



Global Poverty and its Colonial Roots



A reEDUCATION

Teaching pack

A workshop designed to introduce 16-18 year olds to the historical and political roots of global poverty.

This guide has been produced by Health Poverty Action.

Thanks to the teachers and educators who took the time to review and feedback on this workshop, to Consented for providing us space to pilot this workshop as a part of their education programme teaching race and empire in London-based schools, and to the students and colleagues who participated in the pilot workshops. Thanks also to Teah Bernard for support with the development of these resources.

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Workshop information

By the end of this workshop, students will be able to recognise that:

1. Colonialism still impacts our lives today and can be found at the root of global poverty and poor health;
2. Global poverty is a result of political decision making, and that certain modern mechanisms allow governments, institutions, and corporations to make these decisions;
3. Change is possible, and we can all play a role in creating that change while avoiding damaging stereotypes.

Workshop details:

Delivery time: 90 mins. You will need a double lesson or two separate lessons to cover the content of this workshop.

Audience: 16-18 years olds.

Relevant classes: Suitable for teaching as a part of History, Geography, Citizenship and PSHE classes, as well as any additional classes around issues of colonialism, racism, development, global poverty and inequality, or social change.

Slide deck: Along with this teaching pack, you will also find a slide deck that can be used to deliver the workshop.

To run this workshop you will need:

1. The workshop slide deck and a way of visually displaying this
2. Whiteboard/flip chart/wall space for sticking post-it notes
3. Post-it notes
4. Marker pen
5. Printed copies of the 'workshop leaflet' and 'Further resources for students'

This document includes:

1. An outline of the workshop and how to run it.
2. Teacher notes providing background information on each of the topic areas covered in this workshop.

NOTE: You do not need to present all of this information in the workshop.

Notes on running the workshop:

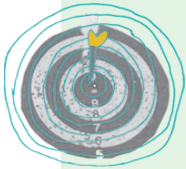
1. The workshop is designed to give a light-touch introduction to the following themes – colonialism, racism, global poverty and inequality, social change.
2. While the workshop looks at European colonialism, it does so with a particular focus on British colonialism and the British Empire due to this being the most relevant to our context today.
3. We recommend running the workshop in an interactive way, guided by the inputs of students.
4. If possible, run this workshop with everyone sitting in a circle without tables. This makes the space feel more open and interactive.
5. For some classes, it could be useful to use a ball or small beanbag that students can pass around to one another when they want to speak.

Workshop outline.

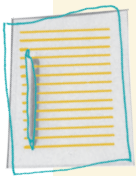
Section 1 – Introductions and welcome.



Time: 5 mins.

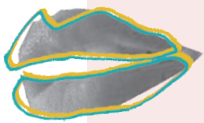


Aim: To get the group relaxed into speaking and sharing ideas.



Exercise:

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Ask each person in the room to say their name and one thing they associate with global poverty.
3. Introduce what this workshop is about.



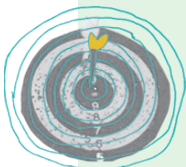
Read aloud for students:

This workshop is about exploring the historical and political roots of global poverty.

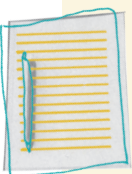
Section 2 - A brief introduction to colonialism.



Time: 15 mins.

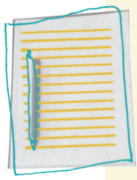


Aim: To explore and introduce European colonialism and what happened during this time.



Exercise:

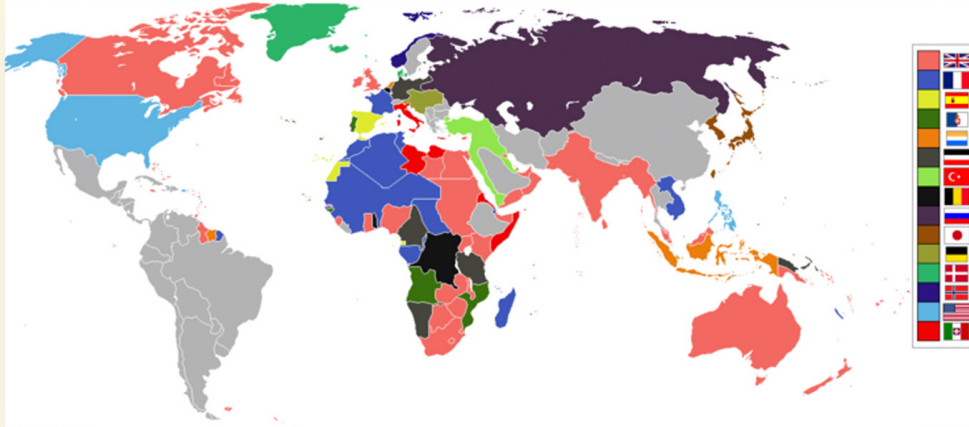
1. Ask the students to have a 3-minute discussion in groups of 2-3 on 'what is colonialism?' [slide 2].



After 3 minutes, ask the students to share some of their ideas.

Then, give a definition of colonialism and introduce European colonialism [slide 3].

Show the map of the world [slide 4]. This details which countries were colonised in 1914 by country¹.



2. Ask the students to go back into their groups and discuss 'what happened during European colonialism?' for a further 3 minutes [slide 5].

Ask students to share some of their ideas.

On the next slide you will find some examples you can give to build on what the students have already shared [slide 6].

Read aloud for students:

What is colonialism?

...the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political and economic control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically"².

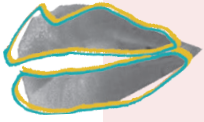
What happened during European colonialism?

Slavery: It is estimated that 12 to 13 million Africans were shipped across the Atlantic over a period of 400 years³. The British had a big role to play in this - in the 18th century they were shipping 40,000 enslaved people per year⁴.

Wealth for colonisers: The British became very wealthy from colonialism by taking resources from the countries they colonised, like gold and silver, by making the country grow certain products that they could then sell⁵ and by taxing the local population. For example, it is estimated that £9.2 trillion was taken from the Indian economy by the British during colonial times – that's over £35 trillion in today's terms⁶.

Racism: Colonial powers saw those who were being colonised as 'savage', 'backward', 'lesser than human' and incapable of governing themselves. They used this to justify their actions⁷.





The imposition of western culture and traditions: Western culture and traditions were imposed on a lot of indigenous communities. For example, the British imposed the English language in India⁸.

Violence: There was a lot of violence perpetrated against indigenous and other communities. For example:

- The Amritsar massacre in 1919 in Punjab, India where 400 peaceful protestors were killed by the British Indian Army⁹.
- The Bengal famine in British India saw approximately 2-4 million people die of starvation fuelled by British policies¹⁰.



Tip:

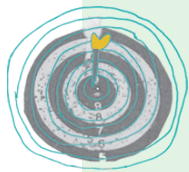
You do not need to read all of the 'Read aloud to students' information. This is just here to give you some additional points to add to what the students share.

Prompt students to engage with the information you are sharing. For example, you could ask 'who has heard of the Amritsar massacre?', 'how much money do you think the British took from the Indian economy in today's terms?' or 'what parts of western culture do you think were imposed onto colonised countries?'

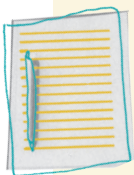
Section 3 - Power mapping – then and now.



Time: 15 mins.



Aim: To map out which groups were involved in or impacted by European colonialism, the power dynamics between them (i.e. who benefitted and who lost out) and explore how relevant this map is to the world today.



Exercise:

'Power mapping' is an exercise that is used to outline the main actors in a system and the power relations between them.

For this exercise you will need to have some wall space to write up what the students share (e.g. a wall to stick post-it notes to or a whiteboard).

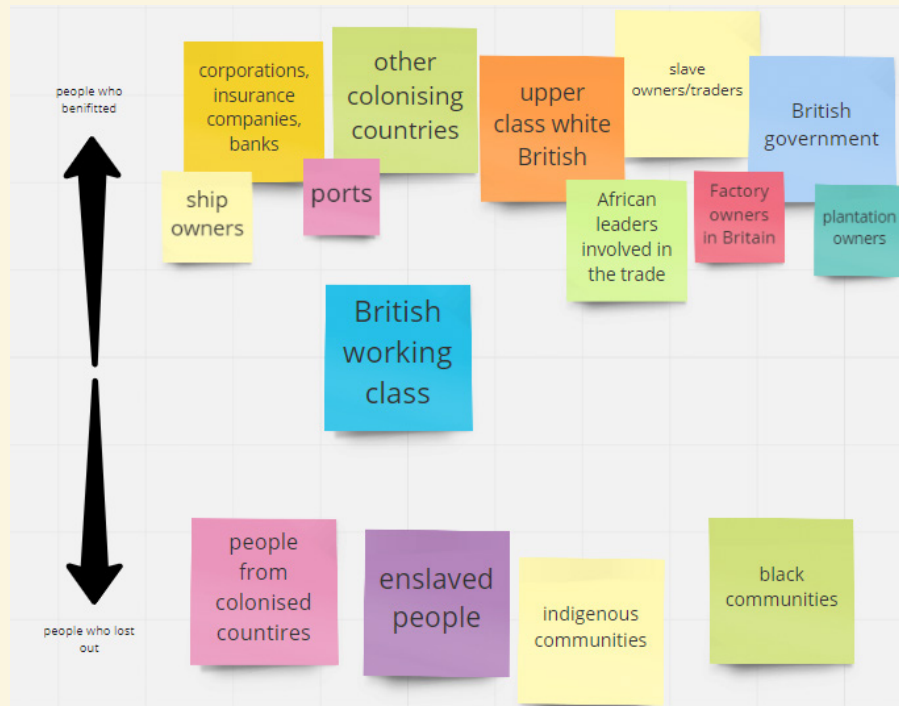
1. Ask the students to call out actors who were involved in, or impacted by, European colonialism [slide 7].



2. Ask them where on the power map they would place them – towards the top for people who benefitted, or towards the bottom for people who lost out.

3. Add the examples to the 'power map' as you go.

You will hopefully end up with a map that looks a bit like this...



4. Now ask the group what they think this power map would look like if they recreated it for today? Would it look the same? [slide 8]

Based on the conversation, you may want to add additional post-it notes or move some things around, but the point is to highlight that much of it would stay the same.



Tip:

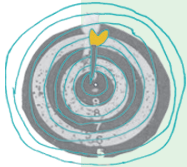
When doing the power mapping exercise, you can offer prompts if the students get stuck e.g. *Which countries/corporations/groups of people etc...benefitted or lost out from European colonialism?*

Power mapping can often oversimplify an issue and you might find that some actors do not neatly fit into either 'benefitting' or 'losing out' from colonialism. If this comes up, we suggest placing them in the middle of the map and highlighting that this is a complex issue. Not all groups of people fit neatly onto the map; this exercise is about mapping general trends or patterns.

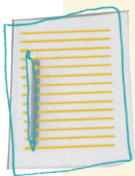
Section 4 – What does this have to do with global poverty?



Time: 10 mins.



Aim: To explain what global poverty is and how it is created, and how global poverty is linked to the power imbalances identified in the power mapping exercise.



Exercise:

1. Ask the students to have a 3-minute discussion in groups of 2-3 on 'what is global poverty?' [slide 9]

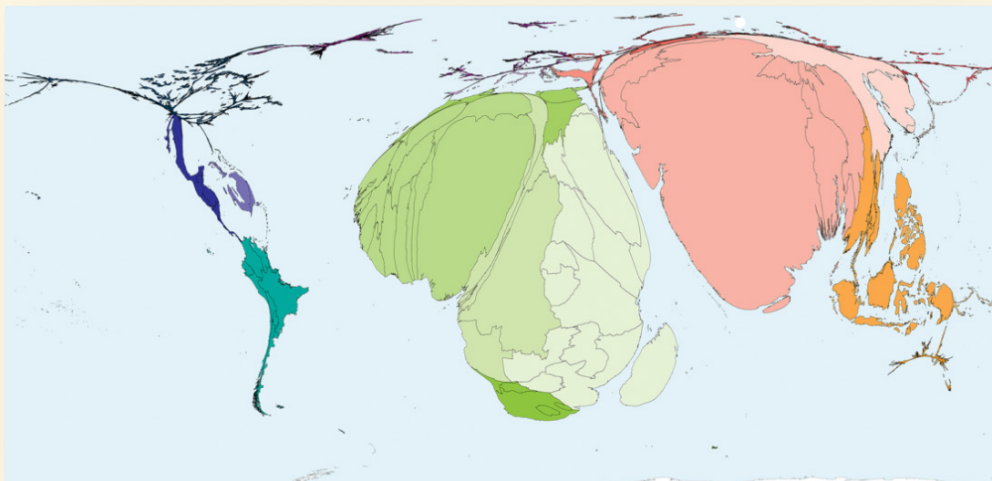
After 3 minutes, ask the students to share some of their ideas.

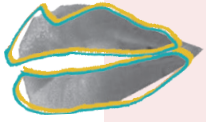
Then, give a definition [slide 10].

2. Ask the students if they think the power map has anything to do with global poverty? If yes, ask them why [slide 11].

Give an explanation on the next slide [slide 12].

Show the map and ask students to call out what they think it shows¹¹ [slide 13].





Read aloud for students:

Defining poverty.

Global poverty is often understood in monetary terms. For example, the World Bank says that you live in poverty if you live on less than \$1.90 per day. According to this definition there are 736 million people worldwide living in poverty¹².

But global poverty is about a lot more than how much money you have. It is also about access to healthcare, a home, community, education, energy, opportunities, decent work, living free from conflict, safety, air quality, access to decision-making processes that affect your life, and more. When you factor these elements in too, there are a lot more people living in poverty. For example, the Multidimensional Poverty Index, which factors health, education and standard of living into its calculations, shows that 1.3 billion people worldwide live in poverty. That is 23.1% of the world's population¹³.

In short, living free from poverty means being able to live a fulfilled and healthy life.

But there is more to this story...

Linking the power map with global poverty.

In general, those at the bottom of the power map are more likely to live in poverty than those at the top. Poverty at its core is a lack of power.

Poverty has been created by human action – by the people at the top of the power map who make decisions to serve their own interests.

Map.

This shows the proportion of people living on less than \$1.90 per day on a world map.

You can see that the majority of global poverty exists in the Global South.

This is not to say that poverty does not exist in the Global North, but it is more prevalent in the Global South when you look at it from a global perspective.



Tip:

When sharing definitions or information with the group, offer prompts for them to engage.

For example, *'has anyone heard of the Multidimensional Poverty Index?', 'what does this tell us about the links between poverty and power?' or 'where in the world do you think global poverty is most prevalent?'*



There are multiple ways to define 'Global South'. In this context, we use it to refer to less wealthy nations in Latin America, Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Southern Asia¹⁴.

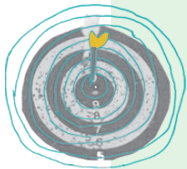
IF YOU ARE DELIVERING THIS WORKSHOP ACROSS TWO SEPARATE LESSONS, THIS IS THE STOPPING POINT FOR LESSON 1 [SLIDE 14].

KEEP A RECORD OF THE POWER MAP BETWEEN SESSIONS. YOU WILL NEED TO REFER TO IT AGAIN IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS WORKSHOP.

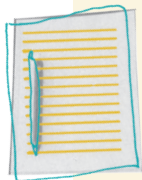
SECTION 5 – How power is maintained.



Time: 20 mins.



Aim: To explore some of the ways in which global poverty is created today.



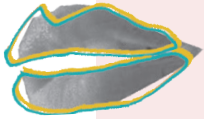
Exercise:

1. If you are delivering this lesson in two parts, start by asking the students to recap where you ended in the last session (i.e. linking the power map with global poverty today).
2. Ask the students to get into groups of 2-3 and discuss for 5 minutes if they can think of any ways the groups at the top of the power map keep their power [Slide 15]

Use image prompts in the slide for this conversation [slide 16].

After 5 minutes, ask the students to share some of their ideas.

You can add to what students are sharing using the 'Read aloud for students' section below.



Read aloud for students:

Mechanisms for maintaining power

International Trade: The rules that guide international trade often favour the commercial interests of powerful countries and corporations¹⁵. For example, in some trade agreements there is a rule that if a government tries to put in place a policy that will undermine the profits of a foreign company, even if that policy is in the public interest, the company can sue that government. In 2011, Philip Morris - a big tobacco corporation - tried to sue the Australian government when they wanted to bring in plain packaging for cigarettes because they said it would reduce their sales¹⁶.

Taxation: In many places around the world, wealthy corporations and individuals can use their wealth and power to not pay their fair share of tax. This can be done legally or illegally. This means their wealth is not being redistributed to wider society and that they are not contributing fairly to funding our public services, like healthcare. Corporate tax dodging costs poor countries at least \$100 billion every year. This is enough money to provide an education for 124 million children and prevent the deaths of almost 8 million mothers, babies and children a year¹⁷.

Natural resources: Plundering natural resources from the Global South was a big part of colonialism. But in many places around the world, this practise still exists. For example, West Africa loses around \$1.3 billion because of illegal, unreported or unregulated fishing every year conducted by foreign and national fleets. Similarly, \$17.1 billion is lost through illegal logging in Africa every year with many foreign firms taking advantage of corrupt permit systems¹⁸.

Indebtedness: Governments, private companies and institutions in the Global North - like the World Bank – give loans to countries in the Global South. The interest rates on some of these loans, like those from private banks, can be very high. Often countries have limited choices about taking on new loans because they need to cover previous debts too. For example, in 2016 Ghana was paying about 30% of all government revenue in debt repayments every year, squeezing the money available for vital public services like healthcare¹⁹. Furthermore, some loans can come with conditions that require governments to make economic changes that favour foreign investment such as privatisation and low taxation rates²⁰. These can have negative consequences such as eroding public services²¹.

Climate crisis – Research by the Carbon Majors Database shows that 100 companies are responsible for 71% of all greenhouse gas emissions. Many of these companies are based in the Global North²². Some of these companies have been able to use their power and wealth to lobby decision makers not to regulate their business. For example, an academic study found that the fossil fuel industry spent nearly \$2 billion lobbying to prevent action on the climate crisis in the US²³, while the effects of the climate crisis continue to worsen²⁴. These effects are most severely felt in the Global South.



For example, African countries are responsible for less than 4% of greenhouse gas emissions, and yet they are having to pay out billions to mitigate the effect of the climate crisis like such as water shortages, coastal flooding, rising sea levels and a loss of biodiversity^t.



Tips:

Prompt the group to engage when you are giving definitions or explanations, e.g. 'can you guess how much tax revenue is lost every year by governments from corporate tax dodging?', 'who do you think is most responsible for the climate crisis?' or 'what % of government revenue do you think Ghana pays in debt repayments every year?'.

When discussing tax, the conversation might move to focus on whether we should pay tax or not (e.g. 'we work hard for our money, why should we pay tax?'). While it can be useful to engage in this conversation if you have time, we find that it is more useful to explain that the very wealthy are able to use their wealth, contacts and resources to avoid paying a fair share of tax, and this is not fair or equitable.

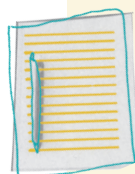
Section 6 - Solutions: addressing global poverty.



Time: 20 mins.



Aim: To start to explore how we can address global poverty.



Exercise:

1. Show one of the three videos provided to the students (see 'Tip' section below). Ask the students to call out how they felt about the video – for example, did it make them uncomfortable, did it make them laugh, what did it make them think about?

Then ask them to call out their thoughts on what this video is telling us about the solutions to global poverty [slide 17].

There are some prompts you can use in the 'Read aloud to students' section below.

Show the diagram of annual financial inflows and outflows from Sub-Saharan Africa to demonstrate how solutions to global poverty must address its root causes, and that aid is a small part of the overall picture ²⁶ [slide 18].





2. Then, ask the students to get into groups of 2-3 and discuss for 3 minutes about what they think the solutions to global poverty are. Remind them to think about the power map as they do this [slide 19].

After 3 minutes, ask the students to share some of their ideas.

3. Ask the group if they can think of any examples of organisations or movements who are working to create this change? [slide 20]

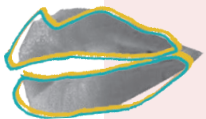
Then, show some examples on the next slide if needed [slide 21].

Show next slide with another quote highlighting the power of people to create change [slide 22]

4. Lastly, ask the students to get back into their groups of 2-3 and discuss for 3 minutes what ideas they have for things they can do to address global poverty? [slide 23]

After 3 minutes, ask the students to share some of their ideas.

Give some examples [slide 24].



Read aloud for students:

Prompts for the video:

This video uses humour and irony to highlight challenging notions of unequal global power dynamics often found in aid and charity communications - such as Global North and white saviourism, and the victimisation of people who live in the Global South.

It is making a point about the arbitrary nature of charity and aid when addressing poverty, because rather than addressing unequal power dynamics, they actually recreate them.

Diagram of financial inflows and outflows from Sub-Saharan Africa.

This diagram²⁷ shows financial inflows and outflows from Sub Saharan Africa.

This is from research conducted by Health Poverty Action and partners in 2015.

It demonstrates an annual net financial deficit in the region despite the inflow of \$30 billion in aid.

This highlights that current approaches to poverty like aid do not focus enough on the broader context.



Focusing on aid may in fact mask some of the root causes of poverty and inequality, and hinder action being taken to tackle these.

Solutions.

There are many different solutions, but they are all linked to addressing the unequal distribution of power we highlighted in our power map, and the mechanisms for maintaining power.

Some examples could be: redistributing power and wealth to those at the 'bottom' of the power map; addressing unfair trade rules; ensuring wealthy companies and individuals pay their fair share of tax; holding corporations to account for the climate crisis; and stopping the plundering of natural resources from the Global South.

The below examples have been selected to show how we can act in solidarity with affected communities here in the UK, by holding our government, institutions and private companies to account.

Community driven change in El Salvador – 'No to Mining Yes to Life'. Communities in El Salvador came together to ask the government to block metallic mining in their region by foreign multilaterals which would have contaminated their water supply. They succeeded and the mining plans did not go ahead²⁸.

Community driven change in Lagos, Nigeria. Community groups in Lagos, Nigeria came together in 2018 to prevent the privatisation of the water supply which was being pushed by the World Bank. They managed to prevent this from happening²⁹.

Jubilee Debt Campaign. This is a UK-based campaigning group that works in solidarity with countries in the Global South to hold Global North governments, institutions and private companies to account by demanding debt justice. They have been a part of some big campaigning wins. For example, they were a part of the global jubilee campaign which resulted in the cancellation of \$130 billion of debt for countries in the global south between 2000 and 2015³⁰.

Black Curriculum and Fill in the Blanks. These groups focus on getting some of the issues we have talked about in this workshop – and particularly the British Empire – taught in the curriculum³¹. This is important because if we don't know about these issues, then we can't demand action on the ways they continue to shape the world today.

These examples all show that even if we are not at the top of the power map, collectively we have power and we can create change, at the community, national and international level.

**Tip:**

We have provided three different videos for you to choose from in this section. This is so you can select the video that is most appropriate for your students.

The three videos we suggest you could use are:

'Africa for Norway', SAIH Norway³²: This video shows a community in Africa fundraising to give radiators to people in Norway. It takes the traditional charity fundraising advert style and inverts it.

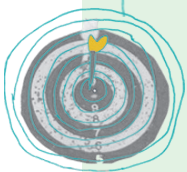
'39 Cents', Saturday Night Live³³: Shows a 'traditional' NGO fundraising video, with commentary from the 'local community'. This video highlights damaging stereotypes found in charity fundraising materials.

'Let's Save Africa! – Gone Wrong', SAIH Norway³⁴: 'Behind the scenes' of a traditional NGO fundraising advert, also highlighting damaging stereotypes that are often found in this kind of advert.

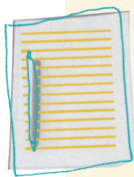
Section 7 – Close.



Time: 5 mins.



Aim: To close the workshop.

**Exercise:**

1. Ask if students have any questions and feedback.

.....

We would love to hear how you found running this workshop, and any feedback you have for us.

Please get in touch with us via
general@healthpovertyaction.org,

Background information to themes covered in the workshop.

This section is to provide some background information to the key topics presented in this workshop for the facilitator.

Not all the information given here should be covered in the workshop (although you might find it useful to draw on some of this information when delivering the workshop).

Colonialism and the British Empire.

"Colonialism is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically" for the colonising country's own benefit. The colonising country will also often force its own language and cultural values upon those being colonised³⁵.

Colonialism has happened throughout history by empires such as Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, who occupied and exploited people and land beyond their own borders to increase their own power and wealth³⁶.

Modern colonialism, or European colonialism, was started by the Portuguese in the 15th century as they started looking for new trading routes and other civilisations outside of Europe³⁷.

The British started their colonial efforts in the 16th century. At its peak, the British Empire was the largest empire in history. By 1914, it covered nearly 25% of the world's land area. There are only 22 countries in the world that Britain hasn't colonised³⁸.

There is not really a set date when the British Empire ended, it went into steady decline after the Second World War ended in 1945. By the late 1960s, most of Britain's territories had become independent countries through struggles for independence³⁹.

There are 14 territories that remain under British jurisdiction today from colonial times. Most are self-governing and not really considered an official part of the UK. They include the Falkland Islands, British Antarctic Territory and Bermuda⁴⁰.

What did colonialism entail?

Some of the key things that underpin modern colonialism include:

The Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The transatlantic slave trade was started in the 16th century by the Portuguese and Spanish, and continued until the 19th century⁴¹. It involved the transportation of enslaved African people by slave traders mostly to the Americas. Most of the people enslaved were sold to work in the production of commodity crops (such as coffee, tobacco, cocoa, sugar, cotton, gold and silver, and rice), the construction industry or as domestic servants⁴².

It is estimated that 12 to 13 million Africans were shipped across the Atlantic over a period of 400 years⁴³. The British had a big role to play in this - in the 18th century they were shipping over 40,000 enslaved people per year. This was hugely profitable for the British, and they were able to use the profits to help fund the industrial revolution⁴⁴. Other groups in Britain also benefitted from the slave trade such as the Bank of England which made capital available for slave voyages, Lloyds of London which insured slave ships, and Barclays bank which invested in the slave trade⁴⁵.

Extraction of wealth and resources.

Colonisers extracted raw materials from the countries they colonised and used them to

trade (e.g. gold and silver). They took over land and planted new crops that they could then trade, often using slave labour for this (such as tea, palm oil, cacao, tobacco, peanuts). They also taxed local populations to generate wealth⁴⁶.

For example, in India in 1765, the East India Company – an English company which controlled the sub-continent during some of the colonial period – introduced a ‘tax and buy’ scheme whereby they taxed the local population and then used this revenue to purchase Indian goods for the British - essentially, acquiring these goods for free⁴⁷. From 1765 to 1938, the amount drained from India via ‘tax and buy’ schemes and other forms of extraction amounted to £9.2 trillion GBP (the modern equivalent of over £35 trillion⁴⁸).

This extraction of wealth, alongside other colonial practises, undermined colonised countries’ ability to develop, even after independence⁴⁹.

Racism.

Colonial powers saw those who they were colonising as ‘backward’, ‘lesser than human’ and incapable of governing themselves. They saw themselves as having a legal and religious obligation to control indigenous people and land ‘for their own good’ seeing themselves as ‘superior’. This way of thinking was used as a justification for the horrific treatment and violence inflicted on indigenous populations⁵⁰, and forms the basis for structural racism and ‘white supremacy’ that is present in our society today⁵¹.

Imposition of western culture and tradition.

Colonial powers attempted to impose their culture and traditions onto indigenous populations as a means of entrenching colonial superiority. For example, one way the British asserted their dominance in India was by making British culture - such as the English language, British sport and social clubs - seen to be superior to the local traditional culture, putting them in a position of power over Indian people⁵².

Violence and Conflict

The notion that indigenous communities were ‘lesser’ was used as a justification for the devastating amount of violence and exploitation inflicted on colonised populations.

There are many examples of this, including:

- The Amritsar massacre in 1919 in Punjab, India where local people were meeting to celebrate a Sikh festival and peacefully protest the arrest and deportation of two national leaders. The British Indian Army opened fire on the civilians killing 400 people⁵³.

- The Bengal famine in British India where approximately 2-4 million people died of starvation fuelled by British policy⁵⁴.

Legacies of colonialism.

Even after the slave trade was abolished and many countries achieved independence from colonial rule, colonial powers continued to benefit from this period in many ways. For example:

Compensation.

After the slave trade was abolished, slave owners and traders were compensated £20 million for a ‘loss of income’ (the modern equivalent of £17 billion)⁵⁵ which they invested in a range of activities such as the building of railways, developing merchant banks or setting up breweries such as Greene King⁵⁶. No compensation was given to those who were enslaved or brutalised⁵⁷. There are wealthy families in the UK still indirectly enjoying the proceeds of slavery where it has been passed on to them⁵⁸.

Power of former colonial rulers.

Colonialism was characterised by uneven power relations in favour of colonial rulers. Even after independence, these power structures have remained in place in multiple forms⁵⁹. How these relations manifest has changed through time in complex ways. However, a modern example includes the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – international financial institutions established by western powers in the 1940s⁶⁰.

In the context of a global debt crisis in the 1980s, the World Bank and IMF provided loans to countries in the Global South on the condition that they made a set of reforms to their economies including reducing government spending, opening markets to 'free' trade and privatising public services. These reforms were based on the neoliberal view that free markets are essential for promoting efficient economies, ultimately leading to improved living conditions and reduced poverty rates. In reality, these policies contributed to rising poverty and inequality in many countries⁶¹. Any benefits that did exist were often only realised by well-connected elites or foreign investors and companies through policies such as tax breaks⁶².

Structural racism.

The racist views of colonised populations as 'lesser' and 'backward', and the notion of white 'superiority' still echoes in our society today. For example, black people in the UK are 9 times more likely to be stopped and searched by police than their white counterparts⁶³, 40% of people from African countries who have graduated university are overqualified for their roles⁶⁴, and black women are five times more likely to die from childbirth in the UK than white women⁶⁵.

Defining Poverty.

Poverty is often understood in monetary terms. For example, the World Bank defines living in poverty as living off \$1.90 USD equivalent per day or less. According to the World Bank, there are 736 million people living in poverty today when measured by these standards⁶⁶.

There are many critiques of using this definition of poverty. For example, the financial line set by the World Bank has been considered arbitrary, too low and unreliable⁶⁷.

Furthermore, poverty is about much more than just income. It is also about access to healthcare, a home, community, education, energy, opportunities, decent work, living free from conflict, safety, air quality, access to decision-making processes that affect your life, and more⁶⁸. The Multidimensional Poverty Index, which factors health, education and standard of living into its calculations, shows that 1.3 billion people worldwide live in poverty. That is 23.1% of the world's population⁶⁹.

This definition also fails to account for the fact that poverty is fundamentally all about power – who has it and who does not. As the quote below highlights, poverty has been created, it is the outcome of political decision making as opposed to being something naturally occurring or the fault of those who live in poverty:

*'Poverty is political. Rather than being an unhappy accident, it is caused by human structures and systems and of being excluded from decision making. As such, the solutions to poverty must be political too'*⁷⁰

This unequal distribution of power manifests in multiple ways. For example:

Economic inequality.

The 26 richest people in the world own as much money as the bottom 50% of the world's population⁷¹.

Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon, is currently the world's richest man. Just 1% of his wealth is worth the same as the whole health budget for Ethiopia which has a population of 105 million⁷². During the COVID-19 global pandemic, his wealth has increased by \$25 billion as a result of people shifting to online streaming and shopping⁷².

Climate crisis.

People living in the Global South, indigenous peoples and those from the working classes in the Global North experience the negative impact of the climate crisis most intensely, yet they contribute less than 10% to its causes^{74,75}.

Mechanisms for maintaining power today.

There are many ways that powerful people can maintain this power and wealth today. These mechanisms demonstrate how many of our global systems are set up to enable, or turn a blind eye, to the concentration of wealth and power for some at the cost of quality of life for others.

Examples of these global systems/mechanisms include:

- International Trade
- Tax rules
- The plundering of natural resources
- International debt
- Climate crisis

See "Read aloud to students" in Section 5 above for more information.

Solutions to global poverty.

In the Global North, aid and charity are often portrayed as the solutions to poverty. This story tells us that we can overcome global poverty by 'us' giving to 'others'.

While aid and charity - in their different forms - are a piece of the puzzle when addressing global poverty, the story that they are the primary solutions is limited and damaging. This is because they fail to adequately expose and address the root causes of global poverty (i.e. the unequal distribution of power and the global mechanisms that enable this) and recreate racist and colonially rooted ideas of 'white saviourism' and 'superiority'^{76,77}.

David Lammy – a Labour MP – highlighted this in 2019 when he called out presenter Stacey Dooley for posting images on social media of her posing with a young Ugandan child while on a trip there for Comic Relief. He highlighted how these images perpetuated tired and unhelpful stereotypes of poverty⁷⁸.

The videos provided in Section 6 also demonstrate these points.

To address global poverty, we need to expose and address the unequal distribution of power and wealth in the world and change the systems which sustain this, and move beyond the false and damaging stereotypes of those who live in poverty.

See "Read aloud for students" in Section 6 for examples of what these solutions could look like and examples of successful community-driven campaigns.

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