

Kulanu, Inc
Mitzvah Project Program
www.kulanu.org/mitzvahprojects

Kulanu ("All of Us" in Hebrew), founded in 1994, is a non-profit organization which supports isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world – in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the United States. Many of these groups have long been disconnected from the worldwide Jewish community; some claim to be descended from the “lost tribes” of Israel, while others are Jews by choice. Often our communities do not have access to things like synagogues, matzoh, or even their own Torah; most are minority groups living in impoverished areas, and may face obstacles such as hostility from neighboring communities, or a lack of food to feed their families.

Kulanu engages our network of dedicated volunteers and other activists – as well as the community members themselves – to raise awareness about, and find funding and other resources for these emerging communities; we accomplish this through research, visits, and publications about their histories and traditions. We provide Jewish education and other materials to these communities, and help cultivate their connections with the wider Jewish world. These connections help “all of us” enrich our Jewish lives as we learn from each other.

Interested in being part of this Jewish global outreach and community development work? Check out our list of ideas for fun ways you can educate your peers about, and raise needed funds for, these inspiring Jewish communities around the world. Then visit www.kulanu.org or kulanu.org/mitzvahprojects to find out how to get started on your own Bar/Bat Mitzvah Project or class *tzedekeh* activity with Kulanu, Inc!

Mitzvah Project Ideas

The following list includes just some of the many ways you can lead your classmates or students, friends & family, and youth group or synagogue/JCC in projects and events that expand their awareness of the diversity of the global Jewish experience. These ideas can be made into individual projects, as well as group or class activities; they can be organized by teachers or by students, and can be as big or as small as you wish!

Personal Fundraising Pages (PFPs): Use this fun and easy webpage creation program to raise money for Kulanu through team or individual events, such as the Mezuzah-thon, Merutz Meshuga, Walk-A-Thon, or other fundraiser you organize! It’s great for Bar/Bat Mitzvah projects, too – one of the most effective things a bar or bat mitzvah student can do is tell their friends and family why Kulanu’s work with these communities is so important to you, and to Jewish people everywhere. Put a letter like this in your party invites, direct people to your PFP, and see how easily YOU can make a difference in the lives of Jews around the world!

Mezuzah-thon: Decorate blank wooden *mezuzot*, or make your own from clay to send to Jewish communities in Africa, Asia or Latin America. Create a Personal Fundraising Page (above) to make it easy for friends and family to sponsor the “Mezuzah-thon” and help with the cost of kosher scrolls and shipping, and/or to raise money for the community that will receive your mezuzot. (See above for information about how to raise funds easily online!)

“Around the Jewish World” Party: Celebrate the many unique Jewish communities of the world with different stations at your bar or bat mitzvah party, in your classroom, or another public space – each representing a different Jewish community. Have fun exhibiting the food, music, culture and history of the diverse communities Kulanu supports! (Visit www.kulanu.org/communities to start discovering unique traditions and fascinating backgrounds.)

“Where in the World is Judaism?” (for educators): Every week, devote a segment of the class to a short lesson on the history and culture of a Jewish community that Kulanu supports. Put a push pin in a world

map on display in the classroom for each country/community you cover. Older children can write reports or make presentations on the communities.

Photo Slideshow: Show a multimedia slideshow from Kulanu's Phanfare website to demonstrate a "slice of life" in a Jewish community abroad. You can have one play on loop at your party, or set up a time in class to introduce these "other" ways of being a Jew. Check out our albums at www.kulanu.phanfare.com!

Walk-A-Thon: Set up a track with markers to show the distances that children in the Abayudaya community walk to go to school ("Isaac, 12, walks 8km to school every day"). Have friends and family sponsor you and your class for a distance you choose to walk along this track. Alternately, map out a path from a set location back to school or your home, then have your whole group follow it together, to simulate how far Ugandan children walk to school.

Coins for Communities: Ask classmates to check under the cushions of couches in their homes or to look for dropped coins each day, and collect what they find to donate to Kulanu, or a specific community of your choice. You'll be surprised at how fast spare change can add up, and it's a great way to use money that would otherwise go to waste!

Tzedakah Boxes: Decorate *tzedakah* boxes to look like a synagogue in Uganda or El Salvador; use construction paper, raffia, magic markers, or even modeling clay. You could tie this in with Coins for Communities by putting spare change or a portion of their allowance money into the boxes.

Vocabulary Flashcards: Create Hebrew/English flashcards (or Hebrew/Spanish, or Hebrew/French) with colorful illustrations to help children in other places learn Hebrew. Be sure to laminate!

Merutz Meshuga (Crazy Race): Instead of the usual charity relay race, create teams to run a fund-raising relay race where at each station, participants have to do something silly before running to the next station. Pie-eating contests, human pyramids, performing a silly dance, and water-balloon toss are just a few fun station ideas! Utilize the Personal Fundraising Pages (PFPs – see above) for relay sponsors.

Thank you for reading our suggested activities to raise awareness about and support for Jews across the globe. We welcome your creativity in planning your Mitzvah Project, and would love to hear your own project ideas, too!

Contact Kulanu to get started on your own Mitzvah Project with "all of us" *now*.
www.kulanu.org/mitzvahprojects/contact.php

We look forward to hearing from you soon!



Kulanu, Inc

Supporting isolated and emerging Jewish communities around the world

www.kulanu.org ♦ 212.877.8082 ♦ mitzvahprojects@kulanu.org

165 West End Ave #3R ♦ New York, New York 10023 ♦ USA