

Dear Educator,

This week, **Operation Change** takes you and your students to Ethiopia, where the team helps people afflicted with an unsightly disease called *mossy foot* receive treatment and overcome the social barriers that have made them outcasts in their own communities.

Your students can view this episode for free at OperationChange.com, where they can also sign up for an Operation Change Passport and earn points for exploring and sharing the rich digital content on the site.

This free educational program is designed to help you make **Operation Change** part of your social studies curriculum. Use the student activity sheets to explore how issues examined in this episode are echoed in our society and to help students recognize how they can follow the example of **Operation Change** to become change-makers in their own community.

Operation Change offers you a unique opportunity to add a service learning dimension to your social studies curriculum. We encourage you to share this opportunity with other social studies teachers at your school, and we look forward to receiving your comments on this learning program through our feedback form at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-operation-change.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



OPERATIONCHANGE

TARGET AUDIENCE

This program is designed to supplement the social studies curriculum for students in grades 9-12.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- This one-page teacher's guide.
- A reproducible two-page student activity sheet for the Ethiopia episode of **Operation Change**.
- YMI microsite at ymiclassroom.com/operationchange, for additional resources and to send feedback on this program.

TOUR THE OPERATIONCHANGE.COM WEBSITE

Begin your **Operation Change** humanitarian adventure by introducing students to the OperationChange.com website:

1. Click the green "Get Started" button on the homepage to show students how to sign up for an Operation Change Passport, so they can earn points for exploring and sharing content on the site. As you tour the site, have students notice how points are awarded for watching videos, viewing photo galleries, and clicking links to learn more. Also show students the "Top Explorers" leaderboard on the homepage, and explain that they can climb the ranks to become a Top Explorer every time they visit the site. (You may want to create your own in-class leaderboard to encourage student exploration of the site and reward top explorers.)
2. Click "About Us" for a video that explains the **Operation Change** mission and profiles of the **Operation Change** team members.
3. Click "The Series" to give students a preview of the places they can visit with the **Operation Change** team as they explore the website.
4. Click one of the buttons under the description of the Ethiopia episode to launch the "Story Mode" content panels. Pause the video to show students how they can click the Story Mode tabs for background on the history and geography of this region (globe tab), information about the people and organizations featured in the episode (people tab), videos that provide an in-depth or behind-the-scenes look at topics presented in the episode (play-button tab), **Operation Change** team member blogs about their experience in Ethiopia (dialogue tab), and multimedia content on Ethiopia's culture (masks tab).

5. Explain to students that additional Story Mode content will appear alongside the video player on this page as they watch the episode, providing them with background facts and commentary.
6. Click "Causes" to show students a roster of some of the non-profit organizations that **Operation Change** has worked with in countries across the globe. Students can click the "Learn More" link to view multimedia content on the work of each organization, or use the "Click Here" link to visit the organization's website.
7. Complete your tour of the website by clicking "Exclusive Videos" to show students a quick way to browse the Story Mode videos for different featured episodes.

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

1. Distribute photocopies of the two-page student activity sheet to your class. Point out that the URL for viewing the Ethiopia episode of **Operation Change** is provided at the top of the sheet. Then review the activity to help prepare students for this learning experience.
2. Have students complete Part 1 of the activity in class, as preparation for watching this episode of **Operation Change**. Use the talking points provided below to discuss how people in your community would react to an unsightly physical condition like "mossy foot" disease.
3. Students complete Part 2 of the activity at home, after watching this episode of **Operation Change**. Have them share their reflections on the relationships described on the activity sheet, then use the talking points provided below to prompt critical thinking about the broader implications of these social interactions. Also provide time for students to pose their own questions for discussion.
4. Have students work in small groups or independently to complete Part 3 of the activity, which presents a research challenge that draws on the "Story Mode" content for this episode. Schedule time for students to share their research in class.
5. Use the "Be A Change-Maker" section of the activity to have students brainstorm ways they can build on what they have learned from **Operation Change** to empower people in their own community and help them overcome challenges in their lives.





OPERATION **CHANGE** MISSION TO ETHIOPIA

PART 1

- This episode focuses on a community in Ethiopia where more than five percent of the population is afflicted with mossy foot (also called podoconiosis, or non-filarial elephantiasis.), a disease of the lymphatic system in the feet and lower extremities that causes swelling and deformity. As the episode makes clear, it is almost always a shock to see the full effects of mossy foot, and the episode is deliberately structured to prepare viewers for this experience. Mossy foot is discussed and fairly mild cases are seen in the early minutes of the episode. Viewers do not see a severe case until late in the episode, when they have become increasingly familiar with the disease and understanding of its impact.

Part 1 of this activity is designed to help you prepare your students for this viewing experience. It describes how the shock of seeing mossy foot can give way to sympathy for the person suffering from this disease or trigger a self-protective impulse that can harden into prejudice. To help students recognize that feelings like these are common in societies everywhere, they are asked to describe how people in their own community would react in this situation. Have students share their ideas in class, and invite them to explain how they think they would deal with the initial shock that almost everyone feels on seeing mossy foot for the first time. Use this class discussion to model an appropriate attitude for viewing the episode.

PART 2

- This part of the activity provides a graphic organizer that students use to examine the special relationships that develop between members of the **Operation Change** team and four people they help cope with the social consequences of mossy foot. Have students complete Part 2 at home, after viewing the episode. Review in class how the **Operation Change** team members help the people named in the graphic organizer (see descriptions below), then discuss what each team member takes away from the relationship. Why does Carlos, for example, say that his experience helping Woyze replace her home has "changed his life?" How are Bill, Steven, and Snejana changed by their experiences? What do they gain by giving to others? What do they learn about social values and themselves?

- ▶ Bill restores Endrias' hearing and works with him to restore hearing for other mossy foot patients. When he sees that Endrias has developed a tumor as a result of his mossy foot, he takes Endrias to a hospital for life-saving surgery.
- ▶ Steven provides Megiso with shoes for his children, so they will not become infected with mossy foot, and pays for surgery to correct the deformity caused by his disease.
- ▶ Snejana works with Bircanesh to help her start a small business selling injera bread to people in her village.
- ▶ Carlos works with the Widow Project to build a new home for Woyke, whose hut has been destroyed by termites.

PART 3

- This part of the activity encourages students to learn more about mossy foot and how they can help eradicate this debilitating disease by exploring the "Story Mode" content for this episode at OperationChange.com, as well as The Mossy Foot Project website and other sites that provide information on the disease. Students can undertake this research independently or in small groups, and share their findings in class.

Additional Research Resources

- *The Mossy Foot Project*, www.mossyfoot.com
- *The Mossy Foot Treatment and Prevention Association*, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2682702
- *Footwork*, www.podo.org

BE A CHANGE-MAKER!

Have students work in small groups to brainstorm ways they can build on what they have learned to launch a humanitarian adventure in their own community. They might, for example, consider how they could help people whose physical condition or personal appearance sets them apart within the community counteract misunderstanding and prejudice. Have students share the results of their brainstorming in a class discussion.



OPERATION **CHANGE** MISSION TO ETHIOPIA

JOIN THE MISSION AT OPERATIONCHANGE.COM/EPISODE/ETHIOPIA

The **Operation Change** team travels to Sodo, in southern Ethiopia, to learn about mossy foot*, a disease of the lymphatic system in the feet and lower extremities that causes swelling and deformity. In this rural area, most people travel on foot, which leaves people with mossy foot nearly immobilized. What's worse, they are treated as outcasts and left to survive on their own. The team partners with the Mossy Foot Project to provide treatment and support services for people afflicted with this disease. Working together, they help break down the barriers that have formed around the disease in Ethiopian society and help mossy foot patients break out of their isolation.

PART 1 As you will see, the physical deformity caused by mossy foot disease can be shocking. Members of the **Operation Change** team have a strong emotional reaction when they first meet people who have this disease. As they get to know them, and learn how to help them, that initial shock quickly gives way to sympathy. But there is little compassion for these people in their own community, where they are shunned and ignored.

Before viewing this episode of **Operation Change**, think about how a situation like this would play out in your community. Would people show compassion or turn away? Use this space to describe how you think people would react to mossy foot in your community. Then talk in class about how you would deal with that initial shock we all feel in these situations.

* Also called podoconiosis, or non-filarial elephantiasis.






OPERATION **CHANGE** MISSION TO ETHIOPIA

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PART 2 As they work with the Mossy Foot Project, the members of the **Operation Change** team develop special relationships with several mossy foot patients. And in these relationships, instead of simply giving the person help, each team member also gets something in return — not just the satisfaction of helping someone solve a problem, but a feeling of inspiration or admiration or respect.

After you have watched the episode, use this chart to analyze these relationships. Try to describe what each member of the **Operation Change** team takes away from the relationship. Then talk in class about how each relationship changed two lives, the life of the person with mossy foot disease and the life of the **Operation Change** team member.

| | | | |
|---|---------|-----------|---|
|  | Bill | Endrias |  |
|  | Steven | Megiso |  |
|  | Snejana | Bircanesh |  |
|  | Carlos | Woyze |  |

PART 3 As you learned on your mission to Ethiopia, mossy foot is caused by particles of volcanic glass mixed into the soil that penetrate the skin when people walk barefoot. The disease can be easily prevented by wearing shoes, but it occurs mostly in tropical areas where people customarily go barefoot and where shoes may not be easy to obtain.

Find out how you can help bring an end to this terrible disease. Start by visiting the **Operation Change** website, OperationChange.com, to learn more by viewing the additional scenes from the team's visit to Ethiopia. Then visit the Mossy Foot Project website, mossyfoot.com, to find out how you can play a part in their effort to support mossy foot patients and teach everyone in Ethiopia how to eradicate this disease.

BE A CHANGE-MAKER!

You've seen how the **Operation Change** team helped people with mossy foot overcome some the social barriers that have made them outcasts in

Ethiopian society. Now take a look at your own community. Are there people whom misunderstanding or prejudice have set apart? How might you make a difference in their lives? Talk with your classmates about ways you could follow the example of **Operation Change** and become a change-maker where you live.