

# WHAT ARE PEOPLE'S BASIC NEEDS?

Now that students understand the dynamics of population growth, they can examine the impacts of population growth on the world around them. In Unit 4, they will learn that people have basic needs: food, water, shelter, and energy. People also have basic human rights, such as receiving an education, being treated fairly by others, and living in a safe place free of fear. As part of the human family, students should recognize that not all people have their basic needs met or enjoy basic human rights. Still, this is a goal that we, as global citizens, need to work toward.



Before beginning these activities, go over the following information with your students:

Every person has needs and wants. A **need** is something essential for our survival. In order to live, people need food, water, shelter, and energy. A **want** is something we would like to have but could live without. Many of us have all of our basic needs met and take these things for granted. But in many parts of the world and even here in this country (perhaps in our community), there are people who do not have enough to eat, have no home, or lack running water or fuel to heat their homes and cook their food.

Often people must leave their homeland, the place they spent their childhood, because the land can no longer meet their needs. If the population has grown too large or too quickly, there may not be enough food to eat, trees to build homes and burn for fuel, or fresh water to drink for everyone in the area. Sometimes people move to another place because they cannot find jobs or express their ideas freely. And sometimes people leave their homes to escape war and crime. Many people around the globe lack basic human rights such as the right to receive an education, be treated fairly by others, and live in a safe place.

There are many things that each of us can do to help people whose basic needs are not being met. We can help to share our resources when we have more than enough and volunteer our time to help others.