



Social Issues

Conflict between Communities



Definition:

This is the continued struggle or battle between different communities, often because of prejudice about race, ethnic group or religion.

Examples:

- War between different communities living together in one country, for example between the Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda.
- Conflict between local communities in a city (e.g. London) as well as abusive behaviour towards people of one or both communities because they belong to a different race and/or religion.
- The classic Romeo and Juliet story between 2 different factions of Italians, or West Side Story - Puerto Ricans and white North Americans.
- The Roma Community integrating within countries across Europe.

Why the situation occurs?

Conflicts and discrimination occur in all societies due to a lack of understanding, misconceptions, preconceptions and ignorance. These conflicts may also arise as a result of personal feuds between a few individuals, which then escalate.

Sometimes people and whole communities are judged on their appearances, without fully understanding them. The matter balances on the question of developing tolerance and respect for each other.

The different communities need to listen to each other and learn about each other in order to live in harmony together. They must work towards finding a compromise and not resorting to any violence or abusive behaviour.

How you can make a difference?

Tackle the issue - learn about the various forms of conflict between communities and why each situation occurs. Recognise how others might feel discriminated against and see how these situations could be avoided or better dealt with. Learn to empathise with others, to mediate and not to judge anyone before getting to know them.

Use the materials and tools provided to follow the process of:

1. Identifying the problem
2. Developing Awareness and Empathy
3. Taking action
4. Measuring the change

Resources and Links:

Workshop 9: "It's not always easy - managing our conflicts" from the booklet "Building Peace Together" (A World Organization of the Scout Movement publication)

http://www.scout.org/wsrc/peaceworkshops/workshop9_e.pdf

Scouting in the Roma Community in Slovakia:

http://www.scout.org/wsrc/peaceworkshops/workshop9_e.pdf