



WHAT CONTROLS THE GLOBAL MENU?

What is youth topics?

Topical issues to get young people thinking >>> fun – games, discussion starters, quizzes... >>> for people working with young people sent once a year putting faith into action **(youth topics is recommended to be used with young people 12-17. >>> Feel free to adapt the content to suit the particular age and needs of your group.)**

How to use **YT**

- 1 **Read** it through once to get a feel for the programme.
- 2 **Choose** what is appropriate for your group.
- 3 **Gather** up what you will need.
- 4 **Give** yourself at least 30mins preparation time.
- 5 **JUSTice** – do it!

What controls the global menu? *youthtopics* **numbereighteen**

Food is a basic human right. Without it we perish. In 2010 925 million people lived with hunger and malnutrition. The surprise - 80% of these people are food producers. People who grow food no longer have enough but global food corporations have grown. Six companies control 85% of the world trade in grain, three control 83% of cocoa, three control 80% of the banana trade.

This issue of youth topics explores the growing call for food sovereignty. People want to have greater control over what food they eat, how and where it is grown as well as how it is sold and marketed. Access to food is only part of the story. Small farmers need access to water, land and markets in order to feed their families and contribute to local economies. There are growing calls for food sovereignty among poor people who can see how large scale factory farming and the immense power of transnational corporations are robbing them of their livelihoods. Land grabbing, selling or diverting water that once was shared by the community and supplying sterile seeds threaten the world's food supply for peasant farmers. The poorest people are finding it hard to survive and are moving to cities in increasing numbers. The only way they can have a choice about their future is if power and food sovereignty are restored to local communities. If local people have more control then they are more likely to be fed today and tomorrow.

Activity 1 HAVE YOUR FILL

Aim To acknowledge that food is a basic human right that everyone should enjoy.

Resources Picture cards of vegetables and fruit, e.g. carrots, potatoes, bread, water, apples (10 people playing you will need 10 cards of each fruit or vegetable, or an option is to play in groups or pairs). You will need to make your own cards. Lists of picture cards for each player or group.

Action Before everyone arrives, hide the picture cards. When you are ready for the activity give each person, pair, or group a list of the picture cards they need to collect. Explain that they need only collect one of each of the items on their list to make sure there is enough for everyone. When everyone has collected and completed their list you could munch on some carrots, celery and dip or other foods from the cards.

Discuss What was it like finding your list items? Were you tempted to take more than you needed? What sort of pressure did you feel?

Activity 2 HUNGRY – WHY?

Aim To understand that many factors cause hunger.

Resources Factor cards: disaster, discrimination, war, poor infrastructure. (download from website). Bottle for a spinner

Action Place the cards in the corners of the room. Gather everyone in the middle of the room. The leader calls out a cause of hunger - e.g. disaster - and everyone runs to the corner of the room where that card is placed. After a few turns the leader then pulls out the spinner (bottle). The leader then explains that this time the call out will be 'hungry' and once again everyone is to choose one of the 'cause' corners to run to. This time they are asked to stay in the corner and wait. The leader then spins the bottle and the corner that it points to is eliminated from the game. When there is only one person left the game is finished.

Discuss "Food shortages are seldom about a lack of food, the shortages occur because of the inability to get food where it is needed and the inability of the hungry to afford it." Jim Goodman

Christian World Service (CWS)

CWS works worldwide in 22 countries providing funds for local community projects to tackle poverty and build self-reliance. CWS responds quickly to humanitarian crises like earthquakes and tsunamis by providing emergency supplies like food, shelter, medicines, and clean water through the global network ACT International (Action by Churches Together). CWS also campaigns on the root causes of global poverty and injustice, such as discrimination, the lack of food and water, and to help communities achieve their own priorities.

What we affirm

CWS affirms the right of those working on the land the right to have control over how and what they produce. CWS partners like MONLAR and the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), of which CWS is a member, are campaigning for a change in the way food is grown, sold, distributed and shared. They want small scale farmers to have choices on what crops are grown and for families to know they will be able to access the food they need to survive. Giving locals the means to control and access their own food is offering opportunity for real progress. Injustice is at the root of poverty, but it can be overcome by dedicated action over time. Food sovereignty is a call to provide food at the same time as expose and eradicate the causes of hunger. By supporting CWS partners you enable people to work together for a better future and make real a vision of a society that guarantees enough for all. Listening to the stories of people living with poverty can help us understand what needs to be fixed in the world to make this happen.

yt direct

If you wish to receive Youth Topics and be notified of new resources Tel 0800 74 73 72 (Youth Team) or email us at youth@cws.org.nz Just say what you want and give us your details.



Activity 3 WHAT DOES IT COST TO EAT?

Aim To highlight the power issues around giving and receiving food aid.

Resources Plates of covered food, envelopes, buzzer, and resources cards, e.g. water, land, and labour, seeds. Make your own.

Action Divide the group into pairs. Ask each person to choose a country they wish to represent. Then give one of each pair a plate of covered food and to both members an envelope with a resource card. Ask them not to open the covered food but to open the envelope. Once this is done announce to the pairs that there has been a food crisis in the country of the non-plate holder because of disaster. Therefore if the non-plate holder is to survive they must receive food. They will need to negotiate. Set the timer and start the activity (give some time for negotiations to take place, then when the buzzer goes off the activity stops). Suggested time is about 3 minutes.

Discuss What negotiations took place, if any? Why did they take place? How did it feel to be the receiver/giver of the food supply? Were there any surprises that came from the exercise? Think about the statement, "Dependence can be a means for survival but not a means to an end."

MONLAR

CWS partner MONLAR (Movement for National Land and Agricultural Reform) is breaking down the barriers facing small local farmers who can no longer feed their families. In May 2009 the Government of Sri Lanka claimed victory over the Tamil Tigers, ending thirty years of civil war. Many of the nearly 300,000 Tamils living in the war zone were forced into camps. Now some have returned to destroyed houses and farms with absolutely nothing. Many were forced to live in the cities but others have returned home and are starting from scratch. Farmers face high prices on seeds, fertiliser, agricultural equipment, and a government focused on an export orientated agricultural economy with high value crops. The ability to make a living by growing food has become less of a choice. MONLAR educates farmers in sustainable and 'zero cost' ecological farming practices. They are taught to make a fertiliser called jeewamurtha (made from cow dung) and to grow the ixora plant a natural pesticide. Village seed banks have been established that distribute organic seeds so farmers do not have to buy sterile seeds every year. These small-holder farmers now have the opportunity to choose local food production as their livelihood.



Activity 4 AT THE TABLE

Aim To explore how we get access to food.

Resources Bowls of weetbix, milk, spoons, aprons.

Activity Invite people to get into pairs. Let them decide who wants to be the provider and receiver of the food. The receiver of food sits at the table with hands behind their back and the provider stands behind the chair. The provider then becomes the hands of the receiver. Receiver and provider are facing outwards. The provider starts to feed the receiver the weetbix not able to see what they are doing. The receiver eats the weetbix.

Discuss How did it feel to give and receive food this time? Were there any surprises? What do you think it would mean to be dependent on someone else to be fed each day? Would you want to have the responsibility of feeding someone each day?

Activity 5 SELF-SERVICE

Aim To create awareness around the need to have choices to enable self-sufficiency.

Resources Magazines, scissors, paper, glue, and felts.

Action Invite each person to draw or mindmap their ideal lifestyle. Then stick their expressed lifestyle on a larger piece of paper. From a variety of magazines (set up in the middle of the floor) ask them to cut out and stick on what is needed to achieve and sustain their chosen lifestyle.

Share Gather the group and ask them to share their creations. Then ask how important it is to have choices about how you live? What is needed to sustain life? Were there any extras? Were there benefits to having choices?

Activity 6 THERE IS ENOUGH

Aim To explore some of the Biblical teachings on wealth and creation.

Resources Bible and candles

Activity Read through Genesis 1. As you read through the passage, light a candle each time you hear the words 'God was pleased' or 'it was good'. After some silence read Leviticus 25:35-38.

Discuss Why do you think rules and regulations were put into place? How did the Hebrew's deal with poverty? What rules could we put into place today that could address the poverty issue? Another way to start discussion is to offer some agree or disagree statements.

- There is enough food grown today to provide more than enough for every person on earth.
- God wants everyone on earth to have enough good food to eat.
- God uses people to provide.
- From a Christian faith perspective, scarcity is a human construct.
- The fact that there is already enough food to feed the world shows that the food crisis is not a technical problem – it is a social and political problem.

What to do now

- 1 If you want to know more about CWS and development work check out the website. www.cws.org.nz or login into our CWS facebook page.
- 2 Write to CWS and ask about their Food for Life campaign: youth@cws.org.nz or watch the website.
- 3 Organise for everyone to bring an item of food for your local foodbank or spend some time helping at a local mission.
- 4 Grow plants and then sell them at the local market with the money going to help CWS partners like MONLAR who are equipping local farmers to become self-sufficient or ring CWS (0800 747372) and become a regular financial contributor.
- 5 Check out your local community garden or farmers market.
- 6 The next time you have a meal think about where the food has come from and who has produced it. Is it a local or internationally provided product?
- 7 Find out more about food sovereignty by checking out our website www.cws.org.nz