

# ALTERNATIVE INCOME

## ELEMENTARY LEVEL

### Poverty Around the World

#### Core Activity

- **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is for students to learn about the seven countries Free The Children works in around the world and the ways poverty affects the livelihood of the people in these countries.
- **Instructional method(s):** class discussion, independent work
- **Differentiated instruction:**
  - Simplified: Choose one statistic in the statistics activity and focus on it by breaking it down and explaining it to the students.
  - Advanced: Students will read the story on their own and come to independent conclusions.
- **Curriculum connections:** Grades 4 – 8, Health and Physical Education Program, Language, Mathematics and Social Studies.
- **Estimated time:** 45 minutes
- **Steps:**
  1. Explain to students that Free The Children works in seven marginalized countries around the world, these countries are: China, Ecuador, Haiti, India, Kenya, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka.
  2. Explain that these countries were selected because of their struggles with issues such as disease, exploitation, thirst and poverty.
  3. Distribute B.L.M.2 and ask students to colour in and label these seven countries.
  4. While students are working on their maps, write the following words on the board: literacy rate, child labour, under 5 growth stunting, primary school attendance, unemployment rate and poverty line.
  5. Tell students they are going to participate in a statistics demonstration, but first they must learn what the different statistics mean. Explain that all of the words on the board are development indicators. These are numerical measurements of the quality of life in a country. Run down the list of indicators and explain what each one means.

*Teacher Note:*

*Literacy rate: the percentage of the population that can read and write.*

*Child labour: Percentage of children aged 5 to 14 years of age involved in child labour activities.*

*Under 5 growth stunting: the amount of children under age 5 who suffer from reduced growth rate*

*Primary school attendance: the percentage of children in the age group who attend school.*

*Unemployment rate: the percentage of the labour force that is without jobs.*

*Poverty line: is the minimum level of [income](#) deemed necessary to achieve an adequate [standard of living](#)*

6. Discuss when an indicator suggests a low quality of life versus a high quality of life.

7. Begin the demonstration:

*Teacher Note:* Go down the list below one at a time, asking students to sit after each demonstration. At that time, ask them to write the information they learned on their map and discuss its meaning.

- Ask 2/3 of the class to stand up (in a class of 20 this is 13 students). Tell them that this is the amount of people in Haiti who do not have a formal job.
  - Ask 26% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20, this is 5 students). Tell them that this is the amount of children in Kenya who are forced to work.
  - Ask 15% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20, this is 3 students). Tell them that this is the amount of children under age 5 in China who suffer from stunting (reduced growth rate). This is due to inadequate nutrition.
  - Ask 83% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20, this is 17 students). Tell them that this is the amount of primary school children in India who attend school.
  - Ask 23% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20 this is 5 students). Tell them that this is the amount of people in Sri Lanka who live below the poverty line.
  - Ask 84% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20 this is 17 students). Tell them that this is the amount of people in Ecuador, age 15 and over, who are literate.
  - Ask 46% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20 this is 9 students). Tell them that this is the percentage of girls age 15 – 24 in Sierra Leone that are literate. Following this, ask 66% of the class to stand up (in a class of 20 this is 13 students). Tell them that this is the percentage of boys age 15 – 24 in Sierra Leone that are literate.
8. When this activity is complete, revisit the list of indicators and seven countries using the following suggested questions:
- Why do these countries need to be freed from poverty?
  - Why is it important that Free The Children has chosen to work in these seven countries?
9. Ask students to formulate a list of educated guesses that indicate any correlations between the indicators and poverty (e.g.: when people are unemployed they are likely to be living in poverty). Encourage students to think critically to find these relationships.
10. When this discussion is complete gather the class together and read them the story “Breaking the Cycle” on B.L.M.1. After the completion of the story, ask students the following suggested questions:
- What is the dilemma(s) that Leena and her family face?
  - What affect is poverty having on Leena and her family?
  - How is Free The Children helping free Leena and her family become free from poverty?
11. In order to provide further information about the alternative income project, read students the story found on B.L.M.3, “Changing Lives: Meet Mrs. Ambrose.” After the completion of the story, ask students the following suggested questions:
- What dilemma were Mrs. Ambrose and her grandchildren facing?
  - How did Free The Children help Mrs. Ambrose and her family? What was this called?
12. To conclude this activity, ask students to write a reflection from either Leena or Mrs. Ambrose’s point of view about how alternative income projects will help free their families and communities from poverty.
13. Students will hand in their reflections for grading.

**Participate in Free The Children’s Five Days for Freedom campaign as an engaging outlet for youth action. Check out [www.weday.com/takeaction](http://www.weday.com/takeaction) to learn more.**

## Blackline Master 1

### Breaking the Cycle

“There are not many jobs in my village,” laments Warnakulasuriya Don Edna Leena, 46. “The economy is bad especially because of the war.”

A mother of three, Leena is from a small fishing village called Sea Street, north of Colombo, Sri Lanka. She has lived her whole adult life in the shadow of Sri Lanka’s 26-year civil war that both deliberately and unintentionally destroyed the livelihoods of thousands of people.

For years, Leena and her husband tried to get a bank loan for their dry fish business. “We both have good knowledge of making quality dry fish, but we did not have the money to establish a strong business. We applied to the bank for a loan many times, but we were denied a loan because of our weak economic situation.”

Leena’s family was caught in one kind of cycle of poverty: they needed a loan to improve their business, but they could not get a loan unless they had a more successful business. As food prices increased daily, Leena struggled to provide her children with nutritious meals on a household income of a little over \$3 a day.

In 2009, Free The Children’s Adopt a Village program helped to create the Livelihood Development Society (LDS), an organization run by and for the women of Sea Street to promote sustainable development. The Society has a bank that pools the resources of these women and provides microloans and savings accounts.

“The loan from the LDS was the chance I needed to help move my family out of poverty,” Leena proudly states. “Today, I am entrepreneur, and my husband and I work together and we have a good business. I put money in my savings account regularly, and we are able to take care of our children properly, especially their education needs which is important for me.”

Through her \$500 loan with the Livelihood Development Society, Leena has tripled her household income, providing the start she needed to free her family from poverty. With that freedom, she has whole-heartedly turned her focus on feeding her children and making sure they can go school.

### World Map

