Procedure:

In this lesson, students examine the factors that contribute to the cycle of poverty faced by many people in developing countries. Students analyze quality of life and measurement tools such as the Human Development Index. Class discussion, playing an interactive card game in small groups, and individual work are all used to address the topics of poverty and development with students.

1. The teacher may determine students’ prior knowledge about measuring quality of life by asking the students, “What methods or tools do you know of that are used to measure quality of life in the world?”
2. The teacher leads a class discussion by posing the question, “What type of assets (resources) does a person need to maintain a healthy life?” Conduct a brainstorming session as a class and have students provide examples of types of assets.
3. Introduce the concept of Sustainable Livelihoods (see Teacher Background Notes). Provide each student with a Sustainable Livelihoods Chart (BLM 2.1) to complete individually based on the discussion and the students’ own ideas. See the next page for a sample answer sheet.
4. Divide the class into groups of 4 – 5 students to play the Sustainable Livelihoods card game. Distribute one Sustainable Livelihoods Score Card (BLM 2.2) to each student. Distribute one Sustainable Livelihoods Instruction Sheet (BLM 2.3) and one set of Sustainable Livelihoods Playing Cards (BLM 2.4) to each group. Allow students time to play the game.
5. As a class, debrief the Sustainable Livelihoods card game. Have each group present the person in their group who finished with the most sustainable livelihood and explain the group’s reasoning for choosing that person. Did all groups use the same method for determining who had the most sustainable livelihood leading to the highest quality of life? Did groups value different asset categories in different ways?
6. The teacher introduces the concept of the Human Development Index to the class (see Teacher Background Notes). As a class, discuss the use, strengths and limitations of the Human Development Index. Class discussions should focus on the following questions:
   - How could the Human Development Index be used — by international organizations, by individual countries?
   - What is the strength of using the Human Development Index over other methods of determining quality of life?
   - What are some limitations of the Human Development Index?
What other criteria do you think should be included as a key indicator for Human Development? Explain your choice.

Note: If you are looking for an easier version of this game for your students, please refer The Real Survivor Game at the Grades 7-10 level.

Extension Activities

- Students research the current Human Development Report to see where Canada ranks compared to other countries in the world in terms of quality of life. Look at the Human Development Indexes of countries over time and investigate the causes for their change in quality of life ranking. Research the Human Development Index for each of the countries mentioned in the activity cards of this lesson. Visit the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report Website at [http://hdr.undp.org](http://hdr.undp.org) and click on HD Reports and then Global Reports from the list.

- Students research an international development organization and complete the Sustainable Livelihoods Chart (BLM 2.1) to indicate what types of Asset are being affected by one of the organization’s major projects, what vulnerabilities or risks are being mitigated and/or what policies are being adjusted to improve quality of life and break the cycle of poverty for communities in developing countries.

Teacher Background Notes

**Sustainable Livelihoods**

“Sustainable livelihoods” is a popular phrase in the world of international development. But what does it mean?

Livelihood traditionally refers to a person’s means of support or the way he/she earns money to meet the basic needs of life. The concept of livelihoods in the “sustainable livelihoods” context extends beyond just financial support. It includes all of the assets and resources in life that are used to meet peoples’ needs. The sustainable component of “sustainable livelihoods” means that the means of livelihood should be able to adapt, withstand shocks and not destroy the natural environment.

Development for sustainable livelihoods puts people first, building on their strengths and their own understanding of the development needed in their lives and in their community. A sustainable livelihoods approach to development is holistic. It looks at the big picture and the many factors that influence the cycles of poverty, and not solely at one sector of development, such as economic.

**Human Development Index**

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a measure of human development coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme. It is a summary composite index that measures a country's average achievements in three basic aspects of human development: longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge is measured by a combination of the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment ratio; and standard of living measure by Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) income.

Each year a Human Development Report is produced by the United Nations. The first Human Development Index was calculated in 1990; however, data has been used to calculate HDIs back to 1975. The HDI of a country may be compared over time to measure changes in development.

Complete information on the HDI and the most current Human Development Report can be found on the website: [http://hdr.undp.org/](http://hdr.undp.org/). Some Frequently Asked Questions, and answers, from the web site have been provided here for your quick reference.

**How is the Human Development Index used?**
The Human Development Index is used to capture the attention of policy makers, media and NGOs, and to draw their attention away from the more usual economic statistics to focus instead on human outcomes. The HDI was created to re-emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth.

The HDI is also used to question national policy choices — asking how two countries with the same level of income per person can end up with such different human development outcomes (HDI levels). For example, Vietnam and Pakistan have similar levels of income per person, but life expectancy and literacy differ greatly between the two countries, with Vietnam having a much higher HDI value than Pakistan. These striking contrasts immediately stimulate debate on government policies on health and education, asking why what is achieved in one country is far from the reach of another.

Finally, the HDI is used to highlight wide differences within countries, between provinces or states, across gender, ethnicity, and other socioeconomic groupings. Highlighting internal disparities along these lines has raised national debate in many countries.

Is the HDI enough to measure a country's level of development?

Not at all. The concept of human development is much broader than what can be captured in the HDI. The HDI, for example, does not reflect political participation or gender inequalities. It also does not include important indicators such as respect for human rights, democracy and inequality. HDI can only offer a broad proxy on the issues of human development. A fuller picture of a country's level of human development requires analysis of other human development indicators and information.

Note: The new seeds mentioned in the game cards are of the natural selection variety and are not of the genetically modified type. Local farmers do not need special fertilizers to grow crops and can reuse seeds year after year.

Curriculum Objectives:

- Know that the standard of living is a set of criteria which defines human well-being, and if the criteria change, then the definition of standard of living changes.
- Know that, in general terms, all standard of living models need to consider some or all of the following criteria:
  - the capacity of a society to produce wealth based on technology levels, industrial capacity, energy consumption, social organization, education levels. (This factor is usually expressed as per capita GDP);
  - quality of life factors which often include infant mortality, life expectancy, and literacy;
  - health factors such as calorie consumption, medical care, clean water, and sanitation levels;
  - other more nebulous but important factors include levels of self-esteem, freedom, personal expectations, community loyalty; and,
  - environmental factors such as clean air, pollution-free surroundings, and safe communities.
- Know that embedded in the Canadian worldview is a belief that an adequate standard of living cannot be defined by competitive success alone, but rather standard of living is the result of a process in which people cooperate and share in the creation of a good life.
- Know that any standard of living model has moral consequences attached to its use.
- Know that, in general terms, all standard of living models need to consider some or all of the following criteria:
  - the capacity of a society to produce wealth. (This factor is usually expressed as per capita GDP);
  - quality of life factors which often include infant mortality, life expectancy, and literacy;
  - health factors such as calorie consumption, medical care, clean water, and sanitation levels;
  - other more nebulous but important factors which include levels of self-esteem, freedom; and,
  - environmental factors such as clean air, pollution-free surroundings and safe communities.
- Know that important criteria to be considered in maintaining an individual country's standard of living are:
  - protecting domestic employment;
  - encouraging domestic diversification;
  - protecting infant industries;
  - maintaining environmental standards;
o protecting national security; and,
  o protecting cultural sovereignty.
• Know that Canadians have tended to accept the principles:
  o that raising a standard of living depends upon increasing human productivity usually expressed in terms of labour productivity ratios (output per person hour); and,
  o that improved productivity allows Canadians to produce and sell goods competitively on world markets.
• Know that Canada's economic goals and the criteria for achieving them have been:
  o economic stability defined by high employment and stable prices;
  o a good balance of trade defined by exporting as much as is imported;
  o economic growth defined by a growing GDP; and,
  o an equitable distribution of income defined by a narrow gap between rich and poor.
• Know that per capita GDP is the GDP divided by population and is one way of comparing standard of living among countries.
• Know that the prosperity of modern industrial nations depend upon a modern infrastructure of agriculture, industry, transportation, education, health, and government.