

a Christian Aid
simulation game



The Poverty Challenge

Exploring sustainability



We believe in life before death

Context

Today's world is extremely unequal and can be divided roughly in two. The developed world includes Australia, the US, Canada, Japan and most of the European Union countries. Most developing countries are in Asia, Africa and Latin America. People in developed countries generally have a much higher standard of living than people in developing countries. Almost a quarter of the developing world's population live in severe poverty, struggling to exist on less than US\$1 a day.

The Poverty Challenge aims to raise players' awareness of our divided world and the importance of finding lasting solutions to help poor countries develop and work their way out of poverty. The game is based around the real-life experiences of people in rural communities who are benefiting from projects supported by Christian Aid. Often using local, sometimes traditional, knowledge and methods, these projects help people to protect their environment, strengthen their communities and develop their ability to earn a living. This in turn improves people's chances of growing or buying enough food to survive; enables them to gain new knowledge, skills and self-confidence; afford education and healthcare for their families; and helps them to become self-sufficient. By working together to

learn about and address these social, economic, ecological and political issues, we can all do our bit to reduce poverty and inequality, and create a more equal and stable world.

The game also helps players to understand that poverty is an interconnected, global phenomenon, and that sustainable development is just as important for developed nations as it is for developing ones. The way people in richer countries are using natural resources today simply isn't sustainable – for example, a person in the UK uses on average about 20 times more resources than a person living in Africa. Finding alternative ways of living to avoid overusing the world's resources is one of the most important challenges of our time.

‘...meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’

Brundtland Report, 1987

What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development is any economic activity (eg farming, tourism, etc) that can continue indefinitely without causing permanent loss/damage to the environment and its resources (eg soil, water, oil, gas).

Sustainable development considers local needs and is based on the availability of local resources.

The technology involved in locally based development is small scale and appropriate to local needs (eg making energy-saving stoves out of local, natural materials to reduce firewood-burning when cooking). This tends to be more environmentally sensitive than large-scale, high-tech approaches (eg Three Gorges and Yellow River dams in China).

Sustainable, small-scale approaches to development can benefit local people and enhance their quality of life.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) often support people in taking sustainable actions. NGOs are voluntary, non-commercial groups of people seeking to help others find ways to improve their lives.

About this map

Why a new world map?

The [W]Right World Map is a fair way to show the world. Many world maps show 'cold' lands far too large and 'hot' lands far too small. Also, the cold lands have few people, and the hot lands have many millions of people. This is not fair, and it's not right, so the [W]Right World Map shows each part of the world at the correct size. It's called an 'equal-area' map.

Why not use an existing 'equal-area' map?

On most other equal-area maps, the shapes of land are wrong. There tend to be distortions in Europe, eastern Asia and at the edges of the map. It is important to have a map where the shape of the land is as accurate as possible.

So what are the solutions?

The only way to show the size and shapes correctly is to 'unwrap' the surface of the globe. Place this on to a flat page, and you have to put cuts in the map – mainly in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. This map has two extra cuts in Siberia (the Asian part of Russia). This allows Europe and eastern Asia to have almost correct shapes. Antarctica is cut into several pieces, but it's all there (unlike on many world maps) and it's the right size too. Also, because the Arctic is mostly ocean, not land, and very few people live there, it's the best and fairest place to put another cut. Even so, Greenland is the correct size – so different from the huge Greenland shown on so many maps.

So, is this the perfect map?

No! For perfection, use a globe, not a flat map. No map can be perfect. But if you feel this map is fair, you're welcome to use it. You can call it the [W]Right World Map. Find out more about world maps and atlases at

www.dandjwright.co.uk

Summary

Aims

The Poverty Challenge takes place in six countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya, Malawi, Nicaragua and Tajikistan. By representing families living in rural communities in these countries, players experience how changing to a more sustainable way of life can help to break the cycle of poverty. The activities of the game – collecting water, negotiating with market traders, disasters (chance cards), training with NGOs (sustainability tokens) – have parallels in the real world.

When to play

The Poverty Challenge helps players understand the issues surrounding rural poverty and sustainable development. Ideally, players should have some background knowledge of poverty in developing countries and sustainable development. The introductory activities on page 8 will aid this understanding and support follow-up discussions after the game.

The game is a fun way to run or conclude awareness-raising sessions at youth, fundraising or campaigning events. In schools, it is helpful to play as part of a wider piece of work focusing on sustainability issues.

Who can play?

The Poverty Challenge can be adapted to suit your own circumstances and players' age groups.

- You need at least three people per family group and ideally one market trader/NGO per country. If you have a small group of players, reduce the number of countries featured.
- It is most suitable for anyone aged 11 years and above.

With **younger players** (ages 9-14) you could:

- ignore the *quality* of sacks produced and give the players a training card instead of asking them to choose one from the NGO
- extend the playing time to increase the length of each year, then hold the debriefing discussions in another session.

With **older players** (ages 14+) you could:

- drop the habitat sheets (older players may find this visual representation unnecessary).

- introduce the concept of sustainable development
- demonstrate some of the pressures faced by poor farmers in developing countries
- show how rural communities can benefit from sustainable development
- illustrate how players' choices affect their ability to sustain their livelihoods
- generate discussion about sustainable development and other global issues in a fun and informal way
- stimulate players to think about how they can live more sustainably
- develop skills in cooperative working, communication and numeracy

How the game works

Players form 'family' groups (one 'family' per country) and role-play living in a rural community.

The 'families' play a total of four rounds. Each round represents one year.

During each year they:

- grow crops
- collect water
- sell their produce.

'Chance cards' represent problems for the families in maintaining their livelihoods. 'Sustainability tokens' give families opportunities to benefit from living more sustainably, eg by improving their farming techniques.

Preparation

Time required

Before the game: Prepare your equipment (you could ask some players to help). Allow time to brief those who will play the roles of the market traders/local NGOs. Choose competent helpers and make sure they understand how the game works so it flows smoothly.

Playing the game – 90 minutes: This includes the introduction and debriefing.

If you have less than 90 minutes available: Divide the game into two sessions, either playing rounds one and two in the first session and rounds three and four, plus the debrief, in the second session, or playing rounds one to four in the first session and debriefing afterwards. If you need to divide the game, keep the habitat sheets and record sheets in a safe place, together with any notes or evaluation sheets completed by the 'families'.

If you have only 30 minutes available:

- reduce the time spent producing sacks each year
- skip year 4
- omit colouring in the habitat sheets

OR

- suddenly stop the game and announce that there has been a natural or human disaster (eg drought, flood, earthquake, war). These often affect people in developing countries, particularly their food production, and the sudden end to the game will demonstrate how unpredictable life can be in the featured countries.

Please note: However much you reduce the time, *always* include the debriefing session. This is crucial for players to evaluate their experiences and increase their understanding of poverty, development and sustainability issues.

People

- **one leader** to manage the game
- **extra helpers** to oversee activities (collecting water, selling crops, assisting the local NGO, tidying up after each round), especially with younger players
- divide players evenly between the six countries. These are the **family groups**. Each family group has its own country *role cards* and *habitat sheets*. You will need a seventh group of people to play the market traders/NGOs (ideally six people, one for each country). They will have two roles: **market traders** and **members of the local NGO**. It is *essential* to brief these players beforehand about both roles (see role card on pages 15-16). As market traders they will monitor each family group, recording water collected and crops grown. As the local NGOs they will oversee the training of family members. (See market trader's record sheet on page 17 and sustainability tokens for each country on pages 26, 30 and 34.)

Space and furniture

- a room big enough for **seven groups** of players – ideally a hall, library or room that gives players enough room to experience having to walk some distance to collect water
- desk/table/floor space for each of the six family groups
- desk/table/floor space for the market traders/local NGOs. This should be easily accessible for all family groups
- space for the game leader by the flipchart so all players can see both the leader and instructions
- board/flipchart/wall for displaying the game rules (page 8), as well as maps and any supporting posters, such as images from the featured countries
- enough space for family members to move around and visit their water source (ideally six metres away on the opposite side of the room) and the market traders/local NGOs.

Market traders/local non-governmental organisations (NGOs):

- monitor families' activities
- buy their produce
- offer training to improve families' skills and ability to survive.

Families record what happens each year and how they feel about it.

Equipment

Other materials

Our pre-prepared resource materials are ready for photocopying from page 14 onwards.

To make them more durable and easy to clean, laminate the sack templates, role cards, sustainability tokens, water buckets, habitat sheets, market traders' record sheets, training cards and chance cards. This initial preparation will allow you to re-use the equipment and will save time when you play the game again. (If you want to hold the debrief in a different session or players to use the records at a later date, use paper copies of the habitat sheets and market traders' record sheets.)

You will need:

► Role cards (See pages 15, 16 and 24 onwards)

One country role card for each of the six families.
One role card for each market trader/local NGO.

The country role cards are based on places where Christian Aid supports local development projects.

► Record sheets (See page 17)

One record sheet for each market trader. Write the country's name at the top of their record sheet.
Record sheets are used by the market traders at the end of each year to record what each family has produced.

► Habitat sheets (See page 18)

One habitat sheet for each country. Write the country's name at the top of their habitat sheet.
Family groups refer to the habitat sheets to assess how they progress each 'year'. At the end of each year, the market traders/local NGOs shade in the appropriate number of rows in the bucket shape for the amount of water collected (in blue) and rows on the chart for the crop harvested. **Each year's rows should be shaded in with a different colour.** The habitat sheets are a useful visual aid for players (particularly younger participants) to see what effect living more sustainably is having on their lives.

► Training cards (see page 25 onwards)

One training card for each country represented.
Training cards are held by the local NGOs. NGOs are voluntary, non-commercial organisations that seek to help others find ways to improve their lives. Family members choosing to be trained will stay with the NGO for the whole year, and will receive their country's training card from the NGO. They read it along with their country's role card and decide which training course to do: water, food or home. They take this new learning – in the form of a *sustainability token* – back to their family at the end of their training year. This token is then included when the family records its crops and water at the end of each subsequent year.

► Sustainability tokens (see page 26 onwards)

Sustainability tokens for each country.
Sustainability tokens represent the advantages of living more sustainably and help families to lift themselves out of poverty. At the end of years 2 and 3, the local NGO gives a sustainability token to family members who have received training and are choosing to live more sustainably.

► Chance cards (See page 14)

One set of chance cards, photocopied on red paper/card and cut out. The game leader gives these out during the game, but players should *not* be told about the cards or be warned before they get one.
Chance cards represent the unpredictable environmental, social and economic conditions to which the world's poorest people are most vulnerable. They make players think about what it must be like to live every day under the threat of such events.

Game leader crib sheet

- one **sack** template for each country (see page 26 onwards)
- years 1-4 **evaluation sheets** for each country (see pages 20-23). It is important that families stop growing crops at the end of each year to complete their evaluation sheets. They will need these for a successful debrief
- a set of 20 small **water buckets** (see page 19) for each country, photocopied on A3-sized blue paper or card, cut out and placed into the 'water sources'
- **water sources** (eg buckets or boxes) for each country, with the country's name clearly written on it
- scissors (two pairs per 'family')
- pencils (two per 'family')
- crayons (two per 'family')
- sets of pens containing at least five different colours, including blue (one set for each market trader to complete the habitat sheets)
- two large pieces of paper, A3 or flipchart size, to display the rules of the game (see page 8)
- lots of recycled plain A4 paper for family members to copy their sack template on to (don't forget to recycle this again at the end of the game!).

In addition, the game leader needs:

- dice
- a copy of the market trader/ local NGO role card, for reference
- a copy of the crib sheet (see right)
- a watch or clock
- a whistle or bell
- spare equipment, especially pencils, scissors and plain paper.

The day before

- prepare a flipchart page with rules of the game, or photocopy and enlarge page 8
- copy and laminate the habitat sheets, record sheets, chance cards, water buckets, role cards, training cards, sustainability tokens and sack templates
- copy evaluation sheets
- obtain containers to use as 'water sources'
- find scissors, pencils, pens, crayons plain paper, dice, a watch and a whistle
- select and thoroughly brief the market traders/local NGOs. Prepare a pack for each of them, containing the relevant country's record sheet, training card and sustainability tokens
- prepare a pack for each country containing a role card, scissors, habitat sheet (if using), pencils and sack template to be handed out to each family.

On the day

- arrange the room
- divide the players into six family groups
- give out the packs and explain what to do, following the 'Setting the scene' on page 8
- keep an eye on the time
- play the game.

In year 1

- hand out chance cards
- stop the game after **five minutes** to collect water
- collect water for **one minute** (buckets handed out by market traders)
- make sure market traders do their recording properly
- give out evaluation sheets while family members are recording their harvest with the market traders. Remind players to record their feelings/thoughts
- collect chance cards from the market traders once they have finished their recording
- ask market traders and any other helpers to clear paper and unfinished sacks from tables to avoid cheating and give families new paper before the next year begins
- market traders return water buckets to water sources.

In years 2 and 3

- announce that each family can send one person to the local NGO for training
- repeat year 1 activities, including handing out chance cards
- reduce time for water collection if players are collecting too much (ie there are few small buckets left at the water sources).

In years 3 and 4

- if families have sustainability tokens saying they have chosen to improve their water sources in years 2 and/or 3, the market traders should give them **two buckets** at a time instead of one
- at the end of year 4 **roll a die** to see if the families' water supply has been affected
- do **not** give out chance cards in year 4.

End game

Hold a debriefing session if time allows (see pages 12-13). If not, debrief in a subsequent session using the evaluation sheets as a reminder.

Rules of the game

Each round equals one year in your family's life. During each year you:

Grow crops

To do this you need to:

- trace the sack template
- cut it out
- colour it in
- label it with your country's name and product.

Collect water

To do this you need to:

- send one person at a time from your family to the water source
- collect one bucket at a time
- NOT run – you will spill the water!

Each time you collect **one bucket** of water you make sure that you grow **one sack of crop** successfully.

Visit your market trader to sell your crops at the end of each year

Only one person per family can do this.

You need to take with you:

- the **sacks** your family made
- the **water buckets** you collected
- your **sack template**
- your **habitat sheet**
- any **chance cards** or **sustainability tokens** you have collected.

Before the game

Use these activities to help introduce the subjects of poverty and sustainable development to players before the game.

1. Bring in a selection of 'rubbish'. Ask players to sort it into buckets labelled 'Re-use', 'Recycle', and 'Throw away', and ask them to explain how they would re-use or recycle things or why they would just throw something away. The objective is to throw away as few items as possible. Finish off by asking whether players are aware of the small actions they can take to reduce waste and pollution and preserve energy, ie to live more sustainably.

2. Go to www.christianaid.org.uk/learn and download the *Comparing lifestyles* worksheet to compare sustainable and non-sustainable lifestyles.

3. How much do the players know about sustainability and development? Start by exploring what the words 'sustainable'

and 'development' mean, and what they might mean when used together. Use the definition on page 3 and the web links on the back cover for reference. Take notes, or use a mind-map activity to creatively investigate perceptions.

4. Introduce players to the countries featured in *The Poverty Challenge* by exploring the role cards and the supporting photographs at www.christianaid.org.uk/learn Ask questions such as what do players know about the country? Where is it? Why are there problems? Who can change things? How?

5. Use activity 3 again after playing the game to see how players' perceptions may have changed. What will they change about their own lives?

Playing the game

Setting the scene (5 minutes)

1. Explain that

The purpose of the game is for players to experience:

- some of the real pressures felt by poor rural communities in the developing world and
- how their choices affect the sustainability of their way of life.

Each group represents a poor rural family as identified on their role card. Their aim is to grow enough food to live on by 'producing' sacks of crop from their template. *But their crop can only grow if they collect enough water.* One bucket of water enables one sack of crop to grow successfully. Their water source is a long way away, and they have to walk there, at specific times of the game.

2. Explain the rules of the game (copy the rules on the left to a flipchart or photocopy to A3). Refer to the stages chart on pages 4-5 to support your explanation, if necessary.

Allow participants a few minutes to open their packs and read their role cards. Encourage them to imagine what their way of life is like. Discuss the habitat sheets (if using them), which represent water collected and crops grown. Use this time to answer any queries.

During the game, note how the groups organise themselves. Some family members might be good at cooperating, while others may prefer to work on their own. Discuss these differences at the debriefing session.

Year 1

Living day to day, hand to mouth (12 minutes)

During the first year the family groups grow only one type of crop. They have problems collecting enough water to keep their crops alive, as the water source may be some distance from the crops, and/or it may be contaminated.

Growing crops (five minutes)

Groups trace the sack template to make as many duplicate sacks as they can during the year. Their sacks should be identical to the template and have the same lettering. However, tell the groups that each sack produced only counts if it is accompanied by a water bucket, as crops can only grow if there is enough water.

While groups are making sacks, go round with the chance cards. Ask each family to choose one randomly without looking at it first. Tell them to keep the card safe, as they must take it to their market trader/local NGO at the end of the year.

(If groups are slow to cut out sacks/grow crops you could skip the chance cards this year.)

Collecting water (one minute)

After five minutes, use a whistle or bell to stop the crop production so that family members can collect water. This relay activity imitates the way many poor people queue daily at a water source. It runs as follows:

Announce to the family groups that every day they have to collect water for crops and for cooking, washing and drinking. But the water source is one hour's walk from home. Although women and girls usually do this work in developing countries, to have the best chance of surviving all family members can take turns to collect as much water as possible. Show the families that their water source is a labelled bucket, box or other container on the opposite side of the room. Water is represented by small cut-out paper buckets stored inside the water source.

Depending on the space available, some teams may have to walk further than others to reach their water source. Tell them that, although this may seem unfair, it is how the real world works – many people have to walk for hours every day to get water.

A family might need around 100 litres a day to water their crops and for cooking, washing and drinking. That equals 20 buckets each day. Remind groups that the amount of water they collect determines the amount of crops they will have grown at the end of the year.

To collect water players must follow these rules:

- only one person from each family is allowed at the water source at any one time
- each person can only collect *one* bucket at a time. The bucket will be given to them by the market trader monitoring the collection
- family members must wait until the previous person returns with a bucket before the next person sets off to collect water
- no running is allowed. If you run, all your water will spill, ie you will lose the bucket you are carrying
- after one minute, any buckets that have not yet reached the family's table will *not* be counted.

Tell families that they now have **one minute** to collect as much water as they can.

Recording how much crop was grown (six minutes)

After the water collection, each group chooses a representative to send to their market trader. They must take with them their **water buckets, sacks, sack template, chance card** and **habitat sheet**.

The market traders 'buy' the crop. They must check the quality (ie the sack cut-outs), comparing the family's sacks with the sack template if necessary, and count how much water was collected. The market traders then write this information on the **record sheet** and shade in the **habitat sheet**.

Reflection

Meanwhile, give the family groups the **year 1 evaluation** (see page 20) to record how life has gone during the year, and to help them reflect on what has happened.

It is important that families do *not* grow crops at this time, but complete their evaluation sheets. They will need these for a successful debrief and for any homework/extension work.

Preparing for year 2

Once recording is completed and while players are reflecting on how the year has gone, the market traders and any extra helpers:

- put all sacks in the recycling bin to prevent families re-using crops grown the previous year – but make sure to keep the templates!
- clear away all used paper and incomplete sacks from the families' tables
- give families new paper to use in the next year
- return all chance cards to the leader
- return the buckets to the water sources.

Year 2

Making contact with a local NGO (12 minutes)

Training (one minute for explanation)

Announce that a local NGO is **offering families training** to help them have a more sustainable way of life. (Explain that NGOs are voluntary, non-commercial organisations that seek to help local people find ways to improve their lives.) By choosing to live in a more sustainable way, families may be able to break out of poverty.

Each family can send **one member** on a training course run by the NGO, but they will then be away from home for the *whole year*. Their absence will affect the amount of crops the family can grow and the water they can collect. So the family must decide whether or not to take the training.

Family members who decide to train must 'travel' to the local NGO **with their country role cards** and stay there for the rest of this year. Only one person per family may be trained each year and some families may choose to send no one for training.

The local NGO workers give the trainees their respective training cards. They read these along with their role cards during year 2 and choose which of the three areas – water, food or home – they want to learn more about. The NGO workers note their decision on the record sheet and give them the relevant sustainability token. The trainees take their learning (the token) back to their families at the end of year 2 to put their new skills into action during years 3 and 4. Their new knowledge will help families to live in a more sustainable way, ultimately improving their quality of life at the end of year 3 and for all future years.

Growing crops (five minutes)

The families continue to grow their crops by producing sacks. Go round again with one **chance card** for each family, as in year 1.

Collecting water (one minute)

Announce the start of the one-minute water collection. Reduce time for water collection if they are collecting too much (ie the water sources are 'running dry').

Recording how much crop was grown (five minutes)

After collecting water, each family representative takes their **water buckets, sacks, sack template, chance card** and **habitat sheet** to the market traders to be recorded. Their **habitat sheet** should be filled in with a different colour this year.

Reflection

Give the other family members the **year 2 evaluation** (see page 21) to help them reflect on what has happened.

Preparing for year 3

The market traders and any extra helpers prepare for the next year's activities, as explained at the end of year 1 (page 9).

Year 3

Putting the training into practice (12 minutes)

Training (one minute for explanation)

At the start of year 3, the family members who went for training in year 2 have returned home. They once again help to grow crops and fetch water. But the knowledge they bring back (the sustainability token) will have a positive impact on their family's harvest and way of life from now on.

Again, announce that the local NGO can still help families find more sustainable ways to live. Families who did not send a member for training last year may decide to train this year. Families who trained in year 2 can send a **different representative** to train in a **different area of expertise**. Allow the selected family members to travel to the local NGO, where they will spend this year.

Growing crops (five minutes)

The families continue to grow their crops by producing sacks. Go around with chance cards, as in years 1 and 2.

Year 4

Reaping more benefits from the training (12 minutes)

Collecting water (one minute)

Announce the start of the one-minute water collection. Reduce time for water collection if they are collecting too much (ie the water sources are 'running dry').

If families received sustainability tokens in year 2 saying they have worked to improve their water sources, then the market traders/local NGOs give the family members two buckets instead of one at each collection this year. The first family member to go up to the water source must take the token with them to show to the market trader.

Recording how much crop was grown (five minutes)

After collecting water, each group representative takes their **water buckets, sacks, sack template, chance card, habitat sheet** and any **sustainability token** to the market traders to be recorded. Their **habitat sheet** should be filled in with a different colour this year.

The market traders/local NGOs will record the sustainability token again at the end of year 4 to ensure that families continue to benefit from their training, but it is the families' responsibility to take up the tokens at the end of each round.

Reflection

Give the other family members the **year 3 evaluation** (see page 22) to help them reflect on what has happened.

Preparing for year 4

The market traders and any extra helpers prepare for the next year's activities, as explained at the end of year 1 (page 9).

Training

At the start of year 4, family members who went away for training in year 3 have returned home. They once again help to grow crops and fetch water. But the knowledge they bring back (the sustainability token) will have a positive impact on their family's harvest and way of life. No more training is offered.

Growing crops (five minutes)

The families continue to grow their crops by producing sacks. This year, **do not** give out chance cards.

Collecting water (one minute)

Announce the start of the one-minute water collection. Reduce time for water collection if they are collecting too much (ie the water sources are 'running dry').

If families received sustainability tokens in years 2 or 3 saying they have worked to improve their water sources, then the market traders/local NGOs should give the family members two buckets instead of one at each collection this year. The first family member to go up to the water source must take the token with them to show to the market trader.

At the end of the water collection, ask all families to roll a die once. **Families who roll a number four, five or six** must lose the same number of buckets of water from their collection. This represents an unexpected water shortage. However, families that have received water training should cope better with the loss of water because of the benefits from their sustainability tokens.

Ensure that the families lose these buckets *before* the recording process starts.

Recording how much crop was grown (six minutes)

After collecting water, each group representative takes their **water buckets** (*except* any buckets lost during the recent shortage), **sacks, sack template, habitat sheet** and any **sustainability tokens** to the market traders to be recorded. Their **habitat sheet** should be filled in with a different colour this year.

At the end of year 4, market traders may find it helpful to check their records to make sure they are correct and the earlier training is included each year.

Reflection

Meanwhile, ask each family group to discuss their thoughts. They must agree what to record for their final reflection on the **year 4 evaluation** sheet (see page 23).

Debrief

(Seven minutes plus)

(Note: you could use this time to increase the time spent playing the game, and do the debrief during a subsequent session instead.)

1. Compare the families' habitat sheets (or record sheets if the habitat sheets were not used). Which family grew the most crops and collected the most water, and in which years?
2. At the start of the game, how did players feel about their roles as families living in poverty? Encourage them to use the information on their role cards to talk about their living conditions and their family's biggest problems.
3. Ask the family groups about the amount of crops they grew each year. Did they grow more as the years progressed?
4. How did the amount of sacks cut out compare with the amount of water they collected? How did it make the players feel when they lost sacks of crops because they didn't have enough water? How did they feel when the chance cards made conditions even harder, or they lost water because of a water shortage? Try to draw out conclusions such as:
 - you can work hard and still be poor
 - people often have little control over what makes them poor
 - poor people are especially vulnerable to environmental, social and economic change, such as droughts, flooding, war or changes in the price they are paid for their goods.

Follow-up

These activities follow on from learning points stimulated by *The Poverty Challenge*. You could use them for homework, as a starter in the following lesson, or at the end of a scheme of work on sustainability.

1.

Making your family's life even more sustainable

Encourage each group to assess the situation their 'family' was in at the end of year 4, and think of new and realistic strategies to continue improving their lives and making them more sustainable. For example:

- How could they grow more and different crops, such as other fruits and vegetables, to improve their diet and potentially provide an income?
- What could they do to find other ways of increasing their income?
- How could they maintain and improve their environment?

2.

Using the information from these discussions and notes made during the game, participants could produce the following:

- Year 1** a diary of events in the family's life
- Year 2** a report about what the family member(s) learnt during training
- Year 3** a magazine article about how the training improved their family's life and helped them to live more sustainably
- Year 4** an overall summary assessing how effective sustainable development is at challenging poverty and helping poor people improve their lives.

Adapt these for the market traders/local NGO workers, eg they could write a report on how trading varied each year, and the reasons for this; which training was most popular, etc.

3.

Going deeper

To deepen players' understanding of poverty and sustainability, research the work of Christian Aid and the NGOs it supports in the countries featured in *The Poverty Challenge*. The websites listed on the back cover will help you.

5. Each group will have had different training cards, so encourage families to share what they learned. How might the training have helped families to improve their crop yields, or to cope with any natural disasters? If participants chose to train in year 3 instead of in year 2, they will not have seen any benefits until later. How did the delay affect their family? Would they have done things differently with hindsight? If so, why?
6. Ask families to look through their habitat/record *and/or* evaluation sheets to comment on the level of poverty in which they were living at the beginning of the game, and whether and how that changed by the end of the game (ie if they grew more crops). Invite feedback from the market traders/local NGOs about what they noticed or learned during the game. Draw out conclusions that:
 - training helps
 - disasters happen
 - most people do not have unlimited, easy access to water.
7. Ask players – out of role – to consider the differences between their own lifestyles and those of the game’s family groups. People’s lifestyles in developed countries – ie the way we use natural resources and produce waste – are not sustainable. An person in the UK uses on average about 20 times more resources than an average person in Africa. The overuse and misuse of the world’s resources must be addressed urgently, if our planet is to survive.
8. What can we each do to change our own lifestyles to make the world a better place to live – now and in the future? Return to the ‘Before the game’ activity (page 8) and revisit activities 1 and 2 and do activity 5. Then ask for further suggestions. You could include those in the ‘Do something’ box below. List all the suggestions, and discuss which actions the group can agree on. Rank these, with the first being the one action that everyone agrees to take.

4.

The lives of poor people living in cities

Many poor people living in urban areas of developing countries also live in poverty. Often people migrating into the cities from the countryside may end up living on the streets or in huge slums on the outskirts of big cities.

Play Christian Aid’s *Paper Bag Game* to introduce the topic of urban poverty. Discuss the differences between this and the lives of the poor farmers featured in *The Poverty Challenge*. Encourage players to research different types of poverty and how they impact on children and young people at www.globalgang.org.uk (seven- to 14-year-olds) and young people at www.pressureworks.org (14+ years) and at www.togethertv.org

5.

Hold a debate

Poor people are already suffering from effects of climate change. People’s efforts at sustainable development are useless if the effects of climate change aren’t tackled first.

Do something for sustainability

1. **Raise money** for Christian Aid. This kind of action means you will support Christian Aid to help its partner organisations continue with their sustainable development work. See www.christianaid.org.uk/learn for fundraising ideas.
2. Sustainability is closely linked to climate change. Poor people are on the frontline because many places where they live are already prone to drought or floods, high winds or rising sea levels. They will suffer first and worst as the climate changes. **Campaign** with Christian Aid to bring about changes that will safeguard people’s lives and livelihoods in the future. Visit:
 - www.globalgang.org.uk (7-14 years)
 - www.pressureworks.org (14+ years)

Chance cards

(Ideally photocopy on red paper/card, laminate and cut out.)

Chance card 1	Chance card 2	Chance card 3
<p>You buy artificial fertiliser that some people say will help to increase your harvest. But the fertiliser is expensive and leaves you with less money to get through the growing season before the harvest.</p> <p>Because you can't afford to buy them enough food, your family members lack energy, fall ill more easily and can't work as hard.</p> <p>Lose four buckets of water. (The market trader takes these away when completing your record sheet.)</p>	<p>A big foreign company takes over land nearby and uses a lot of local water to grow crops for export. You have less water to grow your crops.</p> <p>Lose four buckets of water. (The market trader takes these away when completing your record sheet.)</p>	<p>An environmental disaster (eg an earthquake or cyclone) suddenly hits the local area.</p> <p>Lose half your harvest. (The market trader takes this away when completing your record sheet.)</p>
Chance card 4	Chance card 5	Chance card 6
<p>Your plants become diseased and many die before you can harvest them. You are now living in absolute poverty and need to work for another family to survive.</p> <p>Lose half your harvest. (The market trader takes this away when completing your record sheet.)</p>	<p>Your water source becomes contaminated. You become ill if you use the water. Having to travel further to get clean water means you have less time to work on your land.</p> <p>Lose four buckets of water. (The market trader takes these away when completing your record sheet.)</p>	<p>Several family members fall sick throughout the year. They are too ill to work in the fields. Visiting a clinic and paying for medicines costs you a lot of money.</p> <p>Two family members do not fully recover.</p> <p>Lose half your harvest. (The market trader takes this away when completing your record sheet.)</p>

An example of how to do the calculations and fill in your market trader's record sheet. Chance cards apply after the harvest has been calculated. Photocopy this example for each market trader.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Sacks produced	Water collected	Crop actually harvested	Chance card	Sustainability token	Rows shaded in on habitat sheet Total harvest
Year 1	18	10	10	lose half your harvest		5
Year 2	12	8	8	lose four buckets of water (ie four sacks of crop) (8 - 4 = 4)	double your harvest (4 x 2 = 8)	8

Market trader and local NGO role card

Other calculations

You have two roles:

1. You will be **market traders**, working on a market stall buying and selling fruit and vegetables
 2. You will be **members of the local non-governmental organisation (NGO)**, a group that helps communities to live in a more sustainable way.
- You will monitor the families while they are collecting water to make sure it is done fairly.
- You will also help the game leader with other jobs.

1. Working as a market trader

There should be one market trader for each family.

At the end of each year (round of the game) each family sends one person to the market. They will bring with them their **water buckets, sacks of crops, sack template, chance card, sustainability token** (if they have one) and **habitat sheet**. You then 'buy' their crops and fill in all their details on your market trader's record sheet.

Calculating number of sacks produced

- Count the number of sacks the family made.
- Reject any sacks that are not cut out properly, not shaded neatly or that have spelling mistakes. Use the sack template to help you decide. If you reject sacks, explain that you won't buy them because they are poor quality – the crop was diseased or rotten.
- Record the number of good quality sacks in **column A** on your *record sheet* for the family's country (see example left).

Calculating how many water buckets were collected

- Record on the family's *habitat sheet* the number of water buckets they collected each year. For example, if **10 buckets** were collected in year 1, colour in the bucket symbol for year 1 up to **level 10**. Use a blue pen.
- Write this number in **column B** of your record sheet (see example).

Calculating the harvest (how much crop was actually grown)

- Families need water to keep their crops alive. If they collect **one bucket of water**, they can successfully harvest **one sack of crop**.
For example, if the family made 18 sacks, they also need to collect 18 buckets of water to ensure that all 18 sacks of crop can stay alive.
- If the families did not collect enough water, some of their crop will have died or become diseased. They can only harvest as many crop sacks as they have buckets of water.
For example, if the family made **18 sacks**, but only collected **10 buckets** of water, they will lose eight sacks of crop. Their actual harvest is therefore just **10 sacks** of crop.
- Write the actual harvest figure in **column C** of your record sheet (see example).

- Write the details of the family's **chance cards** or **sustainability tokens** in **columns D and E**.

Family members keep the sustainability tokens (once you have recorded them for year 3) and must return with them at the end of year 4 to ensure that they continue to benefit from their training.

- Write the final amount of the family's harvest in **column F** (once you have added or subtracted crops/water as instructed by the chance cards and sustainability tokens).
- On the family's habitat sheet, colour in the number of rows indicated in **column F**, eg if the final amount of harvest is 5 (as shown in the example) then you should colour in **5 rows in the column marked for the relevant year on the habitat sheet**.
- This figure represents how much harvest the family will live on this year, after all other factors – like availability of water, natural disaster or learning new skills – have been taken into account.

You will need to do these calculations at the end of each year.

Remember to use a **different coloured pen for each year** when colouring in the habitat sheet.

Give the chance cards back to the game leader.

Put the water buckets back into the water sources for the next year.

Clear away unused crop sacks – at both the traders' and families' tables.

What is an NGO?

2. Working as a local NGO member

In your role as a member of an NGO, you are able to offer training to help local people live in a more sustainable way. This may improve their quality of life and help them to break out of the cycle of poverty.

In years 2 and 3, one person from your country's family may decide to stay with you for the whole year to do some training.

What do you need to do?

- Make sure the family representative brings their country's **role card** with them to the training session.
- Give them their country's **training card**.
- Make sure that they read both cards.
- Ask the trainee to use their role card to help them decide which type of training to take: water, food, or home.
- Once they've decided, record their choice in the box at the bottom of their country's record sheet.
- Give them their country's **sustainability token** for the type of training chosen.
- At the end of the year, ask the trainee to take their token back to their family. The new knowledge they have gained through the training will **increase their sustainability** in future years (this is recorded at the end of the *following* year).

In years 2 and 3, **different** people from the family may come to train. Each family member has to choose a different area of training.

At the end of each year you will note down the sustainability tokens when the family members come to record their harvest (see the instructions on how to be a market trader).

3. Monitoring water collection

Every year families have to collect water for their crops. When instructed by the game leader, they must go to a water source which will have their country's name written on it.

What do you need to do?

- Stand next to your country's water source.
- Make sure that only **one person** per family comes to the water source at any time.
- Give the family member **one bucket** each time.
- If they have a **water sustainability token** that says they can collect two buckets on each journey, then give them two buckets (this year and in future years). You can look at your market trader's record sheet to remind you whether the family has a water sustainability token, but it's the family responsibility to bring the token up during water collection.

NGOs (non-governmental organisations) are voluntary groups or charities. Members are usually local people who seek to help other local people find ways to improve their lives.

Market trader's record sheet

Record sheet for...
(Country's name)

*Remember that the families must have a bucket of water for each sack produced

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Sacks produced	Water collected	Crop actually harvested*	Chance card	Sustainability token	Rows shaded in on habitat sheet
Year 1						
Year 2						
Year 3						
Year 4						

Training given to the family for improving their home, water source or food production:

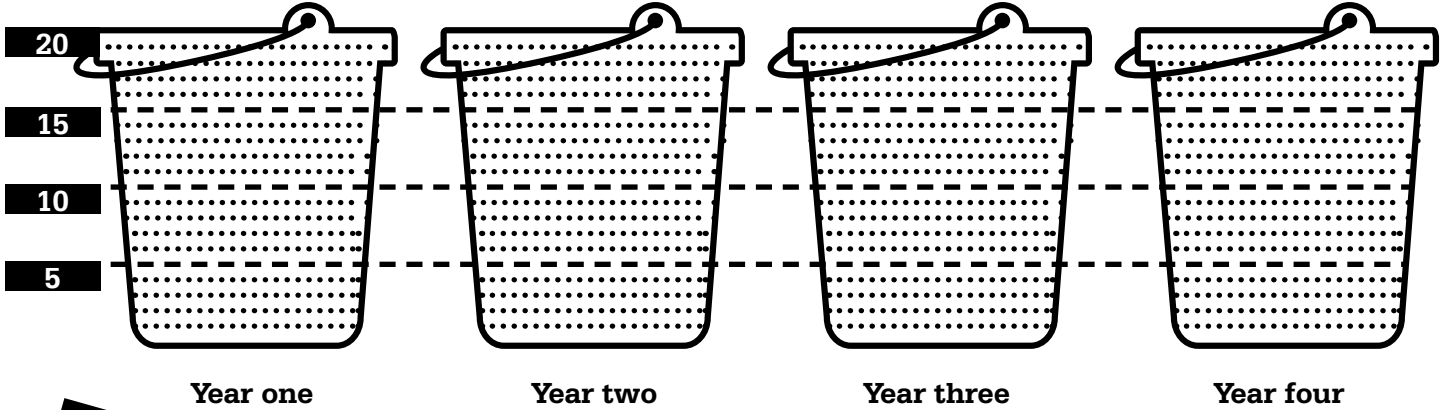
Year 2

Year 3

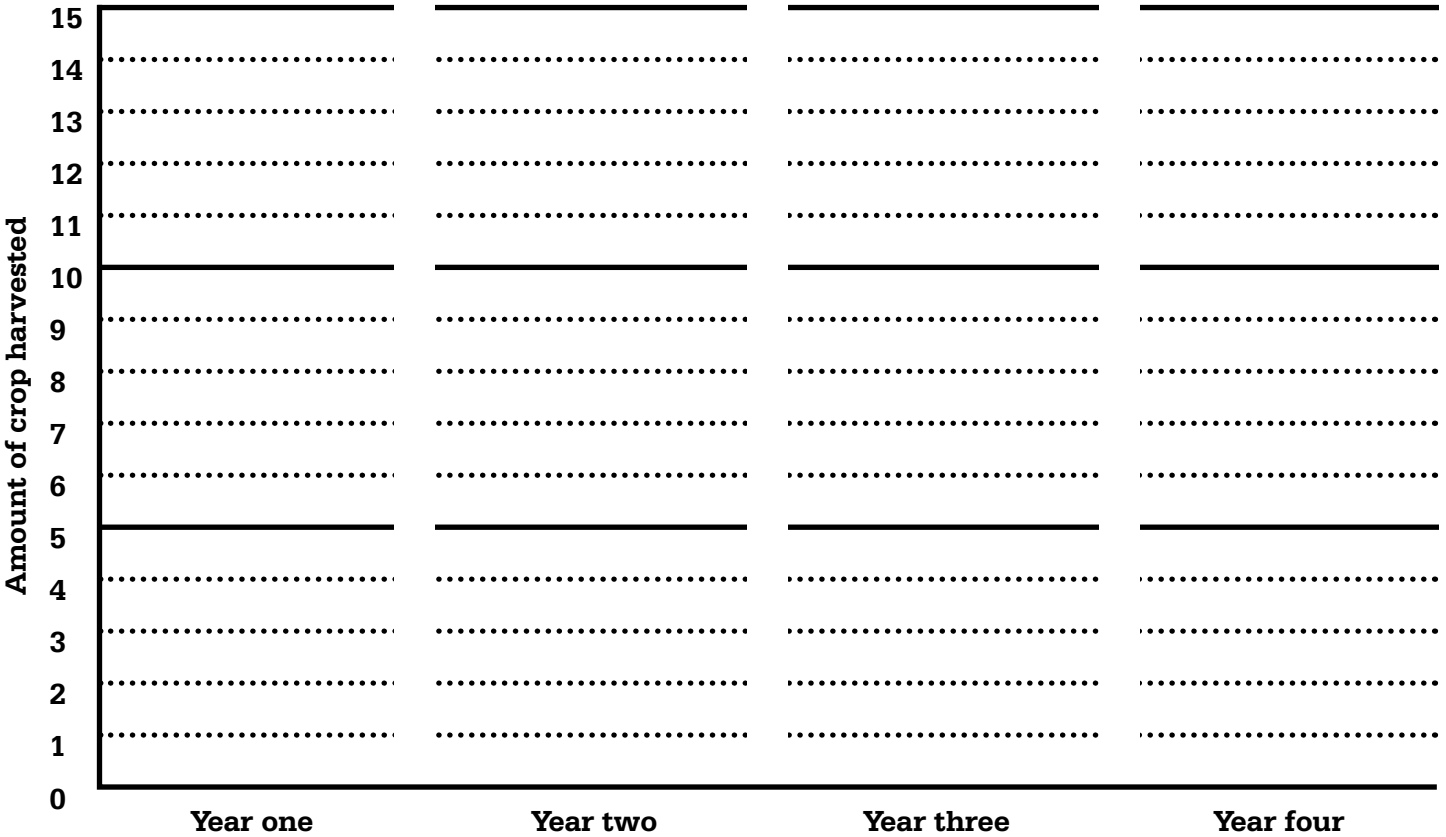
Habitat sheet for

.....
.....
.....
.....

Water buckets collected

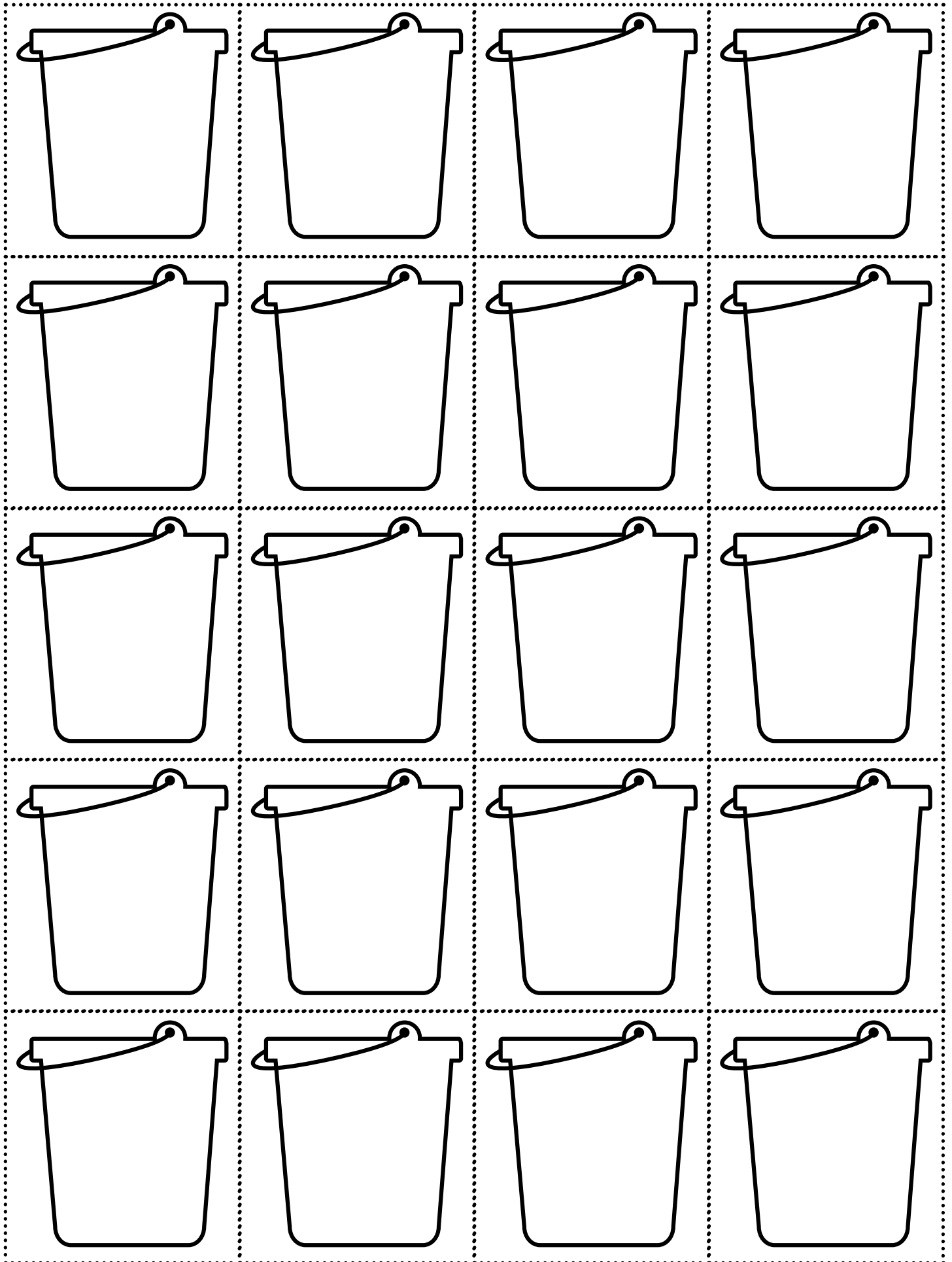


Amount of crop harvested



Bucket templates

(enlarge and print on A3 paper, preferably blue, and cut out 20 buckets per family)



Year 1 evaluation

It is important to complete these evaluations. You will need them for a successful debrief.

My family lives in

We have a small house and a small plot of land. It looks like this:

During our first year we had to do the following tasks and grow the following crop:

It was easy/difficult to grow crops.*

To collect water we had to:

.....

It made us feel:

.....

By the end of the year we had grown

.....

sacks of crops and collected

.....

buckets of water.

This was not enough/just enough/more than enough* to grow good-quality crops.

If some crops went to waste because we didn't have enough water, that made us feel

.....

By the end of the year we were beginning to feel like this about our situation:



*delete incorrect statements

Year 2 evaluation

At the start of year 2 did you decide to take part in the NGO training?

Yes

No

If yes, how did losing a family member affect crop production?

What other challenges did you face this year?

By the end of the year we had grown

.....

sacks of crops and collected

.....

buckets of water.

This was not enough/just enough/
more than enough* to grow
good-quality crops.

*delete incorrect statements

By the end of the year we were beginning to feel like this about our situation:



This is because

Year 3 evaluation

During year 2 a member of your family may have been on a training course.

What improvements are you hoping this will have made to your life during year 3?

Did you decide to receive training in year 3 and how has this decision affected the lives of other members of your family?

Has your family's diet changed? If so, how?

By the end of the year we had grown

.....

sacks of crops and collected

.....

buckets of water.

This was not enough/just enough/
more than enough* to grow
good-quality crops.

*delete incorrect statements

By the end of the year we were beginning
to feel like this about our situation:

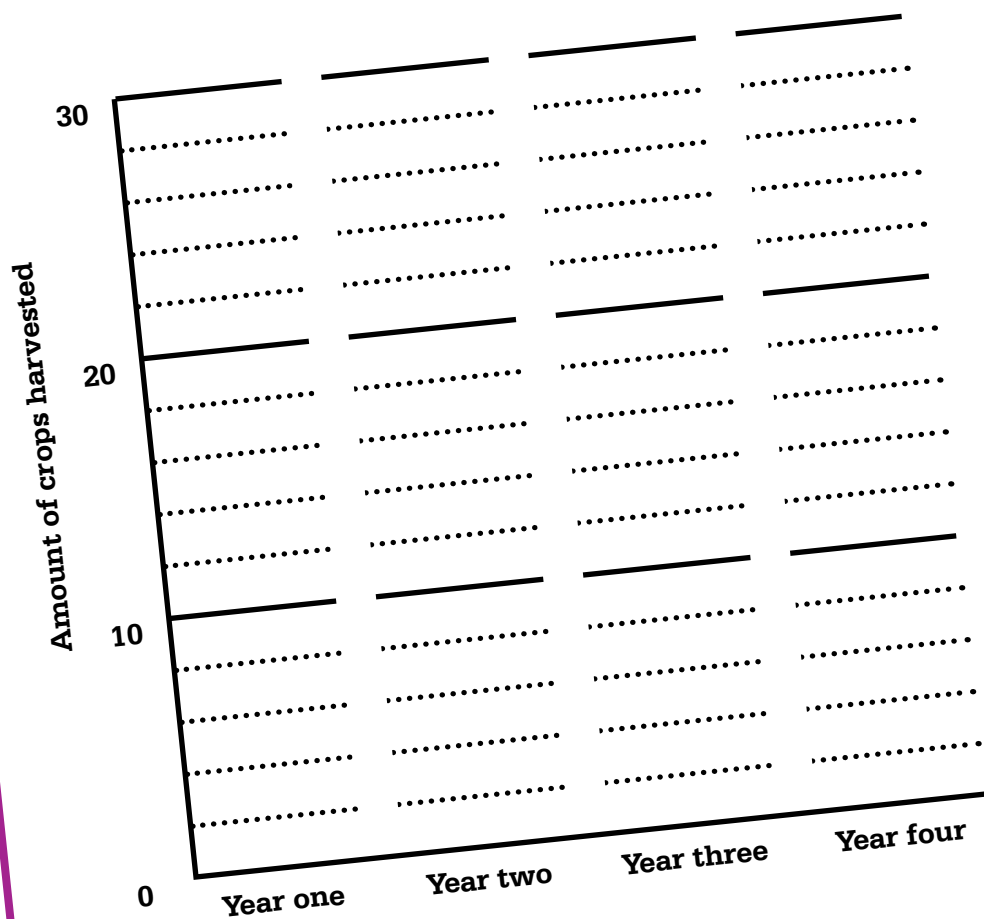


This is because

You have now been farming for four years. During this time you have had to make a number of decisions about what you think is best for your family.

What decisions did you make?

Below, plot a graph to show what has happened to your harvest over the four years.



Bangladesh family role card

Where do you live?

You live in Chondi village in Tangail district, central Bangladesh.

At home

Your house has mud-brick walls and a grass roof that leaks during the rainy season. It has three rooms, but you use one of these to store crops after each harvest. Straw mats cover the earth floor.

There is no electricity or running water. You cook outside on a clay stove using twigs or manure for fuel.

Your compound (private garden) has a small shed containing a weaving loom.

Food and drink

Jackfruit (huge fruits that taste a bit like pineapple) and banana trees grow nearby. Some have old terracotta pots in the branches for nesting birds. Chickens peck around freely, searching for food.

You eat the same rice dish for every meal. You don't have enough to eat and your diet isn't balanced so you are often ill. However, local traders are trying to get you to start growing a new, genetically modified type of crop that will increase your harvest. You think this may be a good idea.

Every day, girls and women walk two kilometres to fetch water from a well. The hand pump is broken and the well often becomes contaminated with sewage after flooding. You each carry ten litres of water in a pot on your head.

Income

Most families in Chondi village have very little land of their own. You just have 'homesteads' (small pieces of land around your houses). You make ends meet by renting more land from others or by sharecropping (sharing land with other farmers).

You have little spare cash to spend on basics such as salt, sugar, cooking oil, clothes and school books.



Bangladesh training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

Your family's supply of drinking water is not always clean. Your well can become contaminated by sewage that seeps into the water, especially during floods. If you build latrines for people in your local community, it will help reduce water contamination and illness.

- The local NGO gives you training in how to design and build a latrine that is safe, easy to keep clean and won't smell bad.

Food

You have been thinking about planting commercial seeds sold by a large company. But you notice that the artificial fertilisers and pesticides that your neighbours used to grow these seeds have damaged the soil.

- The local NGO suggests that your community starts up a traditional seed-exchange scheme. This involves sharing home-grown seeds that will grow well in your local environment without chemicals. This will save you money.
- Instead of buying chemical fertilisers, you start making your own organic compost which improves soil quality.
- Instead of buying pesticides, you start doing 'integrated pest control'. This means doing things like mixing crops that discourage pests with other types of crops that need protecting. In addition, you are now growing a much wider variety of crops.

Home

- The local NGO suggests that you plant trees around your home. The fruit from these trees will give you a healthier diet. The trees also act as a windbreak to reduce soil erosion and in the dry season they are a source of timber and firewood.
- You start storing food in a dry place for use in emergencies.
- To prepare for the rainy season and prevent your home from flooding, you raise the level of your house by using money from the NGO to build a mud platform.
- You take a weaving course. By making clothes to sell at the local market, you will earn more money.
- You increase your income even further by learning how to repair bicycles and selling wood from the trees you've planted.

Bolivia training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

The local NGO teaches you about the rights and responsibilities you have as citizens.

- It helps you register for ID cards which mean you can vote in elections
- You can now lobby (ask) your government to build a concrete well in your community.

Food

The local NGO provides you with seeds to grow cacao trees and other crops like bananas. This allows you to grow a wider range of crops.

- Eating the fruits gives you a more balanced diet.
- You can sell seeds from your trees for twice the price you get for rice crops.

Home

The local NGO can lend your community 20 woolless sheep. It also provides fencing and equipment for you to build a shelter. When the sheep reproduce you give back 20 animals to the NGO to repay the 'loan'.

- By selling sheep you have enough money to pay school fees and buy basic household goods.
- Your family's income is more stable.

Sustainability token: food

You make compost and then add it to the soil. You try new farming techniques, like intercropping (growing two or more crops in the same space at the same time) and natural pest control. Your soil is more fertile and you can grow more and better crops.

Ignore chance card 1 if you get it. Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

You plant trees that prevent soil and wind erosion, and produce timber, firewood, fruit and animal fodder. Your land is now more protected from floods.

Girls and women have to spend less time collecting fuel, giving them more time for studying and earning money from other jobs.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

You help build a latrine to prevent your drinking water being contaminated by sewage. Your water supply is clean and you get sick less often. You grow more crops.

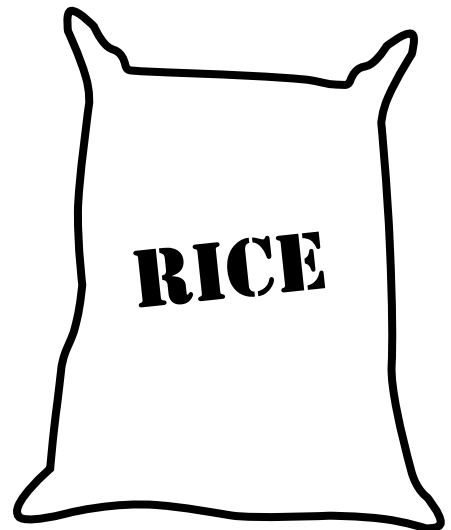
Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Bangladeshi rice



Bolivian rice



Sustainability token: food

The local NGO provides you with seeds to grow cacao trees and fruit like bananas. This allows you to grow a wider range of crops. Eating the fruits makes gives you a more balanced diet. You can sell seeds from your trees for twice the price you get for rice crops.

Ignore chance card 4 if you get it. Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

The local NGO lends your community 20 woolless sheep. You build a shelter for the sheep. When they reproduce you return 20 animals to the NGO. By selling sheep you have enough money to pay school fees and buy basic household goods. Your family's income is more stable.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

The local NGO teaches you about the rights and responsibilities you have as citizens. It helps you register for ID cards which mean you can vote in elections. You can now lobby (ask) your government to build a concrete well in your community.

Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Bolivia family role card

Where do you live?

Bolivia is the poorest country in South America and one of the poorest nations in the world. Few Bolivians have homes with luxuries such as running water or electricity.

Your family lives with 20 other families in a small village beside a river in the rainforest. It is a three-hour drive from the nearest town, and the journey there includes driving buses or cars on to a raft to cross rivers. There is no tarmac and when the tracks turn to mud during the rainy season, you have to travel by canoe instead.

Monkeys swing through the trees and birds copy what you say. Your family has a small plot of land (a *chaco*) down the river and grows a small amount of rice each year.

Each day you row down the river to work on the land and look after banana trees. You hunt in the forest, fish in the river and collect wild fruit and plants. But you don't catch much.

At home

Your house has wooden walls and a wicker roof that leaks when it rains. It has three rooms, one of which is used to store your crops after each harvest. Mats cover the earth floor. Cooking is done outside on a charcoal stove. There is no electricity or running water.

Food and drink

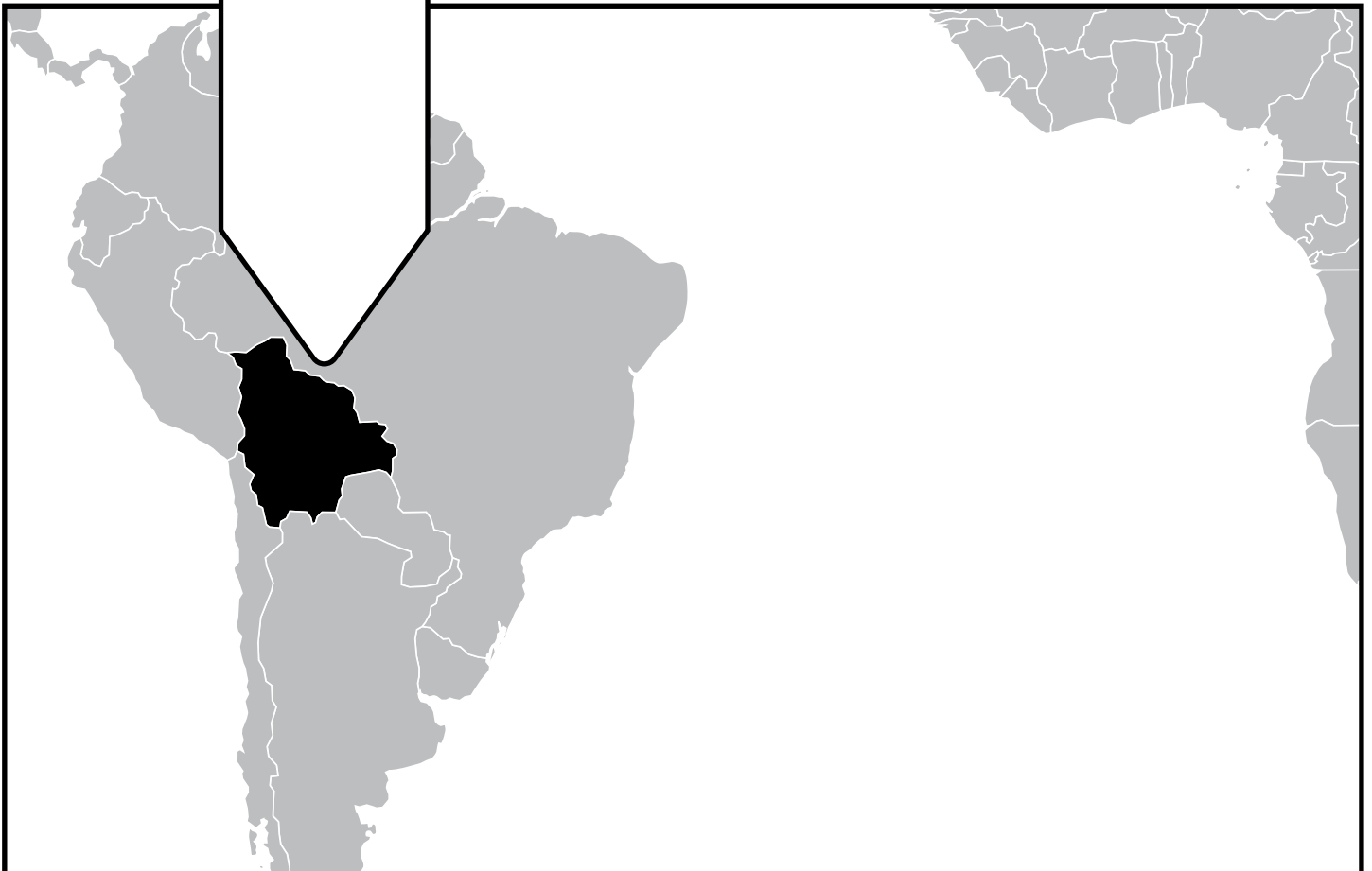
You eat the same rice dish for each meal. You don't have enough to eat and your diet isn't balanced, so you are often ill. You keep some chickens, but they often do not lay eggs because they lack food too.

In the dry season you have to walk one kilometre to the nearest water source.

Income

You have little spare cash to buy basic goods such as salt, sugar, oil, clothes and school books.

BOLIVIA
BOL



Kenya role card

Where do you live?

You live in the hills south-east of the capital, Nairobi. Local tracks and roads are dusty, but get muddy when it rains.

At home

Your three-room house has mud-brick walls and a tin roof that leaks during the rainy season. This is where you and your family eat and sleep.

You cook outside on a charcoal stove. There is no running water or electricity.

Food and drink

Your family has passion fruit plants and banana trees in the garden, which produce lots of fruit.

The surrounding fields have poor quality, infertile soil. You try to grow maize, cassava and beans, but these crops fail when there is drought.

You keep some chickens and they sometimes produce eggs – when they have enough to eat. You have some goats that roam freely but give little milk or meat. In the nearby forests your neighbours keep beehives.

You eat the same dish, ugali (ground maize flour and water) for each meal. Sometimes you don't have enough to eat and your diet isn't balanced so you are often ill.

Girls and women collect the water, which is clean. But the well is five kilometres away and you have to walk along a forest path which is often muddy. You feel scared because sometimes poisonous snakes live in pools of wasted water around the pump. Due to drought, the pump regularly dries up. Then you have to dig in river beds or walk even further to find water. You each carry ten litres of water on your head.

Income

There is little spare cash to buy basic goods such as salt, sugar, oil or clothes, and sometimes you can't afford to pay the school fees, so children can't always go to secondary school.

KENYA
KEN



Kenya training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

Although your water source is good quality, it is a long way from where you live.

- A local NGO has surveyed your land and recommends that you use a water source that is higher up the hill and nearer your home.

Food

Your family is often ill, so you need to look at improving your diet.

- The local NGO suggests that you try organic ways of improving your harvest, such as composting and adding manure to the soil to improve the quality.
- The NGO also shows you ways to use different parts of a plant. It shows you how to use bits you never knew you could eat, like the leaves of cassava or the bud of a banana plant. It shows you ways to cook nutritious and delicious food.

The goats you keep are a problem because you let them graze everywhere and the amount of grazing land is decreasing.

- The local NGO suggests that you start to collect fodder for your goats and keep them tethered at home, rather than letting them roam all the time.

Home

The local NGO is providing training for women in the region to show them how to make things that they can sell at the market, such as:

- brightly coloured tie-dye cloth
- soap made from natural products.
The women can sell these and use the money to buy extras for their home, such as coffee, salt and oil. The money can also help to pay for their children's secondary school fees.
- A neighbour lends you a spare bee hive and the NGO shows you how to keep bees and collect the honey. Any extra honey can be sold at the local market.

KENYA
KEN

Malawi training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

You explain to the local NGO that you face a number of problems getting clean water. Your main source is far from your home.

- The NGO helps you to identify where to build a borehole that is deep enough to get clean water. This will be a first step towards having cleaner water closer to home.
- The NGO suggests you form an association to be responsible for the upkeep of the borehole and to raise money for when repairs are necessary.

Food

The crops you grow are not doing very well, due to the regular droughts in your area. You would like to find alternative crops which will grow successfully.

- You meet with the local NGO to find out more about growing other crops: sorghum and cassava are crops which will cope better with the dry conditions.
- The NGO also suggests you start a small vegetable garden in your backyard so that you can have a healthier diet.

Home

The soil here is not very fertile because there are lots of people living in a small area and the land is over-farmed and over-grazed. You can't afford fertiliser.

- The local NGO shows you how to make your own compost to put nutrients back in the soil.
- It also suggests that you start to collect grazing fodder for your goats and keep them tethered at home. This means that they don't cause so much damage to the land, and allows you to collect their manure to put on your crops.

MALAWI
MAL

Sustainability token: food

You have learned how to harvest cassava properly – if you replant the stem, the cassava root grows back. You get two cassava harvests in one year.

The local NGO suggests you tether your goats to stop any being lost. You now have goats' milk to improve your diet, and manure to improve your soil. Your health and crop yields increase even more.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

You learn how to make textiles and keep bees. You increase your income by selling the textiles and the honey your bees produced. You also enjoy eating the honey!

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

You help dig a borehole close to your home, which means you no longer have to walk for hours to fetch water. You increase the amount of crops you can grow.

Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Kenyan maize



Malawian maize



Sustainability token: food

By growing different kinds of crops that cope better with dry conditions, you can grow more food. Even if there is a drought, some of your crops will survive.

Your harvest increases and you have more to eat.

Ignore chance card 1 if you get it. Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

By tethering your livestock, you stop them from over-grazing the land. By making your own compost from their manure, you put nutrients back in the soil.

The quality of your land improves.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

You help build a borehole close by. You spend less time collecting water (or the same time collecting more water). You grow more crops.

Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Malawi role card

Where do you live?

Malawi is in southern Africa. You live in the mountainous south, close to the border with Mozambique.

The local tracks and roads are dusty when it's dry, and become muddy when it rains.

At home

Your house has mud-brick walls and a grass-thatched roof that leaks during the rainy season. It has one room. Mats covering the earth floor are made of grasses stitched together.

Cooking is done outside on a wood fire. There is no electricity or running water.

Food and drink

Your diet isn't balanced, because you eat the same maize dish for each meal. Sometimes you don't have enough to eat. You keep goats, but they are often hungry and graze on the nearby vegetation. This damages the land by stripping all the nutrients from the soil.

The soil where you live is infertile from overuse, and many families farm very small plots of land on the steep slopes. Your country often faces serious food crises where people don't have enough to eat. It doesn't rain enough during the year for crops to grow properly and you often have poor harvests.

Every day you walk five kilometres to fetch water, which is not safe to drink. You carry ten litres in a bucket on your head. Often the water source dries up and you have to dig in river beds or walk even further to find water.

Income

There is little spare cash to buy basic goods such as salt, sugar, oil or clothes, and sometimes you can't afford to pay the school fees so children can't always go to school.

MALAWI
MAL



Nicaragua role card

Where do you live?

You live in the small village of El Porvenir in north-west Nicaragua in Central America. Most of the people living here are poor and own very little land.

Your village is a three-hour horse ride from the closest town, Achuapa. You have to ride, either by horse or mule, through rivers and over rocky, narrow, dusty tracks. Most of the trees have been cut down and the land looks like a desert. During the rainy season, the roads often turn to mud and are almost impassable.

At home

Your house has a mud floor and wooden walls with a corrugated-iron roof that leaks when it rains. Sometimes your home floods.

There is one room where the whole family sleeps, and a covered area outside for eating, preparing food and storing crops.

Cooking is done outside on a charcoal stove. There is no electricity or running water. Every morning the children walk for an hour to get to school.

Food and drink

Your family has a small plot of land, where you grow some sesame, maize and beans each year.

Every day you work in the fields (children work to after school). You plant seeds, water the young plants and weed. It is very hot, sweaty work and ants often bite your feet. At harvest time you beat the tall, dry sesame stalks with sticks to collect the seeds.

You eat the same dish of beans and tortillas (made from maize flour) at every meal. You have some unhealthy chickens that lay few eggs because they have little food (except after harvest time when you feed them sesame seeds). You don't have enough to eat and your diet isn't balanced so you are often ill.

Every day, girls and women walk two kilometres to fetch water from a well. You each carry ten litres on your head.

Income

Because the soil in your fields has been overused it has no nutrients left. This means that your crops are of poor quality and you have to sell them for a low price to the local market traders. Market traders press the sesame seeds to produce sesame oil, which they can sell for a lot of money. Your family has little spare cash to buy basic goods such as salt, sugar, oil, clothes and school books.



Nicaragua training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

Your local well is in poor condition: it has an old hand pump which is difficult to use and very inefficient. Your community needs to work together to get access to better water supplies.

- The NGO helps you to raise funds by organising groups to work on the community's model farm (which shares sustainable farming techniques with local farmers). Money raised by the farm is ploughed back into community projects, such as improving water supplies.

Food

Your annual harvest is small, and if crops die because of drought, your family goes hungry.

- The NGO helps you to plant different and more varied crops to help you get a more balanced diet.
- You start to grow drought-resistant crops that will survive when there is little rain.
- The NGO trains you to use natural fertilisers, such as manure and compost, instead of buying expensive artificial fertilisers.
- The NGO recommends that you think again about the livestock you keep. It could 'lend' you a cow or goat to increase the types of meat and other products you produce. When your cow/goat has a calf/kid, you return one to the NGO to repay the loan.

Home

The ground around your house is sometimes flooded by the river. The local NGO advises that you first need to estimate the average depth of the floodwater. Then they ask you questions about how you built your house and what you do to deal with flooding.

- The NGO will then help you to build a raised house, or a house that is away from the river on higher ground. Having a house that does not flood means that your health will improve because you can keep dry and warm and store crops safely.

Tajikistan training card

Welcome to the local NGO workshop, where you will find out how you can improve and sustain your family's livelihood and support your local community. It will take some time before you see the results, but they should have a real impact. You can receive training in:

Water

The local water pipes are broken so there's no water coming out of your taps. You are forced to collect rainwater or to take water from open ditches.

- The local NGO trains your community to organise itself to repair the public water points and irrigation channels and to lobby the government to guarantee more and cleaner water. A better water supply will save you time, and you will have more water for growing crops as well as for household needs.

Food

Tajikistan has long, cold winters. You need to look at how you can grow crops after the short summer to extend the growing seasons.

- The local NGO has researched ways to do this and suggests that you build small greenhouses using plastic sheeting. You can grow salad vegetables such as tomatoes and lettuces in these. The greenhouses are heated using small wood or coal-burning stoves. If you pickle some of the crop, you will have healthy vegetables to eat during the long winter. And you will be able to sell anything left over at the local market.

Home

The NGO advises you to collect all your household vegetable waste to make compost heaps to improve the soil so you can grow a few vegetables. You also need a good fence to secure your livestock. You will grow the fodder that they need and then feed it to them. If you don't have a cow, you can join one of the NGO's self-help groups to get access to credit so that you can take a loan to buy a cow. Once the cow is fattened up, you can sell it to pay back the loan and generate income. Or if the cow has a calf, you can sell the calf to pay back the loan.

In addition, you take a sewing and needlework course. You will make extra cash from selling the clothing.

Some of your family members can train in carpentry or shoe repair. This will increase your income even more and bring much-needed skills into your community.

Sustainability token: food

You grow different types of fruit and vegetables. With a better diet, your family is much healthier and has more energy to work harder on the land. Crop yields increase. You have also borrowed a goat from the local NGO. This had kids, and you returned one to repay the loan. You now have goats' milk to improve your diet, plus manure to improve your soil. Your health and crop yields increase even more.

Ignore chance card 4 if you get it. Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

You receive training to help you build a home that can withstand disasters. Your home is less at risk from flooding and you can store crops safely. You have more time to work on your land.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

You help raise funds to build a well to tap a water source close by. You spend less time collecting water (or the same time collecting more water). You grow more crops.

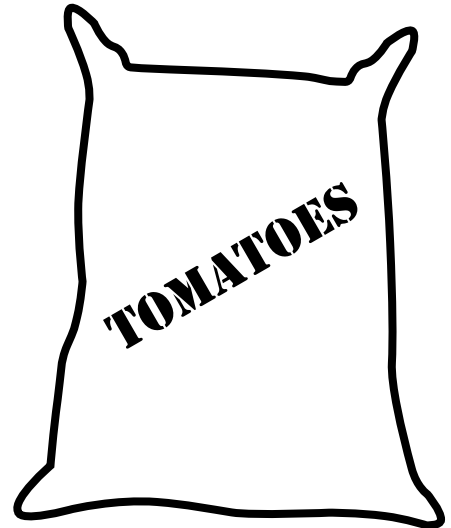
Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Nicaraguan sesame seed



Tajik tomatoes



Sustainability token: food

You grow different types of fruit and vegetables. Your family is much healthier. With a better diet, your family have more energy to work harder on the land. Crop yields increase.

Ignore chance card 4 if you get it. Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: home

You borrow a cow from the local NGO. This had a calf, which was returned to repay the loan. You now have cows' milk to improve your diet, and manure to improve your soil. Your health and crop yields increase even more.

You learn how to make clothes and crafts and sell many of them at local markets.

Double your harvest.



Sustainability token: water

You help repair village water pipes to tap a water source close by. You spend less time collecting water (or the same time collecting more water). You grow more crops.

Ignore chance card 5 if you get it. Each family member can collect two buckets of water each time they visit the water source in future years. Take this card with you when you next collect water and when you visit the market trader.



Tajikistan role card

Where do you live?

You live on the flat plains in the south of the country in the small village of Qahramon, a long way from the capital city, Pushanbe.

At home

Your house has mud-brick walls and a corrugated-iron roof that leaks when it rains. It has two rooms, one of which is used to store food and crops.

Cooking is always done by the women outside or in a shed. There is no electricity or running water. There is an outside toilet that you share with some other families.

Your grandmother and other relatives live nearby. They sew clothes to get some extra money to buy flour, meat, oil and salt. Most of the young men and fathers in the village have gone to Russia to find work, but they haven't earned enough money to send any back yet.

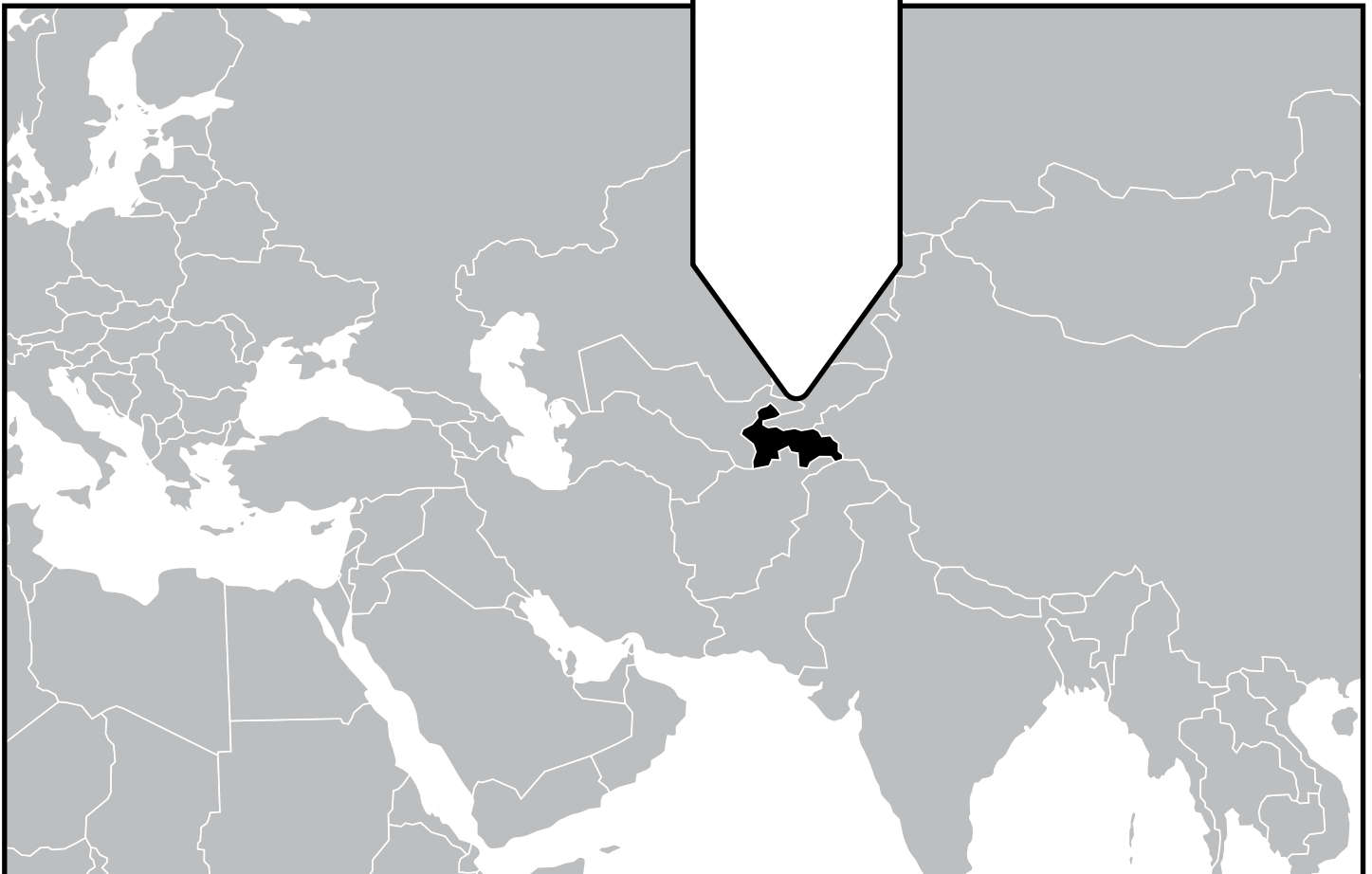
Food and drink

You have a small patch of land next to your house, but most of the time you cannot afford the seeds to grow potatoes or vegetables, so the garden is empty. You do not have any experience of growing food or raising animals, because before, when your country was part of the Soviet Union (1929-1991), food was easy to get hold of.

You collect rainwater from the roof in a pot when you can, or girls and women take water from the irrigation ditches in the fields near the village. You don't have enough to eat and your diet isn't balanced – you eat the same watery soup and bread for every meal – so you are often ill.

Income

You have little spare cash to buy basic goods such as salt, sugar and oil.



More on poverty and sustainable development

Teachers/youth-workers

www.christianaid.org.uk/learn

Has extension and background information supporting *The Poverty Challenge*. Also includes more information about all the Christian Aid resources available to teachers and youth-workers.

7-11 year olds

www.christianaid.org.uk/childrens-resources

Monthly material for children in church-based groups and schools plus links to games and stories from children around the world.

16+ years

www.christianaid.org.uk

www.christianaidcollective.org

Useful for more detailed information about the countries covered in the game and generally about climate change, poverty, sustainable development, environmental change, diet, health and how young people can get involved to make a difference.

www.globaldimension.org.uk

An ideas and resource bank focusing on how to bring global issues into the classroom.

www.cafod.org.uk

The sections on the millennium development goals and food and hunger are a good introduction to topics related to poverty.

www.sd-commission.org.uk

The Sustainable Development Commission is the UK government's independent watchdog on sustainable development. This website has some useful definitions.

www.dea.org.uk

The Development Education Association (DEA) provides useful information on development education – leading to greater understanding of global and development issues, developing practical skills and confidence to make positive changes locally and globally. Lists local Development Education Centres (DEC) around the UK.

The Poverty Challenge supports:

Subject: RE/RME (England and Wales), RE (Northern Ireland), RME (Scotland)

Skills: Reflect and evaluate their own and others' beliefs, express their own beliefs and ideas, making connections between religious education and other subject areas.

Topics: Wealth, poverty, the environment, human rights and responsibilities, social justice, fairness, inequality, communities, responsibilities, belief and action, stewardship, global and national citizenship, the work of religious organisations in the community.

Subject: PSHE/PSD/PSE/Citizenship (England), Citizenship (Northern Ireland), PSD/PSE (Scotland), Citizenship (Scotland) PSHE/PSD/PSE (Wales)

Skills: Explain and express views that are not their own, discuss topical political, moral and social issues, respect and value themselves and others.

Topics: NGOs/community-based groups, the world as a global community, independence, interdependence, sustainable development, vulnerability, the developed world's response to the developing world, needs, rights and responsibilities, health, fairness, justice, participation, making choices, citizenship, stewardship, diversity, uncertainty, precaution, values and perceptions.

Subject: Geography (England, Northern Ireland, Wales), Environmental Studies: people and place (Scotland)

Skills: Identifying geographical issues, problem solving and decision making including analysing evidence and justifying conclusions, appreciating how their own values and attitudes affect contemporary social, economic, and political issues.

Topics: Changing landscapes, physical and human geographical characteristics of Bangladesh, Bolivia, Kenya, Malawi, Nicaragua and Tajikistan, environmental change, natural disasters, sustainable development, interdependence, diet, health, local and global NGOs, quality of life, physical and human interaction

Subject: Science (England, Northern Ireland, Wales), Environmental Studies: science (Scotland)

Skills: Thinking through environmental consequences of choices

Topics: Sustainable development, natural disasters, water within habitats and for sustaining life, climate change.

Subject: Mathematics (England, Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland)

Skills: Using data-collection sheets, collecting data through observation, relating summarised data to an initial question, looking at data to find patterns and exceptions, evaluating results and modifying initial opinions if necessary.

Cover Image

Harvesting squash in Tangail district, Bangladesh. These farmers practise intercropping (growing different crops next to each other), which allows them to grow a wide variety of food within the same area.

Christian Aid/Mohammadar Rahman

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