

2.4. GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION – Why is this a Global Justice Issue?

We live in a world where over 800 million people in the world go to bed hungry while 1.9 billion are overweight. While there the planet provides tremendous resources, access is unequal. And with a growing global population and continued waste of food from field to fork (approximately a third of all food is wasted) there a mounting number of global justice issues have emerging:

- The commodification of food
- Land grabs from smallholder farmers to sell to larger companies
- Mono-crops using pesticides and insecticides which impact health, water, soil and biodiversity
- Climate Change flooding low-lying land affecting communities and crops e.g. Bangladesh and rice-farming
- Clearing of forest for agriculture and to grow feed for farm animals e.g. the Amazon
- Lack of food diversity – with a reliance on only a small number of crops (12 plants provide 80% of the worlds food)
- Biofuels replacing agricultural lands

GLOBAL GOAL & INDICATOR:

This theme relates to a number of indicators within Goal 2 Zero Hunger. Primarily the indicator 2.4 looks at Sustainable food production and resilient agricultural practices. However, other indicators such as ‘ensuring productivity and income for small-scale food producers’ (2.3) and ‘maintaining the genetic diversity of food production’ (2.5) are pieces of the puzzle to having a health global food system and achieving 2.1. universal access to safe and nutritious food.

SUGGESTED AREAS OF FOCUS:

Key global justice issues as outlined in the introduction.

SUGGESTED CURRICULUM LINKS:

- Business
- Home Economics
- Science
- Religious Education
- CSPE
- SPHE

SAMPLE LEARNING INTENTIONS:

- Distinguish between food security and food insecurity
- Describe factors that influence the global food production system
- Evaluate the ways in which our food production system can become sustainable
- Identify reasons why food waste occurs at each stage of the supply chain
- Explain the different ways in which food waste can be reduced at a household and school level

TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS:

Resources:

Scoilnet – World Food Day

Overview: This webpage is a collection of resources for teachers to assist with teaching and learning on World Food Day.

Content:

- Activities by FAO, Concern Worldwide & Self Help Africa
- Lessons for Geography, Home Economics, science and CSPE
- Data on Hunger and food
- Myths about Global Hunger

Note: Needs a little adaption as a little bit outdated (facts) and relates to older Millenium Development Goals

Link: <https://www.scoilnet.ie/fr/post-primary/collections/junior-cycle/zerohunger/>

Trociare (2010) The Business of Food: Who Makes the Rules?

Overview: This is a teacher pack for Business and CSPE teachers. It has been developed to explore with students the impact of trade on hunger and poverty in the “Developing” world (or Global South). Suitable for use with students over 12 years.

Content:

- Classroom exercises and Lesson plans
- Video footage and stories
- Ideas for taking action

Link: <https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/resources/business-food-who-makes-rules>

Concern (2013) One in Eight

Overview: Students explore issues of food and hunger from a justice perspective.

Content: While this was designed for primary school students and slightly outdated – there are a number of very good activities that are suitable for junior cycle up to TY in “Section 2 – Food hunger and the world”. This section is an excellent introduction to justice issues around food.

Link: <https://developmenteeducation.ie/media/documents/One%20in%20Eight.pdf>

LASC (2018) Exploring Latin American Realities through Spanish

Overview: The resource aims to bring Latin American development issues into the classroom of Spanish Teachers to explore the root causes of global justice issues.

Content: This resource is for Spanish teachers in “Food in Latin America” explores issues of food sovereignty and how the current food system affects Latin America.

Link: <http://lasc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2019-Teachers-Manual-A4.pdf>

WorldWide Global Schools (2018) Resources from Regional Teacher Training

Overview: The resource aims to bring Latin American development issues into the classroom of Spanish Teachers to explore the root causes of global justice issues.

Content: This resource is for Spanish teachers in “Food in Latin America” explores issues of food sovereignty and how the current food system affects Latin America.

Link:

Short Video Clips:

Food & You – Oxfam’s Grow Video –

“This animated story journeys through the broken food system and then looks at the transformation that is already underway to bring about change. It brings it back to you, the individual at the root level, and invites you to be part of the movement to grow a better future.”

Note: Slightly outdated but very good at looking at root causes of food insecurity.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUveqzPnfmQ>

Fair food - What’s on your Plate? The Story of your food

“The story of your food. We consume a great variety of food that is grown by small farmers and workers all over the world. This video shows the impact of price pressure by retailers and brands on the working and living conditions of these workers, who often work long hours, in hazardous conditions and at wages below the poverty line. As the most influential players, brands and retailers have the power to make a change by making a fair distribution of profits over the food chain. As a consumer, you can contribute to this change by shopping consciously.”

Note: Slightly outdated but good information on supermarkets role – though ultimately ends with a promotion around Fair food (the organisation)

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXauFbCITWg>

Ten Stories About Food Waste

“One-third of all the food the world produces ends up in the bin.* Some 70% of our business is related to food, and we feel we must engage in this global issue. With this documentary, Electrolux brings together key food experts weighing on the present and the future of sustainable food choices.”

Note: First two videos good for contextualising some issues in the global food system

Link: <https://www.electroluxgroup.com/en/ten-stories-about-food-waste-documentary-invites-to-change-24210/>

IRISH INFORMATION WEBSITES:

Latin American Solidarity Centre (LASC)

Who: LASC is a membership organisation who works in solidarity with Latin America to create real social change both in Latin America and Ireland.

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear examples and linkages between Latin America and Ireland

Link: <https://lasc.ie/issues/environment-2/food-sovereignty/>

Food Sovereignty Ireland

Who: “Food Sovereignty Ireland is a movement of citizens striving for democratic control of our food system.”

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear outline of local to global justice links

Link:

<http://www.foodsovereigntyireland.org/what-is-food-sovereignty.html>

Stop Food Waste

Who: Is funded under the Environmental Protection Agencies National Waste Prevention Programme. It works with households, communities, schools, local authorities etc to educate and reduce waste.

Offers: Good overview on food sovereignty with clear outline of local to global justice links

Link: <https://stopfoodwaste.ie/about>

Food Cloud

Who: Foodcloud connects organisations with surplus food to local charities.

Offers: Infographic of food waste globally. Provides statistics on food poverty and world hunger globally and in Ireland.

Link: <https://food.cloud/the-problem/>

ACTIONS - CREATING CHANGE:

Ideas for Political Engagement:

- Research Irelands “Food Harvest 2020” Policy and how it links with the global goals. See www.developmentperspectives.ie/harvest-2020 for more details. You might **write to Minister Creed (Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine)** with key points you have learned and questions you have.

Ideas for School/ Community Actions:

- Research how food waste is dealt with in your school and create a **campaign to reduce the waste** and ensure food that is wasted is disposed of through the correct waste system (brown bin). Contextualise this with an **awareness campaign around global food production**. Create a visual representation of the food system from farm to fork. Identifying how food is wasted through this process. Make links to climate change, pollution from mass agriculture, biodiversity etc.
- Become a **Fairtrade school**. Ways that schools can make a difference are: buying Fairtrade products; running Fairtrade awareness events or competitions; organizing a sale of Fairtrade products in local shops; or giving the Fairtrade catering list to a local coffee shop or hotel. Visit www.fairtrade.ie for more information. Be clear with students and teachers about why being a Fairtrade school is important and the impact this has on peoples lives.
- Plan an awareness raising campaign for **World Food Day- October 16th**. This could involve a two minute talk/collage/ newspaper article on the issue. The campaign could take place in your school but also in your community.