



# Youth on hunger.

A market research surveying the attitudes and knowledge that today's youth have regarding the hunger issue.

**The  
Hunger  
Project.**

**SWEDEN**

# What we have asked and why.

In this survey we have asked approximately 1000 members of today's Swedish youth regarding their attitudes and knowledge regarding hunger. We wanted to find out how much they know about the hunger situation around the world and how important they feel that this question is compared to other development areas.

We've let the youth group themselves propose which changes they feel should occur on a global, national and individual level to solve the hunger issue. They have also been given the opportunity to tell us who they think should be responsible for decreasing hunger, and who they think have the biggest chance to succeed with making the necessary changes.

## **The youths' attitude is crucial for Agenda 2030**

To achieve the goals set by Agenda 2030, the hunger issue would need to be solved in 10 years' time. The

people who are aged between 16-25 years old today are crucial for this to happen. Their attitude and knowledge about the current development issues, which are presented in this report, are therefore indications to what future we are heading towards. Previous studies conducted by The Youth Barometer in Sweden about Generation Z shows that the youths' perception of the future grows dimmer, but that they still feel that their ability to change society has increased (*The Youth Barometer, 2019, "Generation Z"*). In this report, we want to find out if these findings still hold true, specifically regarding the hunger issue.

## About the survey.

**Performed by:** The Youth Barometer

**Commissioned by:** The Hunger Project Sweden

**How the survey was conducted:** Online survey

**Target group:** Youths in Sweden between the ages of 16-25

**Field period:** 8th of April – 17th of April 2020

**Interviews conducted:** 1005





# Summary of the results.



## Positive about solving hunger

70% of the people surveyed believed that the hunger issue could be completely solved, and 1/7 believe that the goal is within reach. Guys are more likely to believe that we are close to solving the hunger issue, while girls believe that we have a longer road to walk before this.



## The environment is more important than hunger

6 out of 10 believe that the environment is the most important development issue on a global scale. 70% of all the girls believed this question to be the most important one. The hunger issue ranks much lower compared to the other development issues, at number 8 out of 9 from the available options. 3 out of 10 say that the hunger issue is the most important development issue.



## Redistribution of resources, foreign aid and engagement will decrease hunger

When it is up to the people who took part of the survey to answer how the hunger problem should be solved, 40% believe that a redistribution of resources, foreign aid and grants are the best solutions available. How much the individuals can contribute with depends on how much money earn or have disposable. This reasoning is also applied on a national level, the countries with the most resources should give to the ones with the least. Other recurring answers is to help people get educated, change the current food supply chains and making countries cooperate on a global level.

## Non-profit organizations as important sources for information



When today's youth are looking for information about different development issues, every other girl says that they turn to non-profit organizations as a source for this information. Only a fifth of the guys say that they do the same. As a whole, the group prefers to turn to scientists and government agencies for reliable information.

## The government's responsibility for solving hunger



60% say that it is the government and the public sector's responsibility to solve the hunger issue. But it is believed that international organizations like the UN and EU has a better shot at doing this. Individuals and non-profits are placed low on the list both with regards to who should take responsibility and who stands the best chance of solving hunger, while companies are perceived to have significantly better odds when it comes to contributing towards a world free from hunger.

## The youths' knowledge about hunger proves lacking



When it comes to questions that specifically tests the knowledge of today's youth, the answers prove less impressive. The answers given are distributed rather evenly between the three alternatives given, indicating a big uncertainty about the answer to the questions. Not even the people who put reducing world hunger as the most important development issue seem to have too much knowledge in the subject.

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*I believe in good cooperation between different countries, governments and regions. That those that have help people who don't. I truly believe that this will pay off for those who give as well. My reasoning is that those who didn't have any food, when they do get food will become stronger and then give back. I think we all would win on being generous.*

Girl, 17 years old.



# Which development issues do the youth consider important?

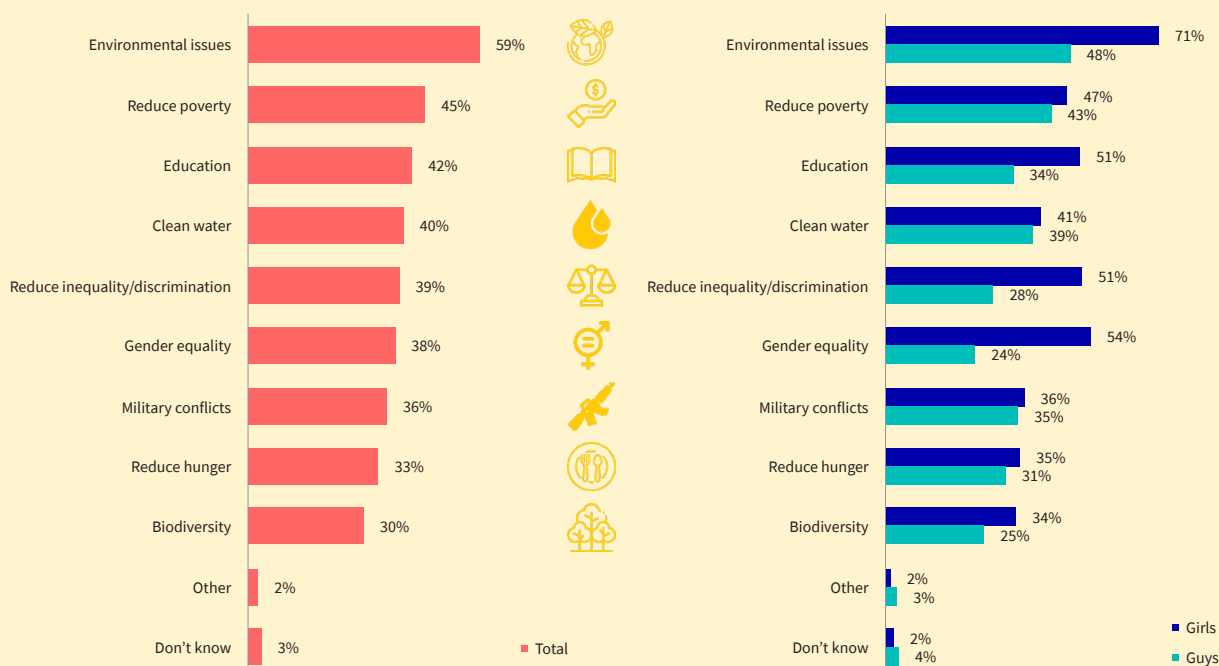
Recently conducted surveys with youths between the ages of 16-25 show that the most important political question for them right now is the environment (*The Youth Barometer, 2019, "Generation Z" and Kantar SIFO, 2019, "Young Opinion"*).

In this section of the report, we are going to find out if the same trend can be found for development issues on a global scale. We also want to find out where today's youth gather information regarding these issues.

## QUESTION 1

## Which of the following global issues are most important to you?

**Six out of** ten believe that the environment is the most important issue on a global scale. Girls have more key-issues than guys, but an approximately equal amount believe that decreasing hunger is the most important issue on a global scale. The biggest difference between the genders can be found in issues regarding inequality between the genders, environment and discrimination.





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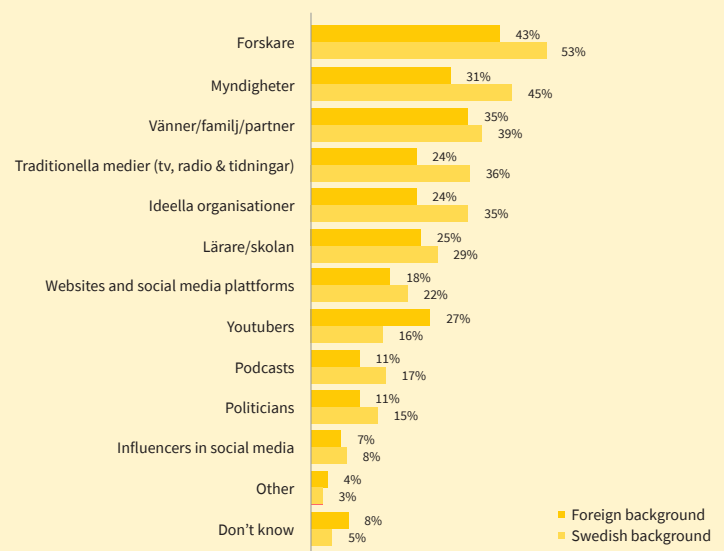
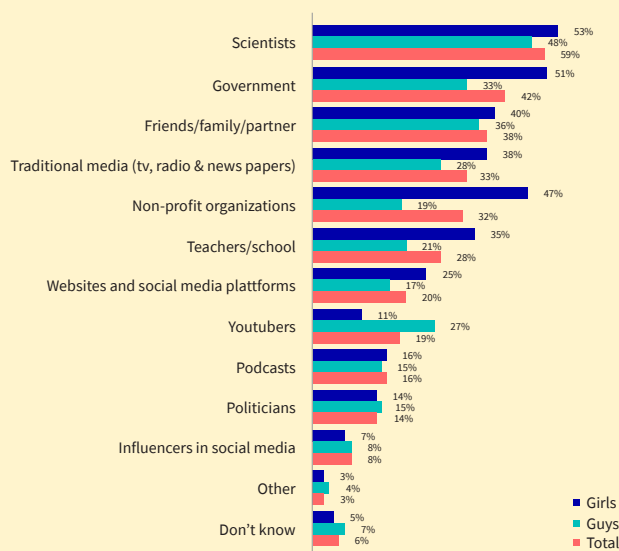
*We need politicians who think globally and not only care about their own country, and that we try to help other people in need through economic measures.*

Girl, 18 years old.

## QUESTION 2

# Where do you gather information regarding development issues that you're interested in?

**Girls are 100%** more likely than guys to turn to non-profit organizations for information about the development issues that they are interested in. Girls are ranking non-profit organizations as the third most important source for information when they want to learn more about development issues. Scientists and government agencies are overall the most likely source for the youth to turn to when they are looking for information.



# What do the youth know about the global hunger situation?

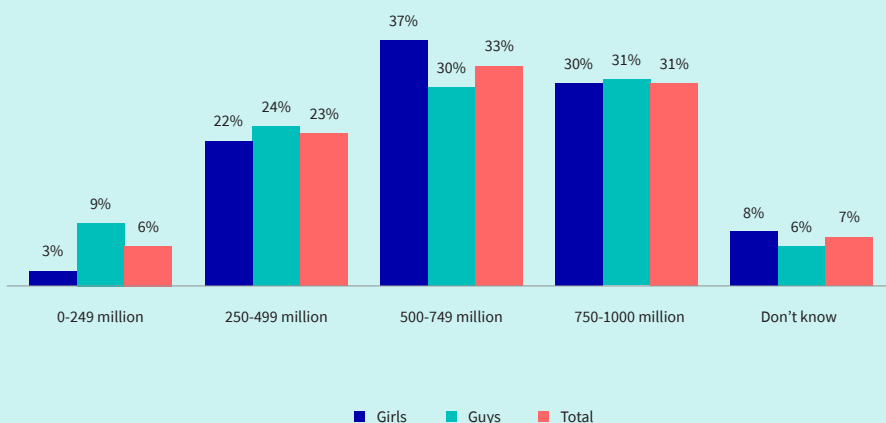
We Effect has conducted a series of surveys these last few years to find out how many people know about the Global Targets set by Agenda 2030. According to the latest survey in 2019 (*We Effect, 2019, "Only half of the Swedish population know about the Global Targets"*) about half of the people surveyed knew something about the Global Targets, but no one could mention anything about the target "No Hunger".

There are 690 million people today living in hunger, a number that has been rising these last five years. At the end of 2020, as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic, approximately 130 million are estimated to end up living in a state of hunger (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World"). In this section, we are going to find out what today's youth know about the global hunger situation by asking a series of overarching question, all stemming from, at the time of the survey, the most recent report about hunger from the UN (FAO, 2019, "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World").

## QUESTION 3

## How many people around the world do you believe live in hunger?

Even though very few people answered 'Unsure/don't know,' the fact that the answers were so spread out serves as an indication that the youths' knowledge is lacking in this question. A third are answering correctly, but that doesn't mean that everyone who did this knew the answer. As previously mentioned, the spread of answers indicates the opposite.



### CORRECT ANSWER:

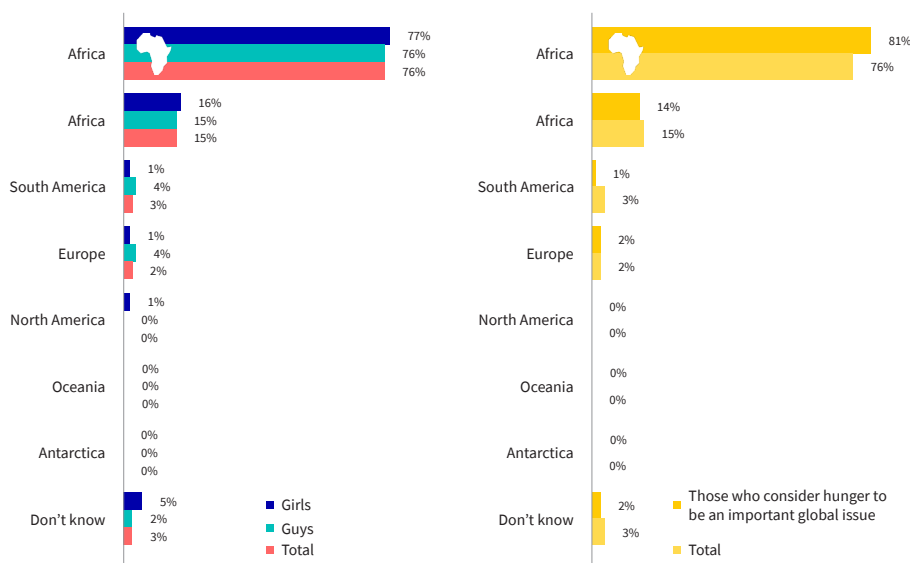
Hunger is defined as an uncomfortable or painful feeling caused by not getting enough nutrition from one's food consumption. For April 2020, when this survey was conducted, about **822 million** people answered that they were living in a state of hunger. In the latest report about hunger from the UN (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World") this number has been corrected to **690 million people**. Contrary to this perceived decrease in numbers, the hunger around the world has actually been increasing for about five years in a row. A huge influx of newly available data has necessitated the previous approximate number to be lowered.



QUESTION 4

# In which continent do you believe most people are living in hunger?

**Three out of four** answered that they believed Africa to be the continent with most people living in hunger, which is a belief shared by even more young people who believe that the hunger question is an important development issue. This is the question where today's youth seemed most certain about the answer. In this case they are wrong – most people who are living with hunger are actually living in Asia. On the other hand, Africa has the highest percentage of people living in hunger.



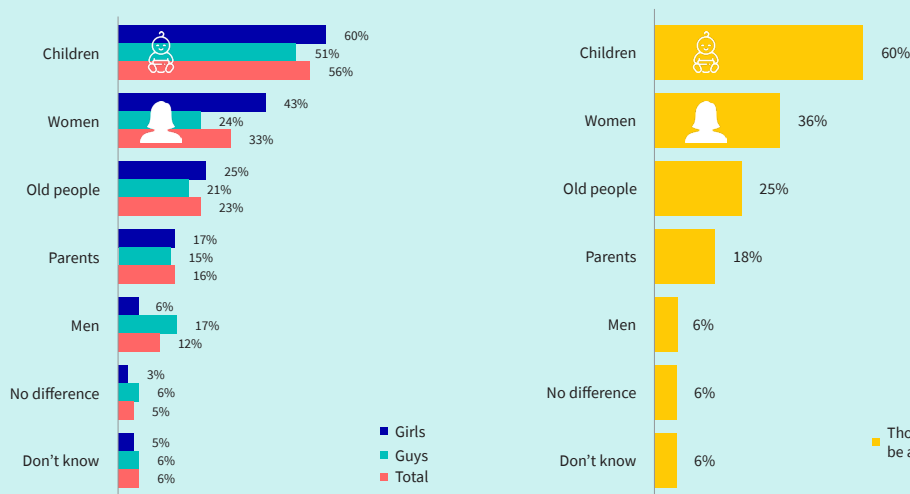
## CORRECT ANSWER:

381 million people, about 55% of the people living in hunger, are in **Asia**. Africa is in second place, where 250 million people are living in hunger. Africa is also the continent with the highest percentage of people living in hunger. One in every five Africans are living in hunger, compared to every eleventh Asian (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World").

QUESTION 5

# Which one of the following groups of people do you think has the least

**Girls as a** group are more likely to believe that children and women are the two groups of people with the least chance of eating their fill of food. The ones who answered that they view hunger as a key development issue tend to believe to a bigger degree that kids and women have the least chance of eating enough food.



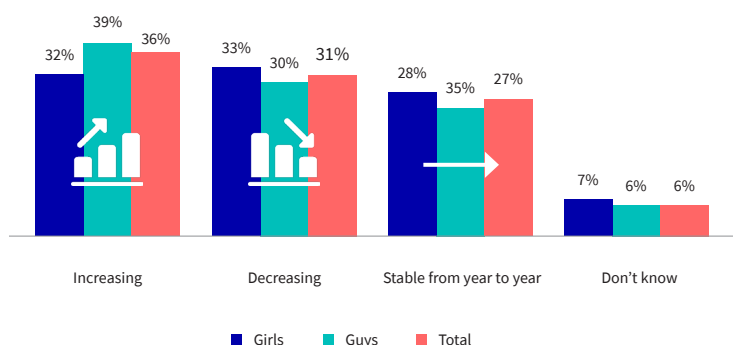
## CORRECT ANSWER:

A big part of the problems we are facing globally with regards to poverty and hunger stems from the unequal societal and economical position that women have compared to men. 60% of the people who are living in hunger are **women** (WFP USA, <https://www.wfpusa.org/women-are-hungrier-infographic/>). **Children** are also especially vulnerable, where every year about 3 million children who are under five years old die due to malnutrition.

QUESTION 6

# What do you believe is the current trend when it comes to world hunger?

**Most of the** respondents say that the world hunger is increasing, but the differences in responses are so small that it seems to be a difficult question to answer. The variety of answers indicate that today's youth doesn't have a clear picture if hunger is increasing, decreasing or remain unchanged on a year to year basis.



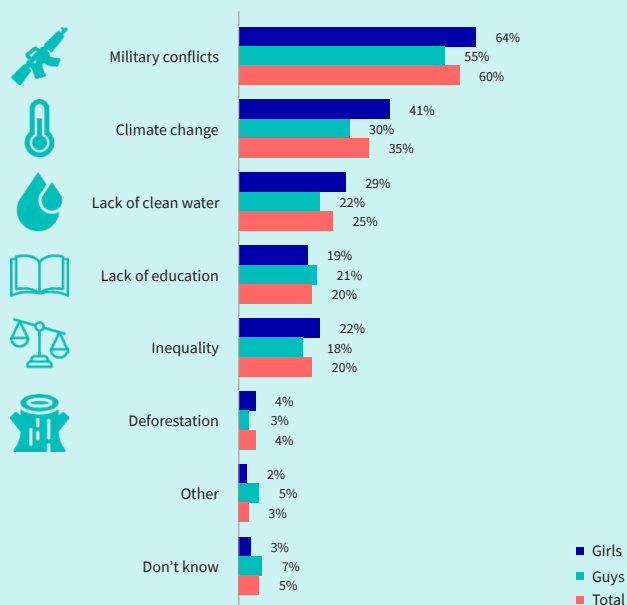
## CORRECT ANSWER:

The last few decades we've seen positive changes regarding the amount of people living in hunger. Looking from year 2000, the amount of people living in hunger has almost decreased with 100 million people, which indicates that hunger is something that can truly be abolished on a global scale. Sadly, this trend is now moving in the wrong direction. **The world hunger has been increasing** these past five years and has reached a level that is similar to the one we saw only a decade ago. The amount of people living in hunger is also expected to increase dramatically as a result of Covid-19 (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World").

QUESTION 7

# What do you think are the major reasons behind the increase in world hunger?

**The majority believes** that hunger has increased as a result of on-going military conflicts. The second most popular answer was that the increase was a result of climate change. A few more girls are choosing these two answers, while guys tend to be more uncertain or believe that there might be another reason than the ones listed.



## CORRECT ANSWER:

**Climate change, military conflicts and an increase in food-prices** are the main reasons to why we are seeing an increase in hunger around the world. Climate change is affecting rain-patterns and the length of agricultural seasons, and extreme climate shifts like drought and floods also help in creating food insecurity. Military conflicts result in destroyed infrastructure and food systems, which results in people succumbing to acute hunger. Economic downturns lead to an increased rate of unemployment and poverty, which in turn leads to an increase in hunger. Another big factor is how expensive nutritious food is. (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World").

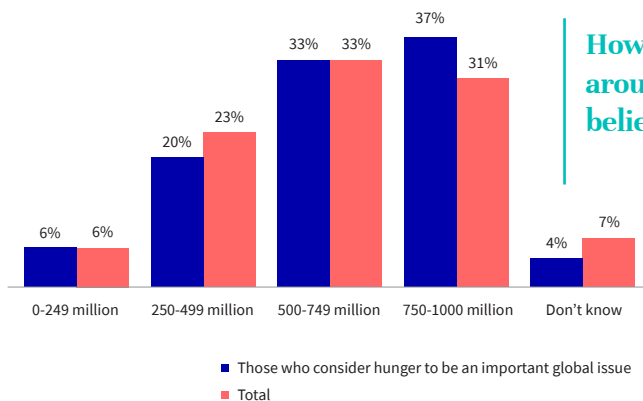


COMPARISON

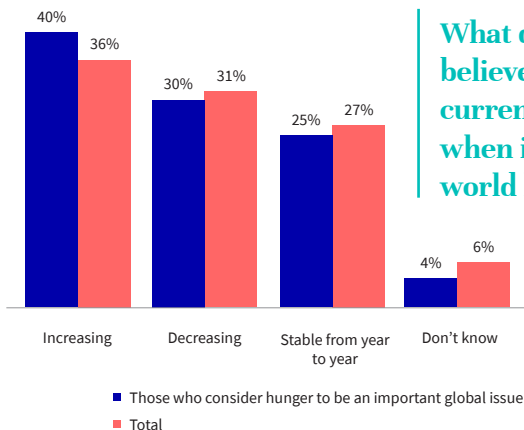
# Is the attitude and knowledge regarding hunger affected by the sense of relevance for the subject?

**We couldn't find** a strong connection between seeing world hunger as an important global issue and knowing a lot about the subject, even if some minor differences could be seen depending on what you answered to the first question.

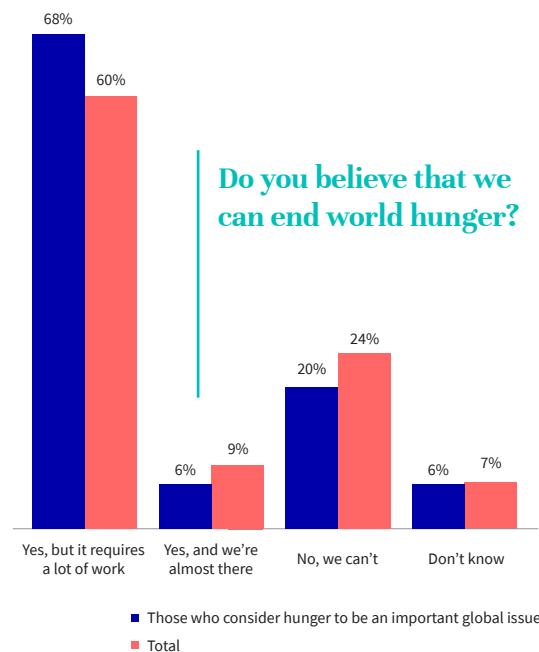
How many people around the world do you believe live in hunger?



What do you believe is the current trend when it comes to world hunger?



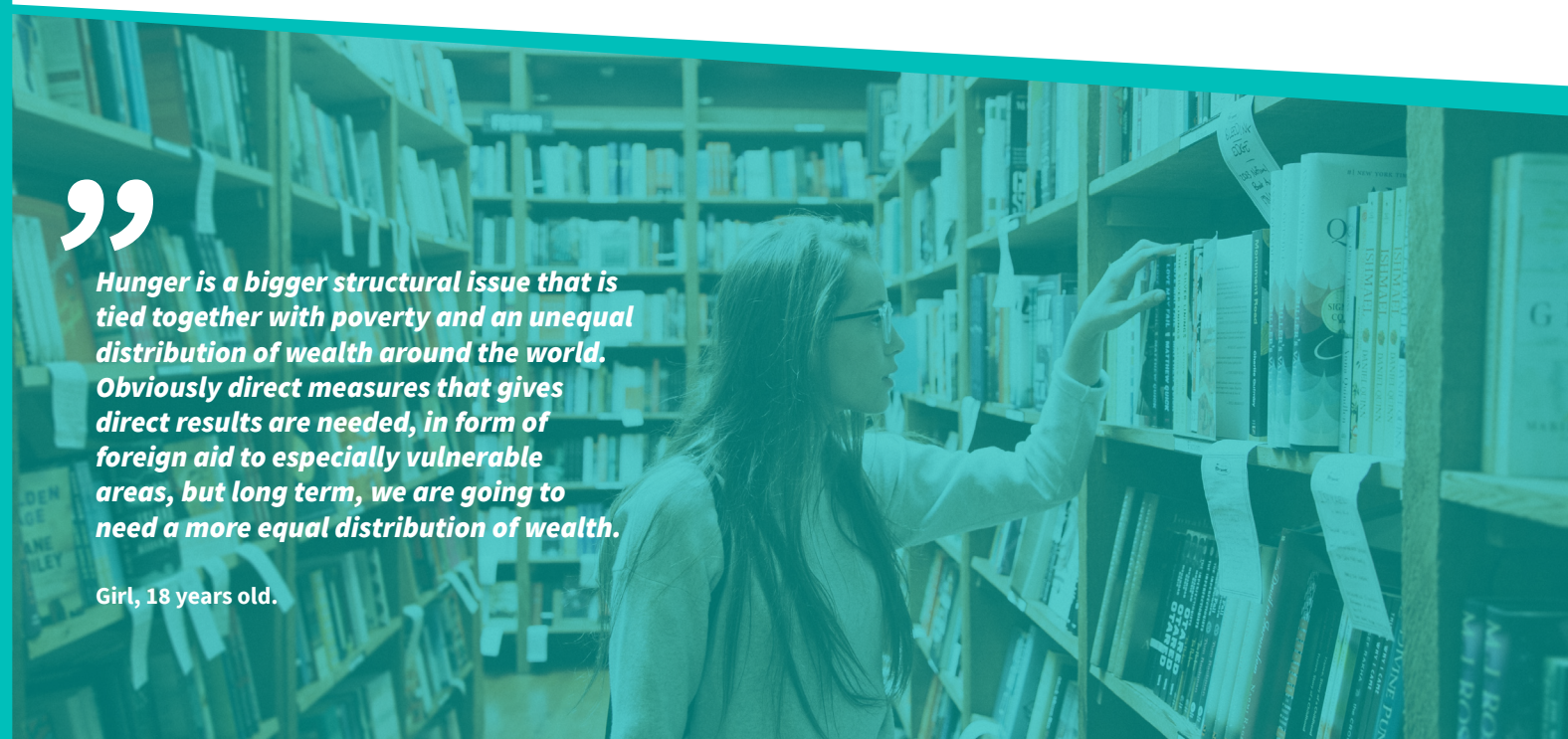
Do you believe that we can end world hunger?



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*Hunger is a bigger structural issue that is tied together with poverty and an unequal distribution of wealth around the world. Obviously direct measures that gives direct results are needed, in form of foreign aid to especially vulnerable areas, but long term, we are going to need a more equal distribution of wealth.*

Girl, 18 years old.



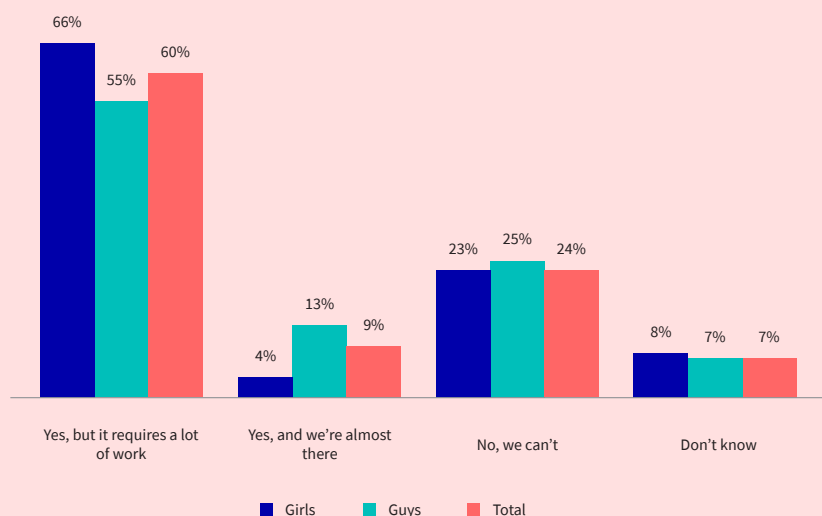
# Do today's youth believe that we can end world hunger?

All of the UN's member nations have agreed on ending hunger to the year 2030. That is one of the goals that is a part of the Global Goals in Agenda 2030. But will we reach this? These last four years has seen an increase in hunger after a long term, steady decrease and has now reached numbers that we saw a decade ago (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, 2020, "State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World"). We are going to find out in this section if today's youth believe that world hunger can be ended and if so, what needs to be done.

## QUESTION 8

### Do you believe that we can end world hunger completely?

**Almost 2 out** of 3 of the respondents believe that global hunger can be ended, but say that it will require a lot of work. Guys are more optimistic than girls when it comes to believing that we are close to reaching the goal of ending global hunger. Girls are also optimistic that global hunger can be ended since two thirds believe it to be possible, but that it requires a lot of hard work to get there.



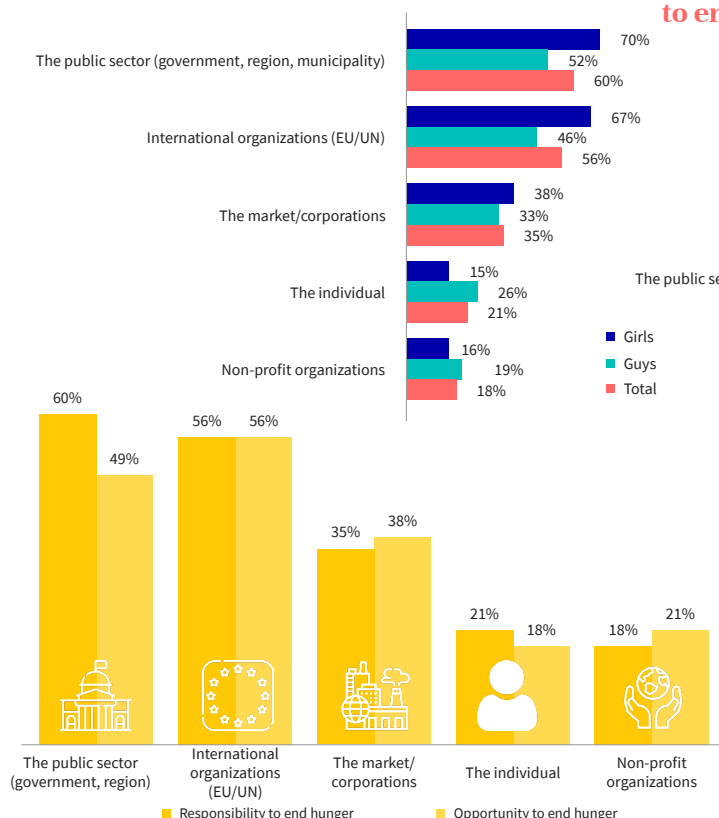


## QUESTION 9

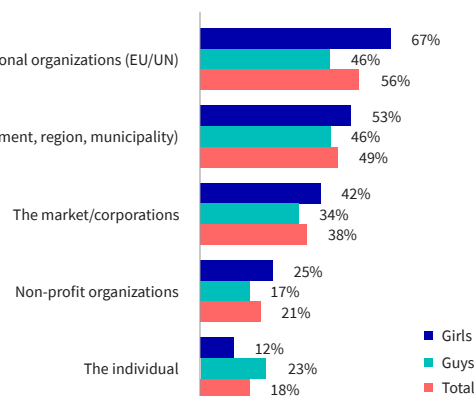
# Who has the most responsibility versus the greatest opportunity to end world hunger.

**Girls are more** likely to believe that it is the public sector and big international organizations that both have the most responsibility and the greatest opportunity to end world hunger. Guys tend to rely more on the individual, compared to girls.

## Most responsibility to end hunger.



## Greatest opportunity to end hunger.



**International organizations are** considered to have the greatest opportunities to end hunger. However, NGOs and corporations are considered to have a bigger chance compared to their responsibility in ending world hunger.

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*I think we need to view the world as ONE place instead of focusing so much on different countries, dividing the resources we have as evenly as is possible all over the world.*

Guy, 25 years old.



## QUESTION 10

# What do you believe needs to be done to end world hunger?

**The youths' reply** to this question is varied, but we can see some trends. The majority proposes that solutions can be found on a global level, by redistributing the resources in a more fair way, provide foreign aid in countries that are suffering from hunger, that nations should cooperate more, making education more equal and accessible, and that the agricultural processes and conditions should be improved. Some of the respondents are instead pointing to your own personal responsibility, like changing the way we consume food and patterns of consumption, and that individuals should help NGO's working with the hunger issue by donating and being more engaged.

## CHANGES ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS

## Donations and engagement (11%)

To give of what you have, either if it is time or money, is viewed as an important factor to end world hunger. Assistance and aid is viewed to be good, but something that is also needed and important according to the respondents is doing the work in the fields if possible.

## Changed attitude towards consumption (3%)

A changed mindset regarding consumption is suggested as a way of ending hunger. That the people with a high standard of living shouldn't demand more but instead strive for moderation and balance. An example given for how they could achieve this is through lesser or at least more moderate consumption.

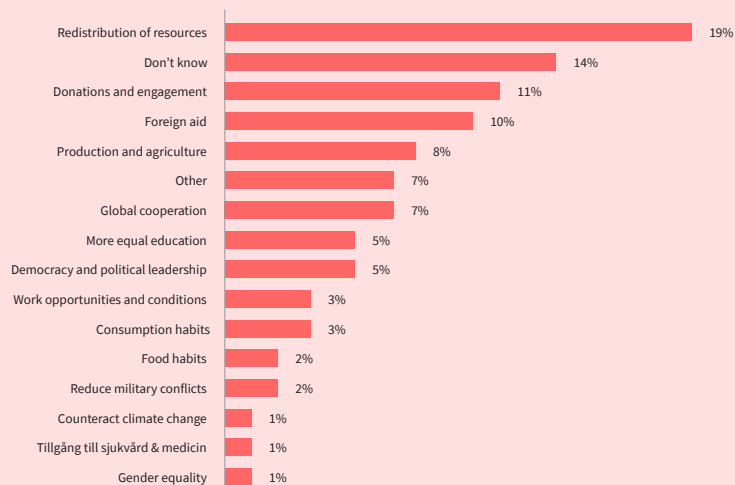
## Food habits (2%)

For some of today's youth, to change one's food habits is a way to work towards a world free from hunger. A part of this is to have a vegan lifestyle, or to eat less meat, since this would also impact the amount of resources needed in the production of food. Beyond only changing what you eat, they believe that a way to achieve this goal is to not overconsume and waste the resources.

## CHANGES ON A GLOBAL SCALE

## Redistribution of resources (19%)

Every fifth person believes that the most efficient thing in the fight against hunger would be a redistribution of resources. The percentage of taxes and aid should depend on how much money one makes or how much assets one possess, both on a individual but also on a national level.



## Foreign aid (10%)

Foreign aid is believed to be an important part in the fight against hunger in the affected countries, but there should exist an oversight function to make sure that the money will go to where it is earmarked. Some people suggest that an alternative to monetary foreign aid would be to actively work with education.

## Production and agriculture (8%)

Some people mention the importance of food production, whether the produced food stays in the country and how the connection between export and internal needs look in the country. Looking at the resources in the countries especially affected by hunger, the access to clean drinking water seems to be a key issue.

## Global cooperation (7%)

According to some, it is important to make sure that national borders don't limit the fight against hunger. A way to achieve this would be through engaged organizations and politicians taking the lead and creating new norms.

## More equal education (5%)

Everyone, especially girls, should have access to education regardless of where they live in the world. More educated people would lead to a decrease in the amount of people living in poverty and hunger, according to some.

## Democracy and political Leadership (5%)

Some talk about the importance of clear, political leadership in the countries where a big share of the people living in hunger. More democracy and less corruption are viewed as key factors.

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***I believe that we need to decrease the child mortality rate so that people don't have so many kids. In that way the parents can give their kids enough food for the day. More sex-education is needed so that people can learn the consequences of sex which in turn will hopefully lead to people having less kids.***

Girl, 16 years old.

## What does this all mean?

**A lot of hope can be taken from this survey. A majority of the respondents believe that hunger can be ended. 60% believe that there still is a lot of work left that has to be done, while 10% believe that we are close to achieving this goal. This is where The Hunger Project is perfectly aligned with today's youth – hunger can be ended. Hunger isn't primarily about access to food – there is enough food to feed the world. World hunger is about an uneven distribution of resources and neglect of human rights. The right to education, decent work conditions, access to water, equality, democratic governance to name a few.**

Sadly, things could be better when looking at where we are today with regards to ending hunger. Today's youth are uncertain when asked if the world hunger is increasing, decreasing or remaining the same – since the answers are evenly distributed between the alternatives. The fact is that hunger around the world is increasing. As a direct result of the ongoing Corona pandemic, this increase will be even more dramatic during 2020 and the coming years. The amount of people falling into acute hunger is thought to see an increase of 130 million people, which is an increase of almost 20%.

### **Who is responsible for ending world hunger?**

According to today's youth, the responsibility lies primarily with the governments of every nation. Organizations like the UN and EU is also given responsibility to be a part of the solution. And it is true that the world's nations carry the responsibility for ending hunger – that was decided in September 2015 when 193 UN-countries signed on to Agenda 2030, where the second goal is to end hunger by 2030. When it comes to the nations' ability to succeed in

that task, today's youth are less optimistic. The global organizations are considered to have a lot more responsibility compared to ability when it comes to solving the problem. Something that is interesting is today's youth's faith in the market and companies to end hunger. 4 out of 10 believe that corporations have the greatest opportunity to end world hunger.

### **Non-profits organizations role**

What about NGO's like us – what role do we play according to today's youth? This survey is showing clearly that their faith in us within the civil society to solve the hunger issue is pretty low, and our responsibility is even lower – about 10%. On the other hand, something interesting that came out of this survey is that today's youth are to a large degree looking at NGO's as a source of information when it comes to development issues. 50% of the girls say that NGO's is the first source they turn to when they want to know more about a global societal issue.



**Great opportunity to raise awareness**

This leads us to the knowledge-part of this survey. It isn't possible to draw any general conclusions from the results, since the questions were few and not comprehensive enough. But the results do give us clear indications that what today's youth believes to know about the hunger issue doesn't reflect what is actually occurring. They are unsure when it comes to the amount of people living in hunger, where they are living and if hunger is increasing or decreasing. This is where we as NGO's both have a responsibility and opportunity to work with the spread of information and increasing awareness when regarding the hunger situation.

**Time to increase the sense of urgency**

That today's youth perceive climate change to be the most important development issue is shown in this survey and has been shown in other, similar studies. The seriousness of the question has truly been actualized to a higher degree these last few years, both through an increase in media attention and activist-actions all over the world. Knowledge has led to enthusiasm, which in turn has created a thirst to increase one's knowledge. What triggers what is difficult to answer, but something that can be concluded is that the existing interest from today's youth towards the environment is significant and can stem from the perceived seriousness with the issue. To increase the perceived seriousness for the hunger issue should be a necessary step to take to increase the enthusiasm for the issue. Here, information- and knowledge-based campaigns are key components and is something we NGO's are accustomed to working with. This survey shows, gratifyingly enough, that the credibility we have for what we say is significant with today's youth, since they like to turn to us to increase their knowledge about societal and development issues. This is something we should take advantage of.

**Change of mindset on a global & individual level**

Some of the most interesting take-aways from the study is what today's youth themselves believe to be the key factor in ending world hunger. The biggest trend is that resource-rich countries and individuals should share what they have with countries that are lacking in this area. One of The Hunger Project mottos is "Talent is equally distributed – opportunity is not". The reason behind hunger existing is, as previously mentioned, due to an unequal share of resources and opportunities. But in the "why", we can also find our solution. Hunger is the largest development issue that actually is 100% solvable. It is just a question of changing one's mindset – both globally and on an individual level. Something that today's youth is mentioning as a part of changing one's mindset is how they themselves relate to consumerism. Some say that the solution can be found in eating less meat, to consume less, donating more to the civil society etc. The Hunger Project's idea is about changing the mindset for every part and for every level of the chain. A change in consumption patterns for one person in Sweden is a step in the right direction towards a world free from hunger, in the same way that it is a step in the right direction for a farmer in Uganda to participate in a course about eco-agriculture.

**A strong belief in foreign aid**

Today's youth consider redistribution of resources on a global scale to be the most important solution in ending world hunger. Even further cooperation between nations and foreign aid are viewed as necessary measures. They put an emphasis on the fact that foreign aid should be monitored carefully, to make sure that the money ends up in countries where the democratic system is functioning well. This is somewhere we as NGO's have a significant responsibility. This survey shows that today's youth is putting a lot of trust into foreign aid as a financial model, which is good news. But it is also a trust that has to be earned by showing good results.







The Hunger Project.

SWEDEN

## Who is behind this survey?

This market research is conducted by The Youth Barometer, on behalf of The Hunger Project Sweden. The Hunger Project is a non-profit organization with the vision of a world free from hunger and poverty, and where all people can live a healthy, meaningful and worthy life which they themselves are in charge of. With an emphasis on women, we are educating people and strengthening them to abolish their own hunger and poverty. We are operating globally and are running programs in 13 countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Our Swedish office is located in Stockholm, where we are working with spreading information, communication and investor activities.