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Module 3

Socio-professional Well-being of Youth





Source: [dormakaba.com](https://www.dormakaba.com)

Module 3 : Socio-professional Well-being of Youth

Learning Objectives

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Module 3: Socio-professional Well-being of Youth

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Learning Objectives

Welcome to the Module 3: Socio-professional Well-being of Youth

This module wants to:

- Raise the awareness of young people about food security, in terms of their socio-professional development;
- Underline the link between educational poverty and well-being of youth;
- Offer concrete solutions to fight food waste and promote sustainable lifestyles.



Source: italiaolivicola.it

Chapter 1

Youth-friendly Orientation and Socio-professional development



Lesson 1: Introduction

According to **United Nations** projections, the world population will increase by **about 2.5 billion people by 2050**, and most of this increase will occur in developing countries. Much of this growth will involve **young people**, who are projected to account **for half of the population** by 2050.

These demographic changes will make young people extremely **vulnerable to food insecurity**. Vulnerability is further exacerbated by problems with rising food prices and crop losses due to climate change. At the same time, young people play a key role in addressing the food security challenge.

This places youth at the center of **food security and nutrition**.

Young professionals have fresh ideas, a strong understanding of emerging trends, and are ready to experiment with new approaches to working with food safety and nutrition.

The underlying responsibility of young people to work collectively to achieve a safe and well-nourished world must be accompanied by addressing the challenges that young people face. The vision of youth and youth-led initiatives that intertwine advances in technologies for increased production with increased awareness of nutritional practices is a fundamental requirement.

If young people are provided with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and abilities, they have the power to transform the fate of food security and nutrition for the better.



Lesson 2: Heterogeneous Needs

The United Nations defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24. Definitions, however, vary from country to country and region to region, with many definitions including people up to age 35.

The different age categories within the definitions of youth may imply different needs and opportunities. For younger categories, such as those between the ages of 15 and 18, priorities may relate to completing secondary education and transitioning to productive work, eliminating all forms of hazardous work. Conversely, those in the older categories, who may already be working and supporting families, may benefit from initiatives to upgrade and learn new skills related to their specific areas of work.

Gender is an important dimension that influences opportunities to build and use the capacities of young people in agriculture. The challenges of reaching young women, who are often constrained by heavy domestic workloads, traditional customs and beliefs, and even constraints on their mobility in some societies, with education and training initiatives can, in many cases, be greater than those related to reaching young men.

Dynamics such as high rates of teenage pregnancy and early marriage prevent many young women from participating in education and training and greatly limit the livelihood options available to them. Persistent gender biases in access to productive resources, particularly land, must be addressed along with targeted capacity-building initiatives to ensure that young women have the opportunity to use their knowledge and skills productively.

Socioeconomic contexts also obviously determine the opportunities available to rural youth in different countries and regions, intersecting with gender and age dynamics.

In Africa, for example, a large number of young people live and work in rural towns and settlements. Moreover, there are big doubts about the potential of the urban sector to absorb these young people into wage employment.

It is clear that the role of agriculture, and particularly small family farming, in providing decent livelihood opportunities for rural youth in the coming years will be important.

At the same time, connectivity between rural and urban areas in some regions remains poor, especially in terms of infrastructure, but also in terms of services and institutions needed to facilitate the flows of goods, information, money and people. These gaps can increase the transaction costs associated with investment in agriculture or in financial institutions operating in rural areas.



Lesson 3: Youth and Agricultural Education

Agriculture plays a significant role in achieving global food and nutrition security, increasing economic growth and environmental sustainability. Representing nearly **40% of the global workforce**, agriculture is the world's largest provider of jobs and employs more than 1.3 billion people.

Transforming agriculture into a more productive, sustainable, competitive and efficient sector requires a transfer of modern knowledge and skills to develop talent in agriculture. It means upgrading and retraining the current agricultural workforce. It means retaining people with skills. It means attracting new staff and **expanding the range of career opportunities** available in the **agriculture-food-nutrition-environment nexus**. Above all, it means creating incentives and campaigns that encourage young people to consider agriculture as one of the best career options.

Youth involvement is essential to increase global agricultural productivity.

Formative agricultural education, whether through direct involvement in agricultural practices with emphasis on environmental sustainability or through entrepreneurial work, increases rural youth's connection to the local environment, their perception of agriculture's impact on the local community, and their aspirations for a career in agriculture.

Stakeholder investments in education that engages young people in sustainable production methods and provides opportunities for greater market engagement and innovation, can help young people consider agriculture as a career option.

To stimulate interest in agriculture, a broader shift in young people's experiences and changes at the national and international levels are needed. Given the demographic diversity of youth, both urban and rural youth should be involved as partners in decision-making at the local and national levels.

What is encouraging is that many examples of initiatives targeting rural youth have emerged in recent years that have highlighted new approaches and methodologies for developing young people's capacity to engage in agriculture. Many of these initiatives have considerable potential to be adapted to different contexts and to be scaled up.

It is important to ensure that lessons learned from these initiatives are documented and integrated into planning and policy agendas.

Moreover, several studies highlights the important role played by learning outside formal institutions, such as informal learning from parents and peers, for rural youth in acquiring both traditional and new knowledge and skills, and the need to strengthen links between informal, nonformal and formal learning as part of lifelong learning.



Lesson 4: Rural Development in Europe

The **EU Youth Strategy 2019-27** wants young people to engage and become active citizens, involved in democracy and society.

The strategy focuses on three main areas of action: **Engage, Connect and Empower**, and set **11 European youth goals**.

Goal 6 is "Advancing Rural Youth: create conditions that enable young people to realize their potential in rural areas and ensure equality for youth in urban and rural settings."

Specific objectives of this European Youth Goal include ensure the decentralization of activities carried out by, for and with young people in order to support their inclusion and benefit local communities.

Establishing a positive image of rural areas and ensuring the protection of rural traditions are other important goals.

Exchanges with rural European stakeholders have identified the changes needed to close existing gaps and make progress toward stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous rural areas, while highlighting the role of young people in achieving these changes.

As Commission **President Ursula von der Leyen** said, "While young people are anxious about the future, they are determined to make it better."

Using their creativity and enthusiasm, rural youth can contribute to the ambitions of the **EU's Vision for Rural Areas** by starting new economic activities that create local jobs.

The development of short supply chains contributes to more sustainable and resilient agribusiness, diversification of rural economies, and the preservation of local traditions.

The vitality of rural life is not only a function of its economy, but is also shaped by the vibrancy of its cultural activities, identity, cohesion and inclusiveness. Therefore, green and digital transitions in rural areas should be equitable and take into account the needs of all rural citizens, including those from disadvantaged groups.

Closing the gender gap, for example, is critical for Europe and requires addressing a variety of issues, from increasing the availability of basic services, to promoting women's employment.



Source: generali.it

Lesson 5: Future Challenges

It is surprising that in many countries where food systems face serious difficulties in providing access to sufficient safe and nutritious food for all, vocational training related to agricultural livelihoods is absent or inadequate.

Existing agricultural training systems are rarely targeted or adapted to young people and do little to reach young women, whose contribution to agricultural systems in many subregions and countries is limited to unpaid domestic work on their husbands' farms. In addition, linkages to research programs, or to informal and traditional security systems for knowledge transfer, are generally not strong, with the result that technologies developed may not be relevant or available for use on small family farms.

Therefore, it becomes critical to ensure that small farmers are connected to markets, that they are able to bargain for their interests through producer organizations, that gender inequality is eliminated and that rural women are empowered, and that rural communities have access to modern technologies, land and financial services.

Skilled young women and men have shown that when given opportunities through inclusive value chains, from input supply, to production, processing, storage, and marketing-they can not only find solutions to feed themselves and their families, but can also help their countries achieve food security and nutrition.

Much more needs to be done.

In particular, much more needs to be done to target young women, who in many rural areas have few prospects for capacity building despite their demonstrated potential to help improve food security and nutrition.

Removing obstacles faced by young women would significantly increase agricultural production and contribute to global food security and nutrition.

Another gap that emerged from the case reviews concerns the need for rigorous evaluations to understand the impact of initiatives on food security and nutrition. This will be necessary to inform adaptation, systematization, and scaling up of successful approaches and to feed into policy and planning processes.

As a matter of fact, given the challenges the world is facing, in terms of food security and nutrition, as well as youth employment, it can be argued that it will not be possible to transform into sustainable food systems and eradicate hunger without all of this happening.



Chapter 2

Social, physical and mental well-being of people against youth poverty



Lesson 1: Sustainable Development Goals

Broadly speaking, poverty that plagues the contemporary world can have different shades.

If we speak of poverty from monetary and economic point of view, we can refer to the concepts of **absolute** and **relative poverty**: the absolute poverty line is considered to be crossed when an individual cannot meet the minimum expenses to lead an acceptable life, usually defined through reference to a “basket of goods”; relative poverty refers to the standards in force in a social group by which the level of well-being is attested.

Fighting poverty has always been a key objective in EU social policy. However, 21% of the European population is still experiencing economic and social hardship, particularly in southern and eastern European countries.

Through agreements among member countries, the EU has laid the legal foundations and tools on which to build action to reduce economic and social hardship. One of the first initiatives in this regard was the **Europe 2020 strategy**, proposed in 2010 by the European Commission. A strategy that hoped to achieve by 2020, **5 goals for development**.

Area of intervention	Objective
Employment	✓ 75% employed between 20 and 64 years old
Research and Development	✓ 3% of EU GDP in research and development
Climate Change and Energy	✓ -20% greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 ✓ 20% energy from renewable sources ✓ +20% energy efficiency
Education	✓ Education Dropout rate below 10% ✓ At least 40% of graduates between 30 and 34 years old
Poverty and Social Exclusion	✓ -20 mln people at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

Despite efforts on the part of the European Union, the Europe 2020 goal, although with clear improvements, has not been fully achieved.

Indeed, there were more than **107 million people at risk of poverty and social exclusion** in European countries in 2019. Still a very high number but reduced by 17.1 million compared to 2005. However, despite a marked improvement, the target that had been set for 2020 still remains far off: from 2010 to 2019 there was a decrease of 10.3 million people in poverty, compared to the desired more than 20 million.

The Agenda 2020 was accompanied by the **UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. The 2030 Agenda is an action agenda for people, planet and prosperity. It incorporates **17 Goals for Sustainable Development** (SDGs).

The SDGs follow up on the achievements of the **Millennium Development Goals** (MDGs), and represent common goals on a set of important development issues. “Common goals” means that they affect all countries and all individuals: no one is excluded from them, nor should they be left behind along the path needed to put the world on the road to sustainability.

- 10. Reduced inequalities
- 11. Sustainable cities and communities
- 12. Responsible consumption and production
- 13. Climate action
- 14. Life below water
- 15. Life on land
- 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions
- 17. Partnerships for the goals



- 1. No poverty
- 2. Zero hunger
- 3. Good health and well-being
- 4. Quality education
- 5. Gender equality
- 6. Clean water and sanitation
- 7. Affordable and clean energy
- 8. Decent work and economic growth
- 9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Source:
public.wmo.int

Why is it necessary for our purpose to speak about SDGs and poverty for socio-professional wellbeing of youth?

“**No poverty**” is the first of our goals to achieve sustainable development by 2030.

We said at the beginning of the introduction to this chapter that poverty nowadays can have several facets, one of which we have not yet paid attention to is educational poverty.

Educational poverty is the condition in which a child or adolescent is deprived of the right to learning in the broadest sense, from cultural and educational opportunities to the right to play. Economic poverty and educational poverty feed off each other.

Thus, we are not only talking about the right to study, but the right to know, learn and experience whose lack negatively affects the individual's experiences.

The goal of this chapter is to understand how educational poverty in the areas of food, food waste, and climate change negatively impacts the lives and health of young people, physically, socially, and psychologically.



Lesson 2: Educational poverty

The concept of educational poverty first appeared in the literature during the 1990s, and has since been taken up by nongovernmental organizations (particularly Save the Children) and governments in shaping policies for children and adolescents.

A child is subject to educational poverty when his or her **right to learn, train, develop skills and competencies, and cultivate his or her aspirations and talents is deprived or compromised**. Thus, it is not merely an impairment of the right to study, but the lack of educational opportunities at its core: from those related to cultural enjoyment to the right to play and sports activities; lack of opportunities that negatively affects the child's growth. Generally concerns children and adolescents living in disadvantaged social contexts, characterized by family hardship, employment insecurity and material deprivation.

Since this is a complex phenomenon, it is not easy to give a synthetic measurement of it. Indeed, educational poverty concerns several dimensions (**cultural opportunities, schooling, social relations, educational activities**) that must be kept in relation to each other.



Source: difesapopolo.it

A useful approach to begin measuring the incidence of educational poverty is to measure levels of absolute poverty with reference to a more or less broad territory, as well as the percentage of people at risk of poverty or exclusion.

These data do not provide a clear "snapshot" of the incidence of educational poverty, but they can help us create a context, knowing that **educational poverty** is a **multidimensional phenomenon** that depends on, among other factors, a situation of material deprivation and social exclusion and **itself is a cause of exclusion and poverty**.

According to performance's results coming from countries and economies that participated in PISA 2018, the most reliable predictor of a child's future success at school – and, in many cases, of access to well-paid and high-status occupations – is his or her family. **Children from low-income and low-educated families usually face many barriers to learning**. Less household wealth often translates into fewer educational resources, such as books, games and interactive learning materials in the home.

Barriers in accessing higher levels of education, may translate into a lack of knowledge about the world that gravitates around the concepts of sustainability and food waste, as well as climate change. They are perceived as irrelevant issues, far removed from the "practicality" of everyday life.

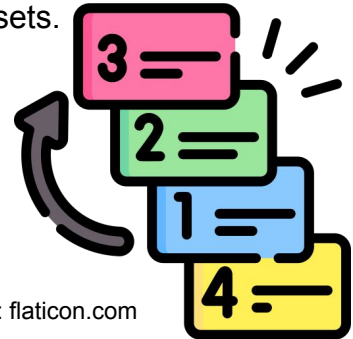
Lesson 3: Global Multidimensional Poverty Index

The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (**MPI**) is an international measure of acute multidimensional poverty covering over 100 developing countries. It complements traditional monetary poverty measures by capturing the acute deprivations in health, education, and living standards that a person faces simultaneously.

The global MPI was developed by **Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative** (OPHI) with the **UN Development Programme** (UNDP). It has been published annually by OPHI and in the UNDP's Human Development Report since 2010.

It is divided into three dimensions of poverty, affecting health, education and living standards.

Each one of these dimensions groups different indicators, holding a specific weight: nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing, assets.

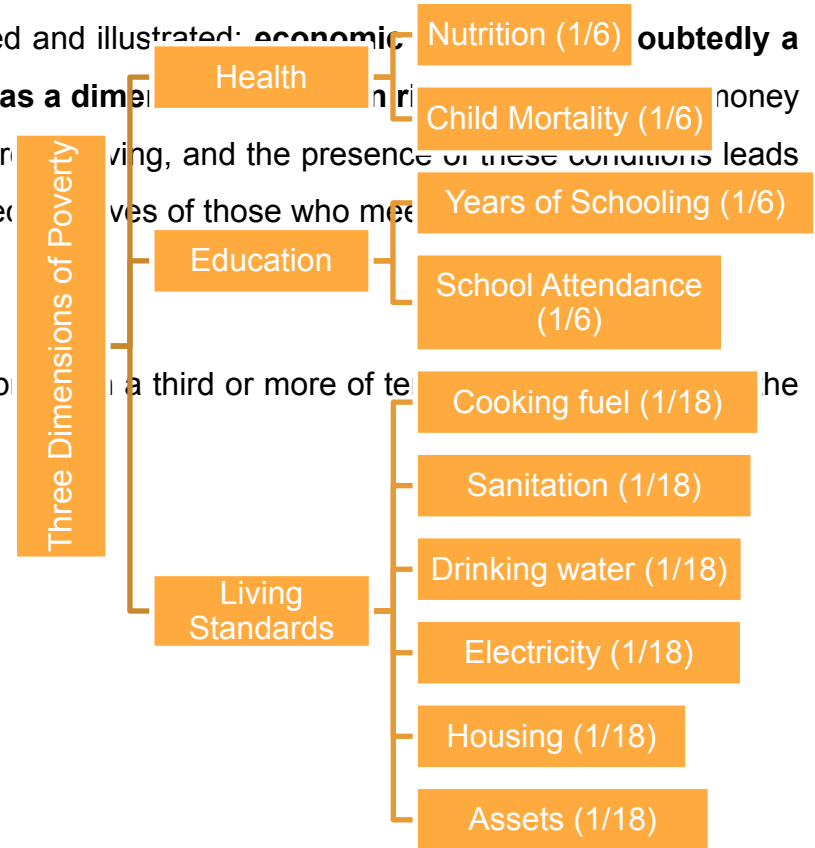


Source: flaticon.com

DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY	INDICATOR	DEPRIVED IF LIVING IN A HOUSEHOLD WHERE...	SDG AREA
Health (1/3)	Nutrition	Any person under 70 years of age for whom there is nutritional information is undernourished .	SDG 2: Zero Hunger
	Child mortality	A child under 18 has died in the household in the five-year period preceding the survey	SDG 3: Health and Well-being
Education (1/3)	Years of schooling	No eligible household member has completed six years of schooling	SDG 4: Quality Education
	School attendance	Any school-aged child is not attending school up to the age at which he/she would complete class 8 (12-13 years).	SDG 4: Quality Education
Living Standards (1/3)	Assets	The household does not own more than one of these assets: radio, TV, telephone, computer, animal cart, bicycle, motorbike, or refrigerator, car or truck.	SDG 1: No Poverty
	Sanitation	The household has unimproved or no sanitation facility or it is improved but shared with other households.	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
	Drinking water	The household's source of drinking water is not safe or safe drinking water is a 30-minute or longer walk from home, roundtrip.	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

One element emerges clearly from the way the index is constructed and illustrated: **economic commonality across all dimensions, but it is not made explicit as a dimension**. **Health** **Nutrition (1/6)** **doubtedly a** **Child Mortality (1/6)** **money** **limits access to educational opportunities, leads to reduced standards of living, and the presence of these conditions leads** **Years of Schooling (1/6)** **to lack of social, physical, and mental well-being that is likely to affect the lives of those who meet** **the long run.**

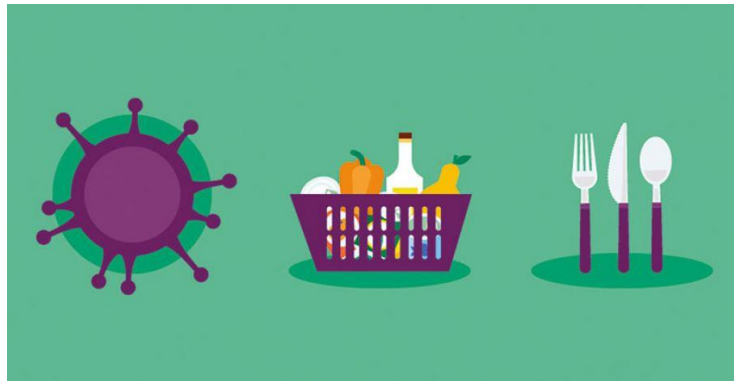
The MPI assesses poverty at the individual level. If a person is deprived in a third or more of the indicators, the global MPI identifies them as 'MPI poor'.



We see, moreover, that health and the indicator "nutrition" occupy the first place among the dimensions of the MPI, being a cause and consequence of poverty.

However, putting aside the poverty-related element, not having access to educational opportunities means not being able to be aware of what is needed to get out of a condition of malnutrition, how to optimize food consumption and consciously purchase.

Moreover, two years of the **Covid-19 pandemic** and, more recently, the **Russian invasion of Ukraine and subsequent war**, and the **energy crisis** due to the shutdown of gas exports from Russia, **exacerbate an already very alarming food security situation**, with unprecedented spikes in global commodity prices as well as in input costs, including energy and fertilizer, and a growing number of food insecure and undernourished people.



Source: eufic.org

Lesson 4: Health and Well-being of youth

How and why can combating food waste and educating people to consume less and better help the well-being of young people?

So far we have analyzed the relationship between poverty, health and education: it is a strong, bilateral relationship in which each element influences another and is influenced in turn. Eradicating poverty is certainly an ambitious goal, but let's try to take it one step at a time. What can we do concretely, in our daily life, to lower poverty levels and improve the well-being of young people when it comes to food waste, food security, climate change and sustainable lifestyles?

Combating **food waste** is now an ethical imperative because food waste has strong **environmental and economic repercussions**.

Suffice it to say that in order to produce the food that will not be consumed, natural resources are unnecessarily used and emissions to the atmosphere equal to 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, and waste is generated.

Redistribution of food going to waste can also contribute to improving the nutritional status of socially fragile segments of the population.



Click to watch the video [WASTE NO FOOD](#)

EUFIC is a non-profit organisation that provides engaging science-based information to inspire and empower healthier and more sustainable food and lifestyle choices.

«We believe in a world where people live a healthier life because they know how to.»

Waste less and consciously consume to protect the environment and the world we live in.

As we saw from the previous video, **wasting food means wasting land, water and labor that went into producing it.**

Waste occurs also at the distribution level: many foods that are close to expiration or have aesthetic imperfections (spots on the skin or dents) are sometimes not even offered for sale, or when they are, they are discarded by buyers.

This is a behavior in which consumers can improve, and sometimes distribution is already helping in this regard when it offers less "beautiful" and near-expiration products at cheaper prices.

Although in the short term reducing food waste seems to have no impact, in reality it can allow us to respond to ethical, social, economic and psychological needs: wasting less means saving money and not feeding a production and consumption system that is close to collapse, it means placing a different value on the resources at our disposal and understanding to what extent our consumption is dictated by a real need, knowing that we have adopted a sustainable lifestyle allows us to feel well-being on a psychological level because we recognize that we are part of the solution and not part of the problem.



Moreover, each person's youth transition and their relationship with food systems is uniquely shaped by specific intersections with multiple factors including **gender, class, wealth, health, location** and **intergenerational relationships**.

From a development perspective, today's youth generation is on the front line: it will have to cope with the effects of environmental and climate change, which are likely to accelerate and intensify during their lifetimes and those of their children.

Since new generations occupy the first places in shaping tomorrow's world and are also the first to suffer the heaviest consequences of what has been done so far, it is necessary to reconsider their relationship with the food system understood not only as a system of food production and consumption, but also as waste disposal, recycling, policies on sustainability, and anything else in between.

“The generational approach should help food systems researchers and development practitioners to understand that today's youth generation is historically situated as a “generation in itself,” facing a unique and unprecedented conjunction of historical processes which is creating novel opportunities and challenges that are conditioned by uncertainty and risk.”

(Glover, Sumberg 2020)

Lesson 5: Waste less...in practice!

Having analyzed the link between educational poverty, welfare and food waste, we would like to provide the tools to promote youth well-being when it comes to food waste and possible solutions. What can we do to waste less and be more sensitive to the issues analyzed in this chapter?

It is true that, unfortunately, what we do is not enough: certainly, these issues require action at the institutional level, and some steps have already been taken (ad hoc laws at the national level, the adoption of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork strategy), but without a doubt each of us can give his/her/their own contribution.

Paying attention to what you eat (and what you waste),
being physically active, and learning more about your food and yourself
can help you reach a more sustainable lifestyle.



Change starts with small daily gestures

Without intending to deliver an exhaustive list, but with the goal of providing suggestions to start wasting less and coping with food waste in our daily actions, we will provide insights – let's say “**food for thoughts**” – into how less educational poverty and more education in nutrition field means promoting well-being not only for young people.

At the end of this module, a useful exercise might be to pay attention to the gestures we make during our days that allow us not to waste food, while also contributing to our **physical and mental health**.

There are a number of apps – **Too Good To Go**, to name one – that allow us to benefit from leftover food from supermarkets, bakeries and restaurants, buying at lower prices and generating new jobs in a sector – that of food waste – that would otherwise risk being deleterious to economic and social well-being.

Keeping track of waste in the home or office can be another useful way to reverse the trend and begin to consume more consciously: writing down in a diary the food wasted and consumed in a week or in a day can help us understand how to avoid waste and "reuse" leftovers.

Do you think there are other ways – also at institutional level – to raise awareness about food waste and sustainability? Do you know about any good practice at national or international level?



Activities

Activity 1

TRUE or FALSE

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Agriculture is the world's largest supplier of jobs, employing more than 1.3 billion people. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 2. Formative agricultural education for young people is not useful for increasing global agricultural productivity. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 3. Stakeholder investments can help young people consider agriculture as a career option. | TRUE | FALSE |
| 4. Only rural youth should be involved as partners in decision-making | TRUE | FALSE |
| 5. A key role is also played by the informal learning. | TRUE | FALSE |

Activity 2

Which of the following is NOT true:

1. Young women are often constrained by heavy domestic workloads.
2. Teenage pregnancy and early marriage prevent many young women from participating in education and training.
3. Young women already have the opportunity to use their knowledge and skills.

Activity 3

Select ALL the correct sentences:

1. In many countries providing access to sufficient safe and nutritious food for all is very easy.
2. Existing agricultural training systems do little to reach young women.
3. It becomes critical to ensure that small farmers have access to modern technologies, land and financial services.
4. Skilled young women and men, when given opportunities, find only solutions to feed themselves and their families.
5. Much more needs to be done to target young women.

Activity 4

YES or NO

1. Advancing Rural Youth is one of the goals of the EU Youth Strategy 2019-27.	YES	NO
2. The protection of rural traditions is not included among the Youth Goals.	YES	NO
3. Rural youth cannot contribute to start new economic activities.	YES	NO
4. The development of short supply chains is important for a sustainable agribusiness.	YES	NO
5. A key issue for Europe is closing the gender gap.	YES	NO



Activity 5

Indicate the number of **goals foreseen by the Europe 2020 strategy**:

1. Employment, Research and Development, Climate Change and Energy, Education, Poverty and Social Exclusion.
2. Climate Change and Energy, Digitalisation, Employment, Development, Food Security.
3. Employment, Research, Development, Education, Poverty and Social Exclusion.
4. Climate Change and Energy, Education, Poverty and Social Exclusion, Digitalisation, Employment.



Activity 6

Looking at the wheel of Sustainable Development Goals, name at least 5 of them.

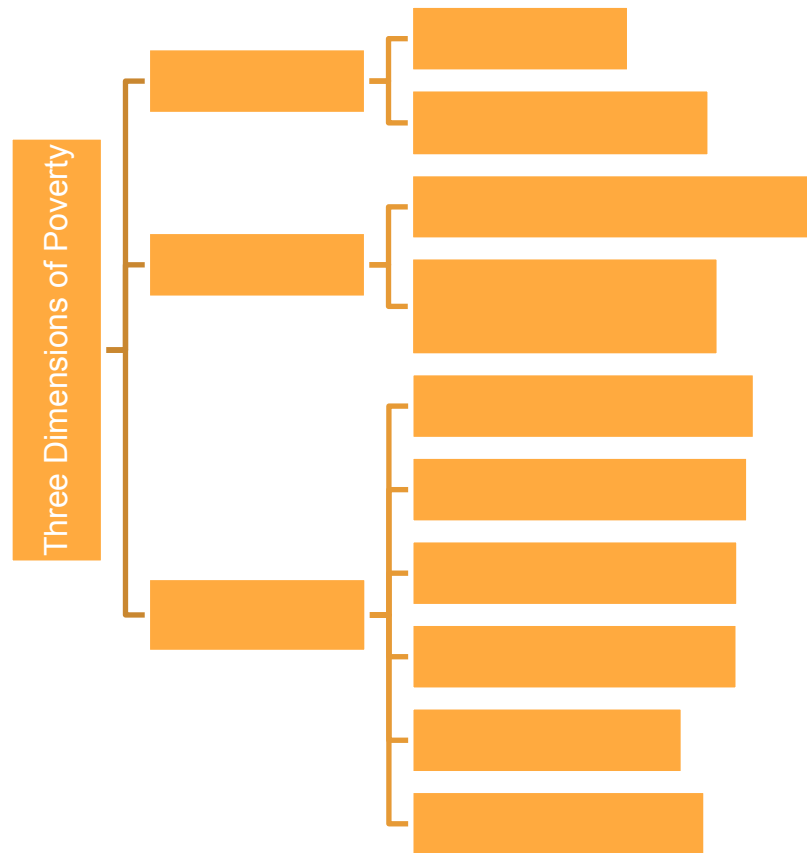
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____



Activity 7

Given the dimensions of poverty and indicators, complete the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index's scheme.

Health	Education	Assets	Housing	Nutrition
Child Mortality	School Attendance	Cooking Fuel	Sanitation	Electricity
Drinking Water	Living Standards	Years of Schooling		



Activity 8

Only one of the following statements is correct. Which one?

1. Convenience formats are always preferred over other formats
2. It is essential to plan family spending more frequently by avoiding massive purchases at one time
3. Once the date by which it is preferable to consume the product is exceeded, you must throw it away
4. Storing the groceries, foods purchased more recently, with an earlier expiration date, should be placed in plain sight
5. Keeping a “Food Waste Diary” help us to keep trace of food waste but it could be a waste of paper



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