

ZERO HUNGER

RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS



As language evolves, so do the meanings and impacts of the words we use. This resource encourages critical reflection on terminology and promotes the use of inclusive language that tries not to perpetuate harmful stereotypes, nor disguise or reinforce unequal power relations shaped by historical systems of oppression. Where possible, the language in this document has been updated to align with these principles.

CONCERN
worldwide

Concern Global Citizenship, 2026

Hunger

Hungry – a word that we hear every day. For many people in the world being hungry is something experienced everyday too. For Concern Worldwide, it is something that we have been tackling with communities around the world daily since 1968.

Hunger is deadly – it kills more people each year than TB, malaria and AIDs combined yet gets little public attention. Use this resource to explore why people are hungry, how hunger impacts on people's lives and ways that students can take action on this global challenge.

Some Useful Definitions

- **Hunger:** Hunger is not having enough food and nutrients for a healthy and active lifestyle
- **Malnutrition:** The physical impact on your body of not having enough of the right nutrients. This can include being underweight, overweight and deficient in vitamins and minerals
- **Famine:** Famine is when there is extreme scarcity of food



What causes hunger?

For the past 50 years, global hunger rates have fallen substantially. However, progress has stagnated in recent years, and the number of people experiencing hunger has increased by approximately 152 million since 2019 (Concern Worldwide, 2025). In 2024, over 295 million people experienced acute food insecurity (Global Hunger Index, 2024).

There is no single cause of hunger – it is the result of many different factors. However, two of the biggest causes of world hunger are:



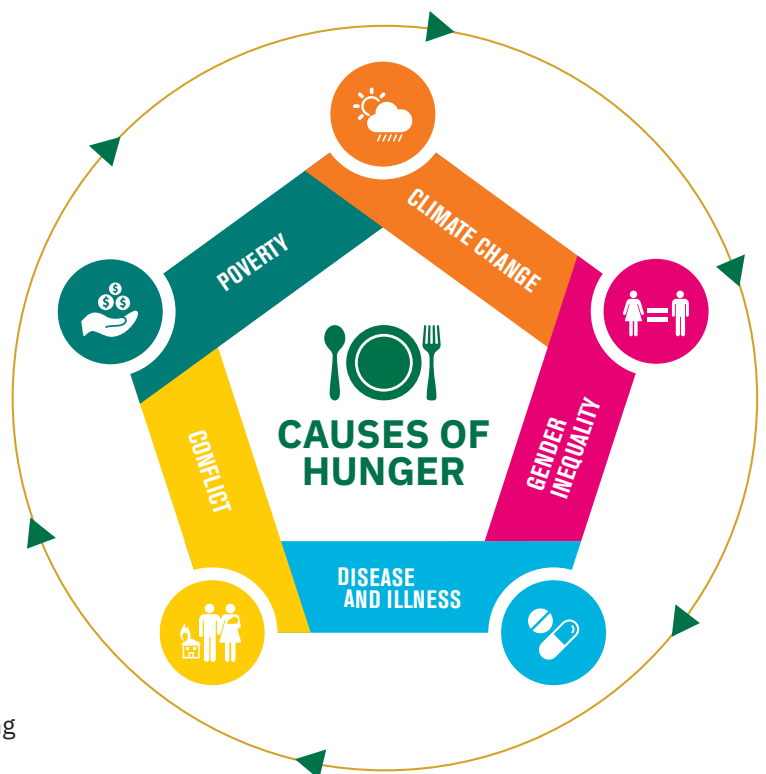
Conflict

Almost all conflicts result in hunger. It destroys agricultural land, increases the price of food and forces people to leave their homes and means of income or food production behind. Food is also sometimes used as a weapon of war through restriction of imports, taking land off people and limiting humanitarian aid to certain areas.



Climate Change

Extreme climate events such as flooding, storms, droughts and extreme heat/cold can cause crop losses, significantly lower yields (how much is produced) and loss of livestock. If less food is produced this puts pressure on markets and increases the price of food which impacts all people, but especially the poor. It also means income loss for those whose crops are impacted.



ACTIVITY ONE

Hunger Statistics

 15 minutes

Need:

- Students in groups of three or four
- A set of cards (on page four) for each group copied and cut up. Ensure that the figures and statements are mixed up



Instructions:

1. Hand each group a set of cards
2. Tell students that in these cards there are statistics and facts – their task is to match up the correct pairs
3. Give students around seven minutes to pair up the cards
4. Next, as a class discuss what the students have decided and identify the correct pairs

Alternative activity:

Another way to use the facts on page four and get students moving is to use them in a walking debate.

1. Designate one side of the room true and one side false
2. Read out the statements and ask students to move to the true or false side of the room depending on what they think of the statement
3. Between each statement, engage students in a discussion about the fact and then reveal if it is true or false

Note: Alter a few of the statistics or facts to ensure you have a mixture of true and false statements (e.g: instead of 733 million people are hungry change this to 560 million people)

Post activity for discussion: This is suitable for both activities

- Which fact did students find the most shocking? Were students already aware of any of this information?
- Share the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the class. Although all of these facts refer to SDG2 Zero Hunger, which other ones do they link to?



HUNGER STATISTICS

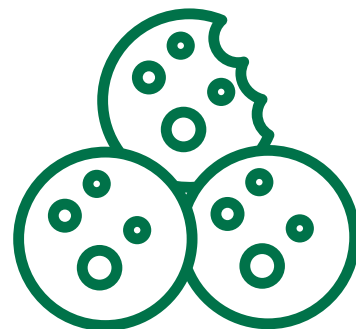
One in 11	... people faced hunger in 2024, around 8.2% of the global population, down from 8.7% in 2022 (WHO, 2025).
1.25 billion tonnes	...of food is wasted at the consumption stage each year, 1/5 of food produced. Food waste contributes to almost 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change (FAO, 2025).
23.2%	...of children were stunted in 2024 (low height for their age which impacts immune system and brain development) (UNICEF, 2025).
100 Million	...children go to school hungry everyday which impacts on their ability to learn and concentrate (WFP, 2024).
140 Million	...preschool children globally are vitamin A deficient. This can cause blindness. Over half of the children that go blind for this reason die within 12 months (UNICEF, 2025).
60%	...of the world's hungry are women and girls. In some traditions women eat last, after all the men and children have been fed, despite women often preparing the food (WFP, 2026).
122 Million	...people were forcibly displaced by the end of 2025. This means they have had to leave their home as it isn't safe and includes people who are internally displaced within their own country. Hunger can be a cause and effect of displacement (UNHCR, 2025).
45%	...of deaths among children under 5 years of age are linked to undernutrition. These mostly occur in low and middle income countries (WHO, 2024).

ACTIVITY TWO

The Biscuit Game

 15-25 minutes

This activity is designed to illustrate the inequality regarding food resource distribution in the world.



Lesson Preparation:

- Prepare six tables for students to sit at. Number each 1-6 clearly. Each table represents a continent
- Place a plate of biscuits on each table based on the figures below. This is to represent the distribution of food resources on each continent
- Do not tell the students what the tables or biscuits represent

Main Lesson:

- Assign students to sit at one of the tables based on the table below. Give the students time to eat their biscuits. Encourage them to look over at the other tables to see how many biscuits other groups have
- Once all the biscuits are eaten, ask the students the following questions
 - **How did you feel when you saw how many biscuits others groups got?**
 - **How did you divide the biscuits between your group?**
 - **Was it fair how the biscuits were divided?**
 - **What do you think the six tables represent?**
- Inform the students that the tables represent continents and the biscuits reflect the amount of food resources in each. Ask each group to chat amongst themselves and guess which continent they are
- Reveal the correct continents and ask students what they think of the amount of food resources per continent

Questions

Do you think the world is an equal place?

Why do you think people go hungry in certain places?

Do you think that in reality the biscuits (or food) is divided out equally within continents or countries?

Ask students how can they take action on hunger in their everyday lives.

Hints: reducing food waste, combating climate change, fundraising etc.



Note: People often hold inaccurate and stereotypical views that huge parts of the world (like all of Africa) are facing food shortages. This is not true. Unequal access to food occurs in all places in the world.

Lesson Conclusion:

- Ask each group to decide on an action they can do locally to fight hunger and something they can do to end hunger on a global scale. Agree on a class manifesto/charter to help end hunger by 2030. This game can also be used as part of a discussion about inequality

Table Number	Continent	Number of Biscuits	No. of pupils per table Class of 20	No. of pupils per table Class of 30
1	Africa	1	3	5
2	Asia	4	11	15
3	Europe	9	2	4
4	Latin America	1	2	3
5	North America	10	1	2
6	Oceania	5	1	1

Concern and Hunger

In 1968 Concern Worldwide was founded in Dublin by John and Kay O'Loughlin-Kennedy. This was in response to a famine in a part of Nigeria, called Biafra, that had declared its independence.

The conflict that followed Biafra's attempt to separate from Nigeria caused millions of people to be displaced, a blockade of food, medicine and basic necessities by the Nigerian authorities and, as a result of this, a famine. At the height of the crisis in the summer of 1968, it was estimated that 6,000 children were dying every week.

Concern was founded because of hunger, and today tackling hunger is still one of the biggest challenges that many of the communities that we work with face. We work with communities and local partner NGOs to support people who are at risk of hunger or suffering its consequences. Concern's mission is to end extreme poverty, whatever it takes. Tackling hunger is a vital part of this.

Listen:

Check out our episode **'SOS: How Ireland Helped a Nation'** on Pod Worldwide, Concern's podcast, to hear about the origin story of the organisation.



Rima* with her mother and a Community Health Volunteer. Rima received treatment for malnutrition in a health centre supported by Concern - she is now fully recovered. Photo: Ammar Khalaf/Concern Worldwide

CONFLICT AND HUNGER

The destruction caused by conflict has a lasting effect on food systems and can carry a lifetime of consequences for children who become malnourished during sieges and blockades.

In 2025, armed violence fuelled 20 food crises that affected nearly 140 million people, with confirmed famines in Sudan and Gaza. While humanitarian spending dropped, military spending surged — a switching of priorities that goes against efforts to end world hunger ([Concern Worldwide, 2025](#)).

In Yemen, the ongoing civil war has driven rising unemployment, hunger, and insecurity for civilians. In 2026, nearly 80% of the population live below the poverty line, and more than 55% require some form of humanitarian assistance, making Yemen one of the world's most severe humanitarian crises ([Concern Worldwide, 2026](#)).

Concern's programmes are designed to address the most urgent needs of the most vulnerable communities. In 2025, Concern-supported healthcare services reached 1,648 children under five in Yemen through nutrition programmes. They also supported a network of 52 trained Community Health Volunteers who conducted routine nutrition screenings, referred sick children and women to health facilities, and carried out house-to-house visits to provide nutrition advice.



Basam* (10 months) who lives in a displacement camp in Yemen, eating Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), a peanut paste packed with calories, vitamins and minerals, used to treat children with severe malnutrition. Photo: Ammar Khalaf/Concern Worldwide.



Adil* receives a MUAC (Mid-Upper Arm Circumference) measurement which is used to assess malnutrition in children under five. Photo: Ammar Khalaf/Concern Worldwide

*Children's names are changed to protect their identities.

TACKLING HUNGER: LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Development:

Development work is supporting communities over a long period of time to tackle complex issues with the aim of making changes that are long lasting.

Humanitarian assistance:

Humanitarian assistance is short-term support to communities during an emergency (for example, after natural disasters, droughts or during times of conflict and violence). The aim is to save lives and reduce suffering.

Read our blog [‘Cyclone Idai and the Impact of Climate Change on Agriculture’](#) on our website to learn about the two approaches to tackling hunger in Malawi.

Watch the video [‘Conservation Agriculture: Changing lives in Malawi’](#) on our YouTube channel to find out more about conservation agriculture which is being used to combat hunger in Malawi.



ACTIVITY THREE

Impact of hunger

 20 minutes

Need:

- Students in groups of four
- The video and the blog above for students to watch/read
- Paper and pens
- The SDGs displayed or printed for students

Instructions:

1. Ask students to read the blog and watch the video about combatting hunger in Malawi
2. Next, students in their groups should discuss and make three mind maps with information about the following three questions - a) what are the causes of hunger in Malawi? b) what is the impact of hunger on the community? Use the SDGs as prompts for this question c) how is hunger being tackled by Concern and this community now? Is there anything else that needs to happen to sustain this?
3. Ask each group to feedback their responses to each question



Take Action



Hunger is a **BIG ISSUE** that plays a big part in:

- Negatively impacting on the health and wellbeing of people globally
- Removing access to quality education
- Keeping families and individuals living in poverty
- Making existing inequalities worse

...and this leads to people's dreams, ambitions and rights being limited.

By taking action on hunger, you are taking a stand against the issues above and showing solidarity with all those impacted by this crisis.



SPEAK ACT DO

Speak, Act, Do is a programme to support students and teachers in taking action on important global issues which impact our world!

Choose a topic, do your research, organise two actions (a Concern action and a local action) to address a global justice issue and then share this with other schools at our Agents of Change event!

Visit our website to find our simple guide to Speak Act Do or email schools@concern.net to find out more.

Below are a few ideas about how you can get involved!



Concern actions

- Create a piece of art/a sculpture to display in school or your community to help people reflect on hunger and communicate how communities that Concern work with are impacted
- Create a cartoon about how hunger impacts on communities. Check out stories from around the world on our website to help you
- Organise a campaign or event for World Food Day which takes place on October 16th to raise awareness of the causes and impact of hunger
- Make posters for your school explaining the issue of food waste and showing how we can tackle the problem

Local Actions

- Research about how hunger affects people in Ireland. Is there an area in particular that you can try and make change in?
- Organise peer workshops in your school on the topic of hunger to help other students understand why so many people are hungry in the world
- Make a video to share with your community about hunger in Ireland and around the world
- Organise a debate on a topic related to hunger. One example recently from Concern Debates is "Global commitments to ending world hunger are a load of hot air"



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