some of the older teens were thrilled to see "English money".

I hope to return to the orphanage next year and show the workers that I didn't just come as a one off but that I am dedicated to helping them, I would like to build a strong sense of trust, friendship and partnership with this truly inspirational home.'

If there is time you could ask children if they have any questions about the story or what they thought about it.



Journeys in the Spirit



Children's work

Additional resources 89.F

Respond

Find out more and plan

An example of preparing an appeal to raise money

Children and young people prepared a special appeal that became part of Leicester Quaker Meeting's Christmas party in early December 2013. This *Additional Resource* outlines some of the steps in the preparation - from the initial inspiration that started it all, research, working with children so that it becomes their project, making a slide show and raising funds. It can be adapted to other causes.

Step 1.

This is how it all started. After one Sunday meeting in the middle of the crowd in the foyer there were 'K' and 'A' waiting for me – adult and child. 'A' didn't want to become a 'doctor without borders', but K and A explained how much A was upset about things she had found out about the situation in Syria and that she wanted to help, now.

Step 2.

Emails were then exchanged.

Dear K,

I will be working with the meeting's children on a contribution for the Christmas party this Sunday. It will be a song-statement mix of Jingle bells and the work and situation in Syria, drawing from A's wish to support doctors without borders. It would be really good for me to find out just a bit more what initiated A's wish and what she knows about the situation. For me this would be helpful to start at the level of the children's awareness.

Please dot down a few thoughts and impressions you have.

In friendship, B.

Hi B,

Thanks so much for this question. A's idea came from a talk we had about war, although I don't really remember the specifics of it. I know we were talking about Syria, and about people who live in areas affected by wars. She felt very strongly that something should be done to stop war, and her initial idea was that children could visit these areas and report on what was happening there. She really wants to be more active in stopping war..... I suggested that one of the most effective things we can do is often just to provide support for those who are working to stop war and to people who are working to improve the lives of those people who are suffering. I really think that this is what drove her to want to join Friend's meeting, knowing that this work is often being done by or supported by Quakers. The first organization that I thought of helping to support was Doctors without Borders, and talked about the work they do. She became interested in fund raising as a way to work against war. I know she would like to be active in an even more concrete way, really discussing war and ways that it can be avoided and stopped, but I didn't have a solid idea of how to go about this kind of thing in a way that would be appropriate to her age. Any ideas you may have are much appreciated. And we are both looking forward to Sunday! K.

Step 3.

The next step was to research the current situation in Syria and surrounding countries at the time and gather facts and questions. www.doctorswithoutborders.org/country-region/syria

Step 4.

After doing research there were lots of things that were useful, interesting and also difficult. One thing that was noticed was that, in contrast to the situation of people, children and adults in Syria, our families and children here had been hoping for snow and winter fun. We thought of songs that would help us all express and think about the situations songs to express this.

The challenge was how to do both at the same time, create a link of being a child, enjoying winter and drawing attention to a situation of despair without causing feelings of depression and fear amongst the smaller children. I had chosen the joy of winter weather as a link on a personal level and medical help being given to show a way ahead however small and limited it might seem.

Step 5.

I prepared a slide show (PowerPoint) as a way of showing photos and ideas and asking questions. Photos were researched and one in particular drew my attention:



It was the jute bag behind the boy, the 'wall' of his makeshift home which touched me so much because another bag of this kind was loosely thrown over one of our doors. I had bought the bag on a beautiful sunny day during our summer holiday and it was waiting there to become a piece of art... and here it was used as 'wall' of a shelter. How should this not at all solid piece of a sack provide shelter against the elements?

During a children's meeting to prepare for the all age Christmas gathering on a Sunday afternoon in December, I told the story of the coffee bean bag and we sang Jingle Bells and looked at the slides together. The children discussed slides and info, shared thoughts

and settled on ways as to what to write down. Two older children started some mathematics to work out the number of displaced persons. They wanted to include this figure into what by now had become their presentation.

Since we wanted to raise money for *Medicines sans Frontiers* we included photos showing parts of their work and illustrating the need and the help provided. But the children had decided that this wasn't all, which we could do, and they wanted the following impulses and questions added.

Step 6.

The slide show was shown on one afternoon in December (and Jingle Bells was sung). There was a period of silence. Afterwards the children collected money and counted it. They were surprised by the amount raised. It was posted to *Medicines sans Frontiers* and they received a letter to they thank you and some more facts about this charity's work.

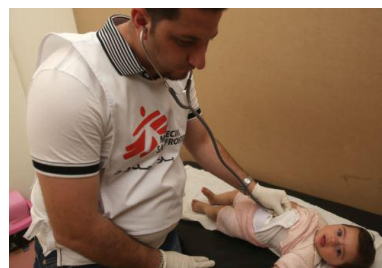
Some of the images and words used as a presentation and stimulus



MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES
DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS

It does not take sides in armed conflicts,
provides care on the basis of need alone...

There are about **8 781 000** displaced children, women and men in Syria and surrounding countries



**What to think, what to feel,
what to do...**