

Food for Thought



Aim

that the group understands the links between food, hunger and poverty around the world

Age

8 years and older

Time

45 minutes

Materials

set of facts cut out, copies of case study

Action

Get a selection of garden pots and ask the young people in your group to decorate them with words or images with a message about the link between healthy eating and global justice. (use acrylic paint for the best effect) In their pots, plant seeds of an edible plant such as apples or tomatoes. Display the pots in your youth club or community centre or use them to take part in the OXFAM garden campaign 'Can you grow for Africa?'. For information visit www.OxfamIreland.org/OxfamGarden

What to do

Part 1 (10 minutes)

Begin by asking why people eat. What different types of food are there? Brainstorm what food the group eats each day – for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and of course snacks. Now ask where the ingredients come from. Possible examples are wheat from Ukraine, oranges from Spain or Morocco, beans from Peru, coffee from Colombia or Kenya, bananas from Costa Rica or Ghana, cocoa (for chocolate) from West Africa.

Part 2 (15 minutes)

In advance of the session, make copies of the facts about food and nutrition and cut them out. Hide the facts around the room so that there is one fact per person. All the participants look for the facts. When everybody has found a fact, ask the participants to form small groups. The participants share their facts and discuss the impact on young people.

FOOD AND NUTRITION FACTS

- The richest fifth of the world's people consume 45% of the world's meat and fish, while the poorest fifth consume just 5%
- 852 million people across the world suffer from hunger. Of these 815 million are in the Developing World.
- Six million children under the age of 5 die each year due to malnutrition
- For people at the greatest risk from hunger, their diets lack starchy staple foods such as potatoes, rice and wheat that provide energy.
- Even where people have access to staple foods they often lack a variety of other foods that make up a nutritious diet such as meat, fish, oils, dairy products, vegetables and fruit that provide protein, fat and nutrients as well as energy.
- Some people have no land to grow food because the land is used to grow crops for export.
- If there is a war, food cannot be grown because it is not safe for people to work in the fields or if they are taking part in the war they are not at home to farm the land.
- Illness and disease leads to families being unable to farm their land and they don't have the money to buy food.

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Note to Leader

Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals calls for the elimination of extreme poverty and hunger. Specifically it says that by 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger will be halved.

General Questions

- Is there enough food for all the people in the world?
- If there is enough food, then why do some people go hungry?

Part 3 (20 minutes)

CHILDREN PROMOTING NUTRITION IN BURKINA FASO

Sami and Sié are brothers. They live with their families in Djarkadougou, a village of 1500 people in Burkina Faso. They are from the Djan group, the smallest ethnic group in Burkina Faso. The local people are small farmers, living in mud houses and using hands tools to cultivate their lands. They grow sorghum and millet to eat, while they grow crops such as cotton and groundnut (peanuts) to sell so that they can buy essential items. However the price they get for these crops has fallen. As a result, poverty levels are very high and families often don't have enough to eat. Less than one in four children get to go to school and for those that do, a single classroom may contain more than 100 students for only one teacher. For children who don't go to school, they stay at home to help their parents with farm work, or around the house.

Sami and Sié go to the local school. Together with Bóthar, an Irish NGO, and ASUDEC, a local NGO, the school has started a poultry project for the students. The children have rotas to feed and water the birds, collect the eggs and keep the specially-constructed hen-houses clean. Once the older children become used to caring for the birds they are permitted to take some of them home, where they train their own parents in their care. This improves the nutrition of their families by providing them with meat and eggs. It also to help generate extra income for the families as extra eggs can be sold in the market.

In groups, hand out copies of Sami and Sié's story. Ask for a volunteer in each group to read the story to the rest of the group. Why do families in Djarkadougou often not have enough to eat? What are Sami and Sié doing about it? How do you think it makes them feel? What does the future hold for Sami, Sié and their family?

If you have time, hand out paper and art materials and ask the participants to draw a picture based on the story. Ask for volunteers to show their pictures. Alternatively, develop a short drama to highlight the story.