

Think Critically about Food

This activity has been designed to help young people think critically about the topic of the broken food system.

TAGS

Food system

Outline

When we eat, we do not always think about how food gets on to our plate. However there is a very complex system from growing and producing, to trading food. This system is now broken, and we are all part of it and how to fix it.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the challenges facing India's food system.
- Reach conclusions about five priorities to make India's food system more equitable (fairer).
- Present these conclusions in a visually interesting way that explains them clearly to others.

Resource

- India's Broken Food System. Short 'trailer' version (film, 2' 38"): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G1AhyuXp8Ok>
- India's Broken Food System. Full version (film, 13' 47"): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKoxsf5_4E
- Issue Wheel: Get Global pg.89 <http://bit.ly/2arIhL9>
- Example of an infographic.

Key Words

Food system, Global food economy, Inequality, Small farmer (small scale farmer), credit, markets.

Food system is all "the processes and infrastructure involved in feeding a population: growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items. It also includes all the laws, rules and regulations that govern the food system".¹

Teachers notes

India is home to 1.25 billion of the world's 7.4 billion people (2016). The ability of India's food system to feed its people is therefore of great importance to one in seven of the world's population. The challenges facing India are replicated in many other countries.

There are two versions of the film 'India's Broken Food System', produced by Oxfam in 2011. The short 'trailer' version lasts for 2' 38" and the 'full' version lasts for 13' 47". If possible young people

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-au725e.pdf>

should watch the full version. However, if there is insufficient time, it is possible to complete the activity by watching the short 'trailer' version of the film.

1. Watch the film and identify the challenges facing India's food system. These should be written in a list.

Young people may write down the challenges using different language, but the key points from the short 'trailer' version of the film include;

- The price of food has gone up (e.g. the price of rice suddenly doubled).
- Poor people suffer most from rising food prices.
- Women do not have equal access to land and the right to farm it.
- The world's farm land is unequally distributed between rich and poor people and men and women.
- People face violence and prison because of access to land.
- Poor people are protesting to secure access to land.
- Climate change means that farmers need new knowledge (e.g. what to grow and when to grow it).
- Access to credit (loans) and access to markets is at the heart of farmers being able to grow more food.
- We need to grow more food while allowing the planet to grow back its natural resources, damaged by climate change.

There are additional issues raised in the full version of the film.

2. The next stage of this activity asks young people to think critically about their list and reach conclusions in their group about **five** priorities for making India's food system more equitable (fairer).

Their solutions may not all be **technical** (e.g. providing farmers with new crops, introducing new technology). They may also be **political** (e.g. changes in the law, rules and regulations) and **social** (e.g. working to change people's attitudes). The best solutions combine many different approaches.

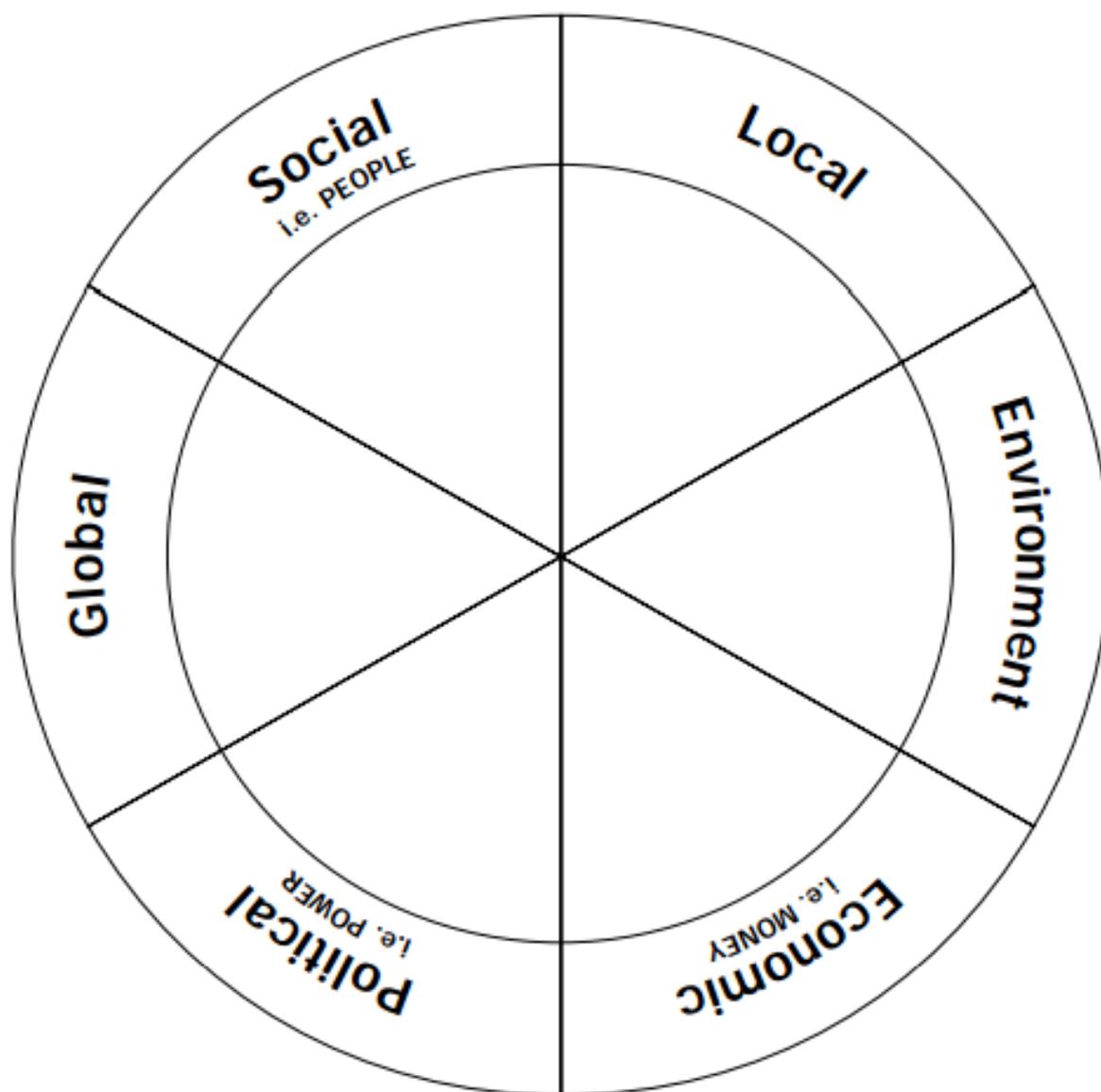
One approach to selecting priorities is to do an **issues wheel** using the activity sheet provided. Young people discuss and enter their solutions against the various headings. Some solutions may overlap across two or more headings. These solutions may then emerge as the priorities.

The Issue Wheel is adapted from Get Global (pg 89).

3. Finally make an infographic or other visual presentation to communicate the priorities clearly to others. A simple version of an infographic is included below. If young people are to think about this task in greater detail there are learning resources at: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-art-of-inequality>.

Remember that food is a complex issue, and communicating about it clearly is a challenging task.

Issue Wheel – Adapted from Get Global (pg 89)



Example of an infographic

