

## EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITY

# Exploring Types of Food Assistance

### SCENARIO card

You are a young boy living in a rural area. Your parents are farmers. The amount of food that you and your siblings receive was a severe drought in your area and your crops did not grow. You also couldn't save any money this season.

What would be an appropriate type of food assistance?  
What questions would you ask to make a better-informed decision?

### RESPONSE card

Each month your family receives a “food basket” which includes staple foods such as beans, oil, tomato sauce, lentils, pasta, and canned fish. This is not a lot of food, but it does help feed your family. It also means that your parents can spend the little money that they have on other things, like rent or medical expenses.

NOTE: Food is not shipped from outside the region locally as possible. The content of the food basket is determined by various factors such as family, nutritional needs, and the amount of food. The food basket is not intended to last a month, but rather to help offset the cost of food.

### IMAGE card



**Recommended age level:** Ages 12 - Adult

**Recommended time:** About 20 minutes

**Number of participants:** can be adapted for a variety of people and contexts

This activity, which includes scenarios to demonstrate different types of food assistance, is intended to accompany the *Ration Meal* activity, produced by Canadian Foodgrains Bank. The *Ration Meal* activity can be found at [foodgrainsbank.ca/education](http://foodgrainsbank.ca/education). While intended as an extension activity, *Exploring Types of Food Assistance* can be done as a separate activity, though you are encouraged to consult the *Ration Meal* activity to learn more about food rations.

Food assistance supports people who are experiencing an emergency crisis, like war, drought, or flood. As you have seen in the *Ration Meal* activity, the distribution of food rations is an important example of food assistance. There are also other types of food assistance, which you will explore in this activity.

## How to facilitate this activity

1. There are six scenarios listed below. Each scenario has 3 accompanying cards: a SCENARIO card which describes the context, an IMAGE card with the image of a potential response, and a RESPONSE card which explains a potential response.
2. Divide the large group into small groups 2-4 people.
3. Hand out a copy of the 6 SCENARIO cards to each group. Have the group read the scenarios and answer the question: What kind (s) of intervention do you think is (are) appropriate? Which questions would you like answered to make a better-informed decision? Allow time for the groups to read and discuss.
4. Hand out a copy of the 6 IMAGE cards to each group. Ask the groups to discuss what the images represent. Invite the group to choose an image of a possible intervention for each scenario. What was their reasoning for their choice?
5. Hand out a copy of the 6 RESPONSE cards. Invite the group to read the cards to see if their own assessment of each scenario was on the right track.\* Be sure to read the note at the bottom of the card for more information about that particular response.

**Set up:** Print single sided, one copy per group of the 6 SCENARIO cards, the 6 IMAGE cards, and the 6 RESPONSE cards. To help keep the cards organized, you may wish to print the IMAGE Cards on white paper, and the SCENARIO Cards and RESPONSE Cards each on a different colour of paper. Cut out each of the cards and keep make a pile of SCENARIO cards, IMAGE cards, and RESPONSE cards for each group.

**Other materials:** You may wish to have a map or globe to consult to see the countries mentioned in the activity.

Another possible way to facilitate the activity is to divide the large group into 6 small groups. Hand out one SCENARIO card to each group. Give them time to discuss a possible response. Hand out one IMAGE card to each group. Ask them to decide if it represents an appropriate response to their scenario. If not, invite them to discuss with other groups to see if they can find an image that better represents an appropriate response for their scenario. Once each group has found an IMAGE card that they think responds to their SCENARIO, hand out the RESPONSE cards. Have each group present their scenario, why they choose the response that they did, and the response suggested on the RESPONSE card. This format only requires you to have one of each card rather than one per group.

## QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS AFTER THIS ACTIVITY:

- Was there anything that surprised you?
- What will you take away from this activity?

\* Try to avoid language about having the “correct” or “incorrect” answer. The emphasis should be on reflecting on the scenario and brainstorming ideas. There are many factors to consider when deciding on an appropriate intervention, including which resources are available, where the family lives, what their diet was like before the crisis. This activity provides very limited information and is meant to generate awareness, reflection and discussion.

## Answer key for facilitators

**SCENARIO card:** Rebab from Pakistan

**IMAGE card:** Grain bag, jug of oil, split peas

**RESPONSE card:** Once a month, your family receives a large bag of wheat, split peas and oil from an aid group. Your family will continue to receive this food until your next crop is ready to be harvested and eaten.

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**SCENARIO card:** Jana from Syria

**IMAGE card:** food basket with staple foods

**RESPONSE card:** Each month your family receives a “food basket” which includes staple foods such as beans, oil, tomato sauce, lentils, pasta, and canned fish. This is not a lot of food, but it does help feed your family. It also means that your parents can spend the little money that they have on other things, like rent or medical expenses.

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**SCENARIO card:** Amani from Kenya

**IMAGE card:** maize, beans, oil and seeds

**RESPONSE card:** Your family received a large bag of maize, beans and oil from an aid group. Your family also received seeds which will help to plant a new crop next season.

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**SCENARIO card:** Grace & Talia from South Sudan

**IMAGE card:** Plumpy Nut

**RESPONSE card:** You took Talia to a health centre which helps young children. She has been given a special type of food paste that is easy for young children who are weak to suck out of the package. It is high in fats, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. This is called a therapeutic food and will help Talia regain weight and improve her health.

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**SCENARIO card:** Luis from Venezuela

**IMAGE card:** food voucher

**RESPONSE card:** Each month your mother receives a voucher which she can use in certain shops to buy food for the family. It’s not quite enough for the whole month, but it helps your family get by. You get to help fill the shopping cart with foods that your family enjoys.

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**SCENARIO card:** Solange from Haiti

**IMAGE card:** cooked rice and beans

**RESPONSE card:** Your school has recently received money so that it can now provide all the students with a lunch consisting of rice and beans. This meal is full of nutrients and helps you focus and learn. You have noticed more children coming to school again, now that there is a hot lunch served.

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**SCENARIO card**

You are a boy living in Pakistan, named Rebab. Your parents grow most of the food that your family eats. However, a few months ago there was a large flood and your family lost all the crops in your field. As a result, your family has no food to eat until the next harvest season.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

**SCENARIO card**

Your name is Jana. You are a young girl from Syria, but you had to leave your home because of a war. Your family is now living in someone's shed in Lebanon. Your parents had good salaries in Syria, but they are now struggling to afford food, rent, and medicals costs.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

**SCENARIO card**

You are a young boy living in Kenya named Amani. Your parents are farmers. They grow most of the food that you and your siblings eat. However, there was a severe drought in your country this year and your crops did not grow. With the loss of the crop, you also couldn't save any seeds to plant for next season. You also sold some of your animals to be able to afford to buy food in the market.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

**SCENARIO card**

Your name is Grace. You are a young mother living in South Sudan. There has been a war in your country for several years. You have a 2-year-old girl, named Talia. For many weeks you have had little or no food for either yourself or Talia. You had resorted to begging until you reached a community where help is available. Talia is very thin, weak, and sick. You are scared that she may die, like so many other children have in your community.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

**SCENARIO card**

Your name is Luis. You are from Venezuela. You had a comfortable life there, but your family choose to leave because of difficult political and economic reasons. Your family crossed the border to Colombia. However, you are hungry, with little money or other resources, and have few opportunities to access public services. Food is available in the city where you now live, but you cannot afford to buy very much.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

**SCENARIO card**

Your name is Solange. You are a young student in Haiti. Usually, your parents can only provide you with one meal a day.

**What would be an appropriate response? Why?  
What questions would you like to have answered to make a better-informed decision?**

IMAGE card



IMAGE card



IMAGE card



IMAGE card



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IMAGE card

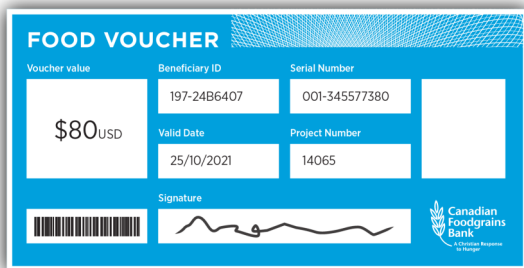


IMAGE card



### RESPONSE card

Once a month, your family receives a large bag of wheat, split peas and oil from an aid group. Your family will continue to receive this food until your next crop is ready to be harvested and eaten.

NOTE: Food aid is no longer shipped from Canada. Instead, food is purchased as close to the actual need as possible, possibility in the same country or neighbouring country. In addition to being more economical, this ensures that food arrives quickly to those in need, local economies are supported and that the food that is selected is appropriate food for that culture and context.

### RESPONSE card

Each month your family receives a “food basket” which includes staple foods such as beans, oil, tomato sauce, lentils, pasta, and canned fish. This is not a lot of food, but it does help feed your family. It also means that your parents can spend the little money that they have on other things, like rent or medical expenses.

NOTE: Food is not shipped from Canada but is sourced as locally as possible. The contents of a food basket are determined by various factors including the size of the family, nutritional needs, and local preferences. Often, the food basket is not intended to feed the family for the whole month, but rather to help offset other needs that they may have.

### RESPONSE card

Your family received a large bag of maize, beans and oil from an aid group. Your family also received a female goat which will have babies and help your family make up for the animals that you sold.

NOTE: Canada is part of the *Food Assistance Convention*, an international treaty which aims to respond to the food and nutritional needs of the most vulnerable people. In previous agreements, the assistance offered was only counted by the amount of food distributed. Since 2013, donor countries can fund other forms of assistance, such as seeds and tools to grow food, cash or vouchers to buy food, or re-stocking of animals for pastoralists.

### RESPONSE card

You took Talia to a health centre which helps young children. She has been given a special type of food paste that is easy for young children who are weak to suck out of the package. It is fully of fats, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. This is called a therapeutic food and will help Talia regain weight and improve her health.

NOTE: Nutritional “Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods” are used as a treatment for severe malnutrition cases in children. These treatments support rapid weight gain and can alleviate a starving child from potential illness or death. The product is easy for children to eat because it dispenses readily from a durable, tear-open package. PlumpyNut® (shown in this activity) is one example. The fortified peanut butter-like paste contains fats, dietary fibre, carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins, and minerals.

### RESPONSE card

Each month your mother receives a voucher which she can use in certain shops to buy food for the family. It’s not quite enough for the whole month, but it helps your family get by. You get to help fill the shopping cart with foods that your family enjoys.

NOTE: The distribution of cash or food vouchers is a relatively recent development but is gaining in popularity. This type of response is most appropriate when food is readily available in the local markets. Cash and food vouchers allow the recipients to choose for themselves the foods that they wish to consume and helps contribute to the local economy. In the case of vouchers, the group distributing the voucher would have to make prior arrangements with one or more local shop owners to accept the vouchers.

### RESPONSE card

Your school has recently received money so that it can provide all the students with a lunch consisting of rice and beans. This meal is full of nutrients and helps you to focus and learn. You have noticed more children coming to school again, now that a hot lunch is served.

NOTE: School lunch programs can have a many positive impacts in communities. For instance, school enrollment increases, especially for girls, as parents may otherwise keep them home. Children who receive lunches are better able to focus on learning and may see improvements in their health especially if the meals or snacks are fortified to provide extra micronutrients. If food is purchased locally, it can strengthen local agriculture and food systems.