

# The Environment

Our everyday choices have a direct impact on the future of the planet. As the population grows, so does the demand we put on the environment. In 2015, between 1 January and 13 August, the global population used up all the resources the planet would produce for the whole year. We're depleting forests faster than we can regrow them, and at current rates, world fishing populations are set to completely collapse by 2048.

With this level of consumption comes waste, pollution and the widespread destruction of habitats. Greenhouse gas emissions are predicted to increase by more than 50 percent by 2050. By then, air pollution will be the top environmental cause of premature death. Unless we improve our habits of consumption and waste, many of these changes will come in our lifetime.

**GLOBALLY**  
**WE PRODUCED**  
**2.1 BILLION**  
 TONS OF WASTE IN 2007 –  
**27% CAME FROM HIGH-INCOME**  
**COUNTRIES**

## FAST FACTS

*Species are dying off at a rate*  
**1,000x TO 10,000x**  
*faster than the natural*  
*extinction rate.*

**1/4 OF THE PLANET'S**  
*coral reefs are already damaged*  
**BEYOND REPAIR.**

*Because of environmental damage,*  
**40% OF THE WORLD'S**  
*population will live in*  
*water-stressed regions*  
**BY 2050.**

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT EVERYDAY ACTIONS DO YOU TAKE THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT?
2. WHAT ARE SIMPLE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO REDUCE YOUR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT?
3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT? HOW CAN WE ENSURE THAT PEOPLE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPACTS THEIR ACTIONS HAVE ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

# Food Security

Food is fuel. Without a steady supply of it, our brains and bodies can't get the nutrients they need to function properly. Yet many people in developing countries continue to suffer from a lack of basic nutrition. A lack of vitamin A can lead to eyesight issues, including permanent blindness. When a pregnant woman doesn't get enough iodine, her child has a higher chance of being born with brain damage.

Hunger not only delays physical, emotional and cognitive development, but also hinders a child's ability to focus in school or attend altogether. Those who do make it to class tend to perform poorly academically and are frequently held back.

For the 795 million people who aren't getting the food they need, hunger is an everyday problem that affects every aspect of life.

**98** % OF THE  
  
**WORLD'S**  
 UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE  
 ————— live in —————  
 DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

## FAST FACTS

*Farmers produce more than enough to feed the world, yet*

**1/3<sup>RD</sup> OF ALL FOOD**

*produced for human consumption is lost or wasted.*

**RECOVERING JUST 1/2**

*could eradicate hunger.*

**US \$3.2 BILLION**

*is needed per year to feed the*

**66 MILLION CHILDREN**

*who go to school hungry.*

*If female farmers had the same resources as male farmers, up to*

**150 MILLION MORE**

*people would be fed.*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. IF FARMERS ARE PRODUCING ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED THE WORLD, WHY DO YOU THINK THERE ARE STILL 795 MILLION HUNGRY PEOPLE?
2. WHAT CAN WE DO TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE?
3. HOW ARE POVERTY, HUNGER AND HEALTH RELATED?

# Global Poverty

Poverty means more than not having enough money. On a deeper level, poverty is the state of not having access to opportunities to improve your situation and take control of your future. For the one-tenth of the global population who survive on less than US \$1.90 a day, poverty forces difficult decisions. Do I buy food and go thirsty, or buy water and go hungry? Do I pay for school fees or hospital bills?

When people do not have equal access to social resources like education, jobs, loans and financial literacy skills, poverty creates a cycle where children born into poor families have fewer opportunities to succeed as adults. Women often have less access to social and economic resources, even though studies show that when women gain access to paid work, economies grow.

It would cost  
**US \$66 BILLION**   
 TO END EXTREME POVERTY  
**FOR 1 YEAR.**  
**THAT'S LESS THAN**  
**AMERICANS SPENT**  
**ON THE LOTTERY IN 2014.**

## FAST FACTS

*The poorest*  
**1/2 OF THE WORLD'S**  
*population has the same amount of*  
*combined wealth as the*  
**62 RICHEST PEOPLE**  
*on the planet.*

**171 MILLION PEOPLE**  
*would be lifted out of poverty*  
*if every child in low-income*  
*countries finished school with*  
*basic literacy. That's a*  
**12% DROP**  
*in poverty worldwide.*

*Extreme poverty*  
**HAS BEEN CUT IN 1/2**  
*since 1990, but progress has*  
*been far from equal. Most of*  
*the gains from the*  
**LAST 30 YEARS**  
*have been made in*  
*a single country.*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. HOW WOULD YOU SPEND YOUR MONEY IF YOU ONLY EARNED US \$2 PER DAY?
2. IF YOU COULDN'T AFFORD TO ATTEND SCHOOL, HOW WOULD IT AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO EARN MONEY IN THE FUTURE?
3. IF YOU COULDN'T AFFORD MEDICINE OR EMERGENCY SAVINGS, WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU GOT SICK?




# Homelessness

Latin America and the Caribbean face a large and growing housing deficit. Despite efforts in recent years to improve the situation, a lack of basic infrastructure services continues to plague many households in the region.

More than one in five households lack electricity and sanitation while one in nine lack a clear legal title to their dwellings. One study shows that Latin America and the Caribbean have a higher incidence of slums than other countries with similar income levels.

The same study estimates that resolving the housing deficit using government housing and urban development programmes alone would require boosting investment more than seven-fold to US \$310 billion annually.

THE STREET DWELLER POPULATION  
IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
GREW BY  
**13%**  
BETWEEN 2000 AND 2011.



## FAST FACTS

In 2011,  
**9 OUT OF 10**  
*street dwellers in Port of Spain*  
**WERE MALE.**

**1 IN 3 FAMILIES**  
*in Latin America and the Caribbean*  
*live in dwellings that are*  
**UNSUITABLE FOR**  
**HABITATION**  
*or are poorly built and lack*  
*basic infrastructure services.*

*The Trinidad and Tobago Housing*  
*Development Corporation*  
**LAUNCHED AN INITIATIVE**  
*in 2015 to distribute*  
**100 HOMES EACH WEEK**  
*to people throughout the country.*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT DAILY ACTIVITIES WOULD BE AFFECTED IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE A HOME? WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO GO TO SCHOOL? STAY CLEAN? STAY FED? DO HOMEWORK? MEET FRIENDS?
2. WHAT RESOURCES EXIST IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO HELP THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS? ARE THEY ENOUGH?
3. WHAT ARE SOME ISSUES THAT ARE MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY HOMELESSNESS? HOW WOULD OVERCOMING HUNGER, POVERTY OR ILLITERACY BE EASIER IF EVERYONE HAD A STABLE HOME?



# Local Poverty

When meeting basic needs is often a struggle, families face difficult choices with every dollar they spend. Pay for groceries or electricity? Medical bills or housing? Diapers or school supplies? Every decision made means the family has to get by without something else.

Poverty is most commonly the result of unemployment, low-paying jobs, and lack of affordable housing and health care. What's more, poverty can make health problems even worse. Low-income families often live on high-carb, processed foods, which contribute to health problems. And when health problems hit, the bills can get staggeringly expensive.

Chronic poverty is a major concern in Latin America and the Caribbean. People who find themselves in chronic poverty face stronger barriers to entering the labour force, and this lack of income opportunities contributes to a persistent cycle of poverty that families struggle to break.

**IN 2012,**  
**1 IN 5 PEOPLE**  
**LIVING IN LATIN**  
**AMERICA HAD BEEN**  
**CHRONICALLY POOR**  
**FOR AT LEAST 8 YEARS**



## FAST FACTS

*In 2013, more than*  
**1 IN 8 BAHAMIANS**  
*were living in poverty.*

*The poverty rate in Trinidad and Tobago hovers*  
**AROUND 21%**  
*and 1 in 10 people is not able to meet*  
**BASIC NEEDS.**

*The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is committed to*  
**REDUCING POVERTY**  
**BY 2% ANNUALLY.**

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE SOME SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF POVERTY?
2. HOW DO THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY MAKE IT HARDER FOR A FAMILY TO EARN MONEY AND OVERCOME BARRIERS TO SUCCESS?
3. WHAT ARE SOME RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO FAMILIES LIVING IN POVERTY? ARE THEY EFFECTIVE? WHY OR WHY NOT?

# Youth Violence

Youth violence involves harmful behaviour—especially the intentional use of physical force—committed by or against a young person that can result in injury, death or psychological harm.

Drug or alcohol use, negative influence of peers, family issues, and poverty are some of the factors that can increase the risk of a young person engaging in harmful or criminal behaviour. Youth violence doesn't just affect an individual's physical and mental well-being—it affects the overall health of an entire community.

While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to ending youth violence, communities can help reduce the prevalence of it by developing a country-wide strategy that combines prevention, intervention, treatment, and re-entry and employment strategies.

**YOUTH VIOLENCE**  
IN THE BAHAMAS HAS BEEN  
**LINKED**   
**TO HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT**  
WHICH WAS **31%** AMONG  
15- TO 24-YEAR-OLDS IN 2014.

## FAST FACTS

*In a 2011 survey,*

**67 PERCENT**

*of secondary students thought  
violence was a serious or very serious*

**ISSUE AT SCHOOLS**

*in Trinidad and Tobago.*

*Countries report that*

**LIFE SKILLS AND  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMMES ARE THE MOST COMMON  
PREVENTION APPROACHES**  
*to youth violence.*

*In 2007, almost*

**40 PERCENT**

*of students surveyed in Trinidad  
and Tobago said they were*

**PHYSICALLY ATTACKED**

*1 or more times during  
the previous year.*

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUTH VIOLENCE? WHO IS AFFECTED BY IT?
2. WHAT ARE SOME OTHER WAYS TO HELP REDUCE YOUTH VIOLENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY? WHAT KINDS OF THINGS CAN EACH PERSON DO TO MAKE THEIR COMMUNITY SAFER OR STRONGER?
3. HOW CAN LEARNING ABOUT SOCIAL ISSUES OUTSIDE OF YOUR COMMUNITY HELP YOU UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY?