

## BITE RECIPE – MANCALA AND OTHER GAMES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

*These count as “Global Bites” only because they provide a natural focus on another country, and, by their nature, a sitting-around-and-talking environment. They are not to be confused with special games devised to tackle global issues. The latter usually take an hour or so to complete and can be very trivial.*

*The game we focus on here is Mancala, a game for two players played in many countries under many names – Isolo, Oware, Conglak etc. There are variations in the rules, but the version in GLADE's Oware collection is very simple to learn, while quite sophisticated and intriguing in play.*

### Ingredients:

- One or more Oware sets.  
(The GLADE collection has eight, including both modern, plain boards and beautiful carved old sets, with seeds or shells as counters.)
- Photos and background information
- Handouts including instructions for making your own Oware Board and how to play.



**Method:** length of time: 20 mins to learn and play

**Age range:** 7yrs up

- Preparation: Obviously you and/or your volunteers MUST learn to play first, to a level where you can teach others with confidence.
- Two or three pairs playing; the rest watching. Make sure pictures are available which link the game to the issue or country you are focussing on.
- Teach the game to all. You will find several version of the rules on the internet, or contact GLADE for a copy.
- As you teach, show the pictures and if possible introduce the global issue.
- As play continues, informally talk issues with those not playing.

**Global issues raised:** This is up to you. The link with the game may be tenuous.

**Where to use this global bite:** With youth groups or elderly people's clubs etc. The point is that many people are happier to talk while doing something or watching something. It will be up to you to inspire interest, however tenuous the link with what you are doing. In this case the fact that so many countries have a version of this game could lead to a discussion of globalisation; it's a game. so a discussion of the right to play, sparked by pictures of very ragged children playing in other countries; or a discussion of poverty generally, contrast of culture (what games do we play here?) etc. Or you may simply use it as an opportunity to talk about the rest of the world.

Variations on the theme and watchpoint:

There are lots of other games you might try, including simple ones involving stones (similar to five-stones or jacks, which might itself be unfamiliar to many children these days (see <http://www.crc-sa.co.za/site/files/6592/Chap13Indigenousgames.pdf>), Morabaraba, which is a sort of 12 men's morris (see Wikipedia) and many others (see for example <http://goafrica.about.com/od/peopleandculture/tp/African-Games-Games-Played-In-Africa.htm>) But you need to try them out first and learn them thoroughly – this can be quite fun but might not lead you to a useful Global Bite!