6: Food Security

Primary Schoolchildren – Ages 8-11

Aims:
To enable students to consider the availability of food resources, and how pulses can improve food security for communities.

Objectives:
• Students will recognise that the availability of food varies across the world.
• Students will develop an understanding of the UN WFP school feeding programme and discuss and evaluate the benefits of such a programme for hungry children.
• Students will consider the role of pulses in improving the food security of a community.

Resources:
1. UN World Food Programme website (http://www.wfp.org)
2. UN WFP fact sheet (from teacher pack).
3. Template of box with UN WFP logo on it (from teacher pack).
4. UN WFP food basket (from teacher pack).

Suggestions for further development:
• Students to consider if there are food security issues in their own communities.
• A whole school or class initiative could be introduced with pupils asked to make and fill boxes at home with foods that meet the UN WFP food basket criteria. These could then be distributed to poverty stricken groups either by the school or local charity.
6: Food Security

15 mins
Pupils explore why people in different countries do not all eat the same food, using what they have learnt from previous lessons. Elicit key ideas: differences in cultural diets, religious restrictions, availability of foodstuffs, climates, etc. In modern times farming and agriculture are resource intensive. What might happen to farming and agricultural output when there are sudden changes in the economy, natural disasters, or changes in weather patterns?
What about the diets of children who live in countries that have been affected by economic or natural disasters? What do they eat? Where does their food come from? Is their nutrition affected?

The UN has launched the ‘Zero Hunger Challenge’ to achieve the aim of eliminating hunger globally and promote everyone's right to adequate food. Discuss with the pupils why they think this is a global challenge, and why everyone has a responsibility to meet the challenge.

Introduce the concept of the UN World Food Programme (UN WFP). What are its aims? Why was it established? Teachers can refer to the UN WFP website (resource 1) or fact sheet (resource 2) for information.

In small groups pupils will be given, or will have brought in, a shoebox-sized box, or larger. More able pupils might like to make their own box using the template (resource 3), and logos are also provided that can be glued to the box, forming a UN WFP ‘food basket’

30 mins
Pupils will have to decide what food items they will put in their food basket box to help ensure that children in need do not go hungry.

The energy and protein that people need varies according to age, sex, body size, physical activity and, to some extent, climate. On average, the body needs more than 2,100 kilocalories per day to allow a normal, healthy life. Extra energy is needed during pregnancy and while breast-feeding.

What should be included and why? What issues might need to be overcome in ensuring the food baskets reach those in need and are then able to help fulfill the dietary requirements (link to learning about Health and Nutrition in Lesson 2)?

Pupils will then compare the contents of their food baskets to the contents of the example UN WFP food baskets (resource 4). Are there any significant differences, and what reasons are there for including these items?

There is a small amount of space left in each food basket. What else could be included in the boxes to enable the people receiving them to re-establish and develop their own agriculture?

Pupils to analyse why pulses would be a key component in allowing regions to develop their agriculture. How does this help with a region becoming food secure? People are considered food secure when they have, at all times, “access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. Remind pupils of their learning from Lesson 2: Health and Nutrition. How does a lack of food security affect peoples’ hopes of achieving a balanced and nutritional diet?
1. What is WFP?
The World Food Programme (WFP) is the United Nations’ food assistance agency mandated to combat global hunger.

2. How does WFP fight hunger?
In emergencies, WFP is on the frontline, delivering food to victims of war, civil conflict and natural disasters. After the cause of an emergency has passed, WFP uses food to help communities rebuild their shattered lives.

3. What is WFP’s vision?
The vision of WFP is a world in which every man, woman and child has access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. Without food, there can be no sustainable peace, no democracy and no development.

4. When was WFP founded?
In November / December 1961, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN General Assembly adopted parallel resolutions establishing WFP.

5. How many people work at WFP?

6. Where is WFP’s headquarters located?

7. Who pays for WFP work and who benefits?

8. Where does WFP distribute its food assistance?

9. How does WFP get food to the hungry poor?

10. How does WFP’s work differ from that of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)?

11. How does WFP distribute its food?

12. What is a WFP food ration?

13. What do the rations consist of?

14. What does WFP do to promote development?
The three-year experimental programme was not due to enter into operation until January 1963. In reality it was up and running several months early, as an earthquake hit Iran, a hurricane swept through Thailand and newly independent Algeria was overwhelmed by five million returning refugees. Food assistance was needed urgently and WFP was tasked to supply it.

5 - How many people work at WFP?
WFP employs roughly 12,000 staff, of whom 90 percent worked in the field delivering food and monitoring its use.
*excludes temporary contracts of 11 months or less as those for short-term international professionals, consultants, short-term general service, special service agreements, interns, author’s contract, fellowship, WFP volunteers and casual labourers.

6 - Where is WFP’s headquarters located?
Ever since its foundation in 1963 and thanks to the generosity of the Italian government, WFP headquarters has been based in Rome, Italy.

7 - Who pays for WFP and its food assistance?
WFP relies entirely on voluntary contributions to run its humanitarian and development projects. Contributions are made either as cash, food or the basic items necessary to grow, store and cook food. None of the people who ate WFP food last year could have done so without the generosity of our donors.

Governments are WFP’s principal source of funds, but increasingly businesses and individuals are also voluntarily providing funds for the humanitarian and development work of WFP. WFP’s effectiveness in providing aid and support to countries depends on available resources. More funding for WFP means more assistance for the hungry poor.

8 - Where does WFP work and who benefits?
WFP fights hunger in least-developed and low-income countries where victims of natural disasters, refugees, displaced people and poor people live. It works in Africa and the Middle East to Latin America and Asia Pacific. See the list of countries where we provide food assistance.

9 - How does WFP get food to the hungry poor?
WFP transports more food than any other international organisation. Moving food assistance, a bulk commodity, thousands of miles at a moment’s notice, often into some of the world’s most inhospitable places, is a skill which WFP has turned into a fine art.

Ocean transport forms the backbone of WFP’s transportation system, with some 90 percent of its food moved by ship. But as complex as the WFP transport system is, it is people who need it and WFP’s transport officers who stretch a logistical lifeline across deserts, lakes, mountains and seas that makes it all work.

To achieve this, WFP’s transport officers stretch a logistical lifeline across deserts, mountains and rivers deep into the heart of the world’s poorest countries. Where there’s no landing space for aircraft, it builds them. Where there’s no road for supplies, it builds it. Where there’s no train to run it, it builds it. WFP brings in its emergency food supplies using every mean of transport at its disposal: ships, barges, dug-out canoes; trucks and trains; planes, helicopters and air drops; even the backs of donkeys, yaks and elephants.
10 - How does WFP's work differ from that of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)?

Food security and agricultural development are major challenges facing the world today. The Rome-based agencies of the United Nations work together to meet them. The agencies have specific and complementary roles. WFP's key mission is to deliver food into the hands of the hungry poor. The agency steps in during emergencies and uses food to aid recovery after emergencies. Our longer term approaches to hunger help the transition from recovery to development.

FAO is the world's agricultural knowledge agency, providing policy and technical assistance to developing countries to promote food security, nutrition and sustainable agricultural production, particularly in rural areas. FAO also acts as a neutral forum where all nations meet as equals to negotiate agreements and debate policy.

IFAD, with its knowledge of rural poverty and exclusive focus on poor rural people, designs and implements programmes to help those people access the assets, services and opportunities they need to overcome poverty.

The Rome-based agencies have many joint operational activities at the regional, country and local level.

11 - How does WFP distribute its food?

WFP works with about 3,000 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to distribute its food. The grassroots and technical knowledge of these NGOs is invaluable when it comes to assessing how to deliver food to the right people.

12 - What is a WFP food ration?

Typical food rations in situations where no other food is available consist of more than half a kilogramme of food per person per day (or 2,100 kilocalories). This amounts to 15 kilogrammes in food rations for one month, or 182.5 kilogrammes for a year. If you're trying to feed 100,000 hungry people, a relatively small caseload in an emergency situation, you need about 67 truckloads of food to feed them for just one month.

13 - What do the rations consist of?

The rations themselves can consist of:

- Cereals - wheat, maize, sorghum, rice
- Pulses - beans, peas
- Vegetable oil
- Salt
- Sugar
- Cereal blends
- High Energy biscuits
- Bread

14 - What does WFP do to promote development?

WFP's development activities aim to make communities food secure, so that they can devote time, attention and energy to escaping the poverty trap. If food-for-Assets projects give community members food in return for work on roads, schools, wells or irrigation systems, food may also support them as they start small businesses or replant degraded forests.
Resource 3a  
Box template WFP

Cut along the outer lines and fold along the inner (dash) lines. Stamp or embellish the outer sides as desired. Glue flaps “A” to the inside sides to create the bottom of the box. Flap B folds in.

Use a photocopier to enlarge.
Resource 3b
Box template WFP

Use a photocopier to enlarge
LESSON PLAN 6

Resource 4
UN WFP food basket

The food that the World Food Programme (WFP) supplies to its beneficiaries depends on the needs of the groups covered and the objectives of the project.

In emergencies or refugee situations people may be totally dependent on WFP food. In this case, the key components of the WFP food basket are: a staple such as wheat flour or rice; lentils, chickpeas or other pulses; vegetable oil (fortified with vitamin A and D); sugar; iodized salt. Often these are complemented with special blended foods, such as a corn soya blend, that have been fortified with important micronutrients.

The photo below shows an example of a daily ration that provides the required 2,100 kilocalories (Kcal) of energy.

**Ingredients**
- 400g of cereal flour/rice/bulgur
- 60g of pulses
- 25g of oil (vit. A fortified)
- 50g of fortified blended foods (corn soya blend)
- 15g of sugar
- 5g of iodized salt

**Nutritional value**
- Energy 2,100 Kcal
- Protein 58g
- Fat 43g

Besides energy, protein and fat, an adequate food basket supplies micronutrients such as vitamin A, iron, iodine and zinc. The food basket serves to prevent micronutrient deficiencies and other forms of malnutrition or prevents them from deteriorating.