

1

primary level

lesson 1

What is Hunger and Who are the Hungry?

The lesson has been designed to be covered in 45 minutes, but it can be covered in greater or less detail to fit the needs of the class. Teachers are encouraged to cover all objectives and content areas.

For each objective, a variety of activities and discussion points are provided from which teachers can select those most appropriate for their students.

The materials for each lesson can be found in the Materials section beginning on page 75.



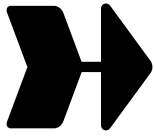
Information for teachers

To begin their study of world hunger, it is important that children understand the main functions of food and the importance of food for good health, growth and development. They should know that all countries and regions have people who are hungry, some more than others, and that we are working together to solve the problem of hunger in the world. The topic of hunger should be presented in a manner that encourages hope for a better future where we all have the food we need for an active and healthy life.

Objective 1 provides an overview of the importance of getting the food we need. Nutrition is presented simply, as providing energy and nutrients to maintain health and life and to help us develop and grow, without going into detail on specific nutrients, which would be too difficult for small children to understand. Additional lessons on nutrients, specific requirements and local food guides may be added for older children. For a more thorough overview of basic nutrition concepts, teachers may refer to Lesson 1 of the Intermediate and Secondary Levels.

Objective 2 introduces the importance of getting a variety of foods to meet our nutritional needs. A simple picture is presented to show the different kinds of foods we need and to illustrate a typical meal pattern that is followed in many parts of the world and provides variety. If time permits, each section can be presented in more detail and the handouts and pictures given to the children to colour and discuss.

Objective 3 presents the magnitude of the problem of hunger in the world and identifies those people who are most at risk from hunger. For a more detailed overview of the current world situation, teachers may refer to "Hunger and Malnutrition in the World" in the Introduction.



Objective 1 To understand why we need food

Materials



Picture: We All Need Food
Fact Sheet: Food Gives Us...

Concept

We all need food

Content



The food chain starts with plants and the smallest of animal life and moves up to larger and larger animals and people. As the word "chain" implies, all forms of life depend on each other and all are connected in their need for nutrients. We must all have nutrients to live.

Activities



Ask if the children can think of any animal that does not need food.



Pass out or hold up the picture *We All Need Food* and ask students to write or call out the foods eaten by the people and animals in the picture. They can also colour the picture.



Discuss how the animals and people in the picture *We All Need Food* eat different foods and need different nutrients, but all share the need for nutrients that keep them healthy.




Discuss the concept of the food chain with the children – i.e. that all plants and animals, including people, are connected. Plants provide the food for many animals; animals, in turn, provide food for other animals; and many animals eat both plants and animals. This can be thought of as a cycle, as well as a chain, because sometimes animals provide fertilizer that gives nutrients to plants.





The food chain can be represented by having the children draw a small picture of a plant, fish, small animal, larger animal or person and attach it to their clothing, or hold it in one hand. The children can then form a chain (linking arms or hands) with the plants, fish and small animals at one end and, moving up the food chain, those species that depend on these for food at the other end. To show the interdependence, the children can join hands (or arms) and form a circle to represent the connection that all species have with one another. An important concept is that if one of the links is broken, it affects the entire chain or circle. All are important and all depend on one another. This is the concept of a system. Another system (the food supply system) is introduced in the next lesson.




Concept Food gives us the energy and nutrients we need to keep our bodies functioning, to grow and develop and to move, work, play, think and learn


Content  Tell the students that there are special things called *nutrients* in food. Nutrients are contained in the foods we eat and include vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, proteins, fats and water. These nutrients keep our bodies functioning, breathing and thinking, keep our blood circulating, give us energy and are the building blocks that help us to develop, move, work, play, think and learn. Several important nutrients are explained in more detail in the fact sheet *Food Gives Us....* The concepts can be introduced and discussed in the detail appropriate for the grade level. More advanced nutrition concepts are provided in the Intermediate and Secondary Levels.


Activities  Pass out or hold up the fact sheet *Food Gives Us....* Hold up food samples, or pictures of local foods, and discuss their functions in the body. For example, to illustrate protein, state what it does in the body (from the fact sheet), hold up a small handful of beans (or some other local food rich in protein) and explain that beans are rich sources of protein.

 Alternative activities can be developed into games. For instance, hold up a food or picture of a food or call out the name of a local food and ask which nutrients (from the fact sheet) are found in that food. An example would be to hold up, or draw, wheat and ask what wheat gives us (carbohydrates, fibre, vitamins and minerals).

Concept Too little or too much food is not healthy

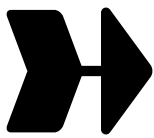
Content  To be healthy, we must have the right amounts and the right kinds of foods. Not enough food, not enough different kinds of food, and even too much food can make us unhealthy. How much is just enough food? People need different kinds and amounts of food. We need more food when we are in a stage of growth, such as infants, children and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers are. We need more food if we work and play hard. And we may need more food if we are sick.

 If we eat too much food we can be unhealthy as well. Too much food causes our body to store too much fat and can contribute to the risk of diseases such as heart problems and diabetes.

Activities  Hold up the picture *We All Need Food*. Ask the children to imagine what would happen if the different animals and people in the picture ate each other's food supply for a day. For instance, what if the chicken ate the mother's food for a day; or what if the child ate the chicken's food supply for a day? Explain that everyone in the family also has different needs for food. We need more



food when we are working and playing hard, when we are growing, or when we are sick. Pregnant women and mothers nursing babies also need more food. All of the family members must have enough food to be healthy. Each animal and person in the picture has special needs for enough food and for specific nutrients in foods. If there is time available, the children can draw a picture of a meal for each of the animals and people in the picture and talk about the types of foods, and the amounts of the foods, for all family members.



Objective 2 To know that we need many different foods

Materials



Picture: We Need Many Different Foods

Concept

People need many different foods to be healthy and to grow

Content



Even if we get enough food to meet our energy needs, we can be unhealthy if we do not get the kinds of different foods that we need. Because different nutrients are found in different foods, we need to eat many kinds of foods to get all of the things we need.



Most regions have a traditional or local pattern of eating that provides the variety needed for health and growth. For instance, a staple food such as rice, wheat, maize, cassava or potatoes will provide the main food, to which smaller amounts of vegetables, meat, fish or poultry and sauces are typically added. When the accompanying foods provide a variety of vegetables, meats or legumes (beans, peas and nuts), as well as sauces with fat, sugar and fruits, the traditional, local diet is rich in nutrients for health and growth.

Activities



Tell children that people all over the world have very different ways of eating. Pass out or hold up the picture *We Need Many Different Foods* and describe the meal that is being served to this family. It is made up of a large staple food. Ask the children what it looks like (rice, cassava and potato). Ask them what else they see in smaller amounts (fruit, meats, vegetables and sauces).



Tell the children that this is how most people in the world eat. They have a staple food, then add smaller amounts of accompanying foods. Discuss how staple foods around the world are typically starchy foods such as rice and other cereals, potato and cassava. Discuss how the accompanying foods may be vegetables, beans, peas, nuts, meats, fish, egg or sauces made from these foods.



Tell the children that the accompanying foods provide the different kinds of foods that we need to be healthy. And that we should try to eat different ones every day. We should also try to eat fruits after meals or for snacks.



Ask the children what their meals are like and ask if they also have a staple food with smaller amounts of accompanying foods like the family in the picture.



Using the picture as a guide, ask the children to create a list of their own local staple foods and the accompanying foods they add. Ask them to count how many different accompanying foods they can list and explain how having many different kinds of foods helps them to grow and be healthy.



Your own version of the picture can be created by drawing or cutting out pictures of local staple foods and accompanying foods.



Objective 3 To know who is hungry in the world

Materials



Picture: Map of World Hunger

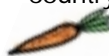
Concepts

- Hunger is not getting enough of the right kinds of foods to meet our needs
- All countries and regions have some people who are hungry

Content



Hunger is not having enough food and not having the variety of foods to meet nutritional needs. Hunger is a problem all over the world. Every country and every region has some people who do not get enough to eat. While hunger is present in every country, some countries and regions have a greater problem feeding their people.



In the year 2001, 800 million people are hungry and never get enough to eat all year long. The goal of the new millennium is to make sure that everyone has enough food and the right kinds of food to eat.



Hunger exists for many reasons (presented in Lesson 2), and it will take much work to solve the problems it causes. Many people are working together in all parts of the world to identify causes and search for solutions to the hunger problem.



All people, including children, can be a part of this effort by learning as much as they can about hunger and how to prevent it.

Activities





Hold up the picture *Map of World Hunger*, which indicates areas with serious hunger and malnutrition problems. Explain how the map shows the areas where many people do not get all of the foods that they need. Point out the areas with the largest numbers of hungry people. Explain that all countries have some hungry people.




Discuss that the people within each area who are most likely to be hungry are the people without jobs or without education, the poor, people without land on which to grow food and other socially disadvantaged people. People who may also be

hungry are those with special nutritional needs, such as children (who need to grow) and pregnant and nursing women. Wars, civil disturbances, climate and environmental changes and other emergencies such as floods and earthquakes often cause both short- and long-term hunger in an area. Identify your area/region of the world and discuss its problem with hunger.

 Ask children to think about a world where all people have enough food to eat. Ask them to create a picture in their minds of that world and share that picture with the class. Share your mental picture of that world with no hungry people. Where resources are available, have children draw their “mind’s-eye” picture of a world or place where food is plentiful and no one is hungry and display these picture in school buildings as well as public buildings in the community.

 Discuss how people can become hungry for many reasons, how it takes much work to solve the problem, and how many people are working to learn why people are hungry and to find ways to ensure that there is good food, all year long, for everyone.

 Discuss how the people in the world can work together so that everyone will have enough and the right kinds of food to eat.

Summary

Lesson 1 presented material to answer the questions *What is Hunger and Who are the Hungry?* After completion of Lesson 1 children should be able to state that:

- We all need food.
- Food gives us the energy and nutrients we need to grow and develop; to move, work, play, think and learn; and to maintain life and health.
- Too little or too much food is not healthy.
- Hunger is not getting enough of the right kinds of foods to meet our needs.
- All regions have some people who are hungry.
- Some people have special nutrition needs, including children, pregnant and nursing mothers, people who work hard and people who are sick.

Tell students that in our next lesson we are going to learn where food comes from and some of the reasons people are hungry in our world.





Fact Sheet: Food Gives Us...

Food gives us the energy and nutrients the body needs to maintain health and life, to grow and develop, to move, work, play, think and learn.

The body needs a variety of nutrients – proteins, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals – and these come from the foods we eat.

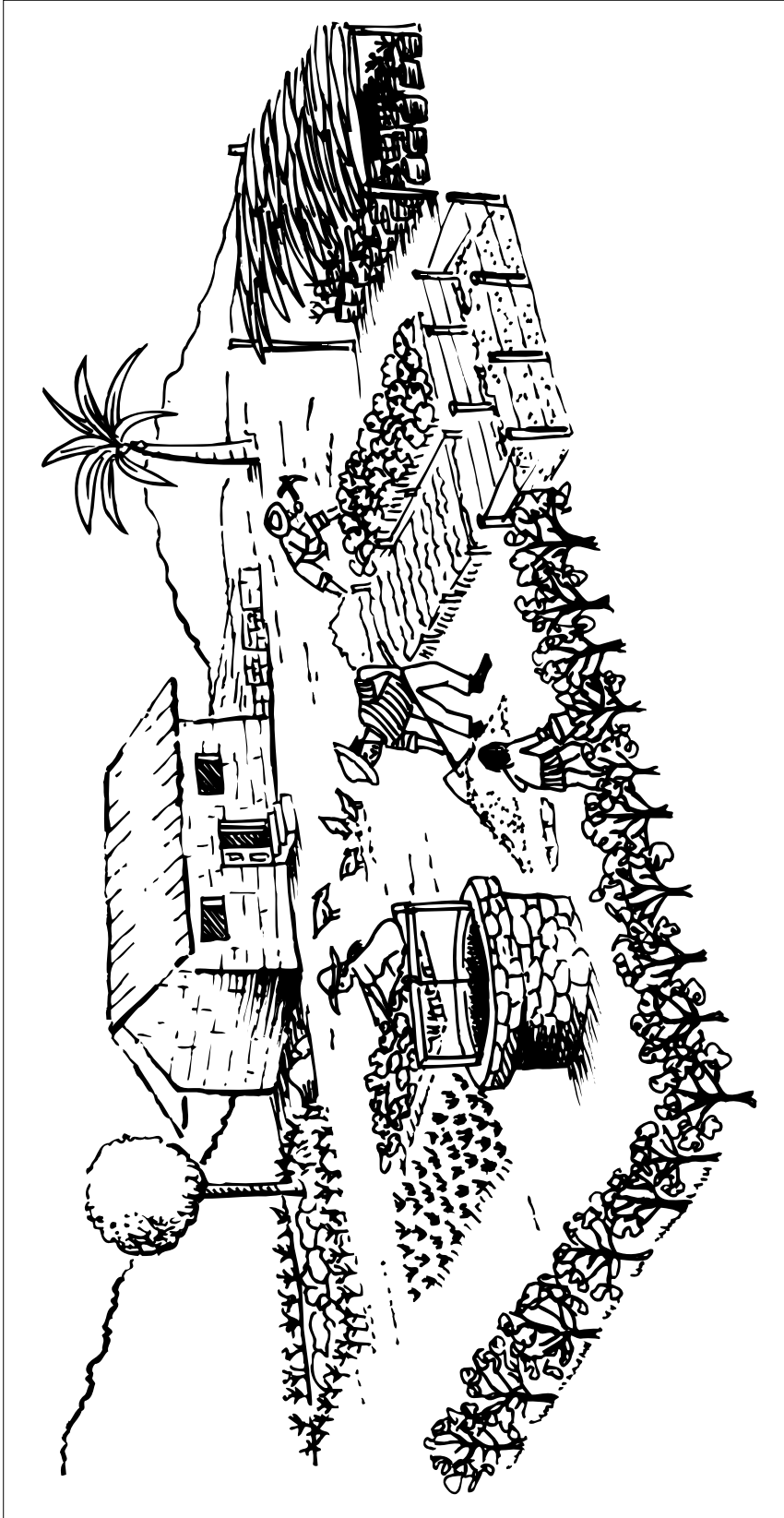
- **Proteins** are needed to build and maintain muscle, blood, skin and bones and other tissues and organs in the body.
- **Carbohydrates and fats** mainly provide energy, although some fats are also needed as building materials and to help the body use certain vitamins.
- **Vitamins and minerals** are needed in smaller amounts than protein, fat and carbohydrates, but they are essential for good nutrition. They help the body work properly and stay healthy. Some minerals also make up part of the body's tissues, for example, calcium and fluoride are found in bones and teeth and iron is found in the blood.
- **Fibre** (or roughage) and **clean water** are also needed for a good diet.

All foods contain nutrients but different foods contain different amounts of various nutrients.

- **Foods rich in proteins** are all types of meat, poultry, fish, beans, peas, soybeans, groundnuts, milk, cheese, yoghurt and eggs.
- **Foods rich in carbohydrates** are rice, maize, wheat and other cereals, all types of potatoes, yams and starchy roots and sugars.
- **Foods rich in fats** are oils, some meat and meat products, lard, butter, ghee and some other milk products, margarine, some types of fish, nuts and soybeans.
- **Foods rich in vitamin A** are dark-green vegetables, carrots, dark-yellow sweet potato, pumpkin, mango, papaya, eggs and liver.
- **Foods rich in B vitamins** are dark-green vegetables, groundnuts, beans, peas, cereals, meat, fish and eggs.
- **Foods rich in vitamin C** are fruits and most vegetables, including potatoes.
- **Foods rich in iron** are meat, fish, groundnuts, beans, peas, dark-green leafy vegetables and dried fruits.

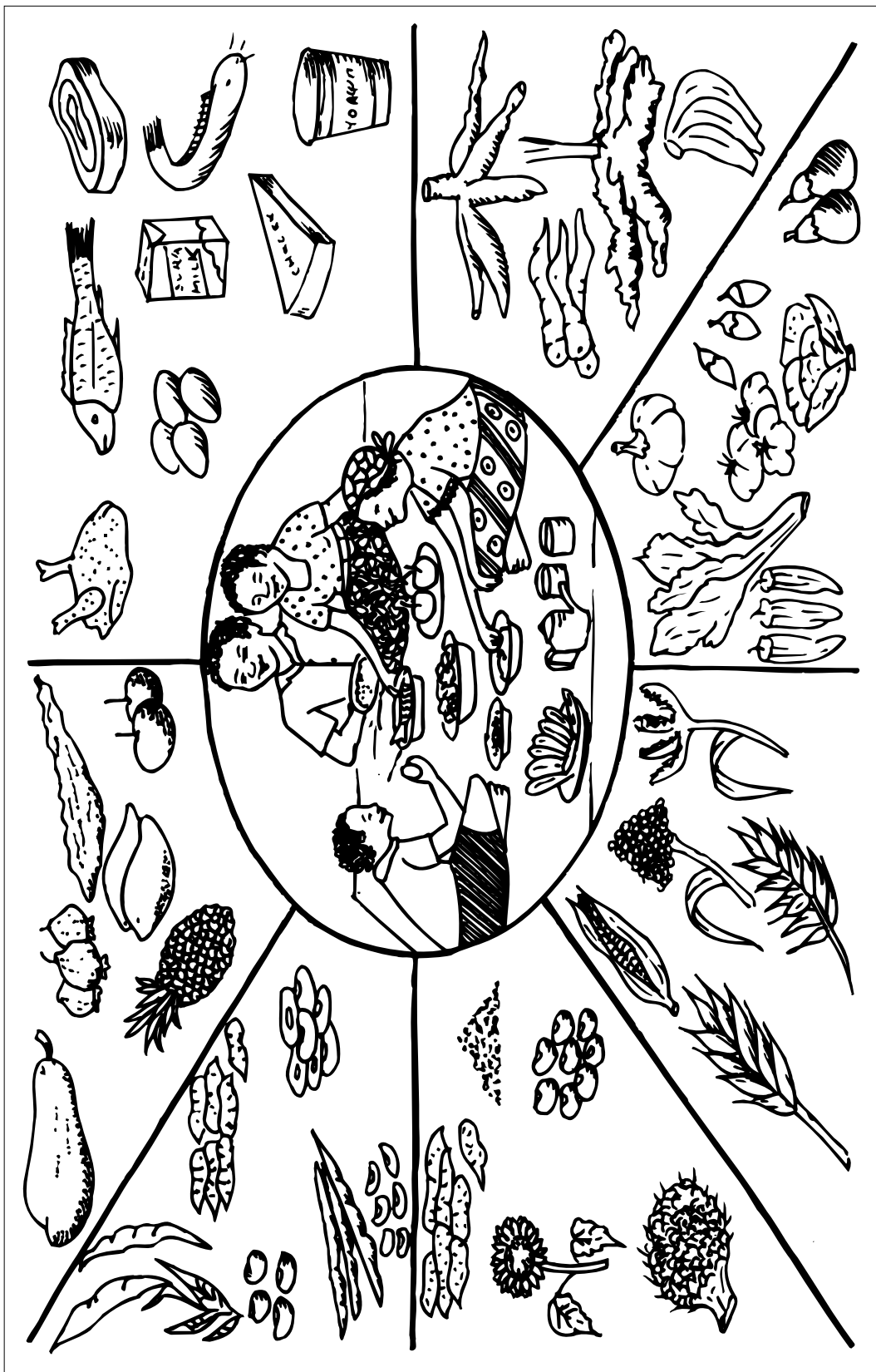


Picture: We All Need Food



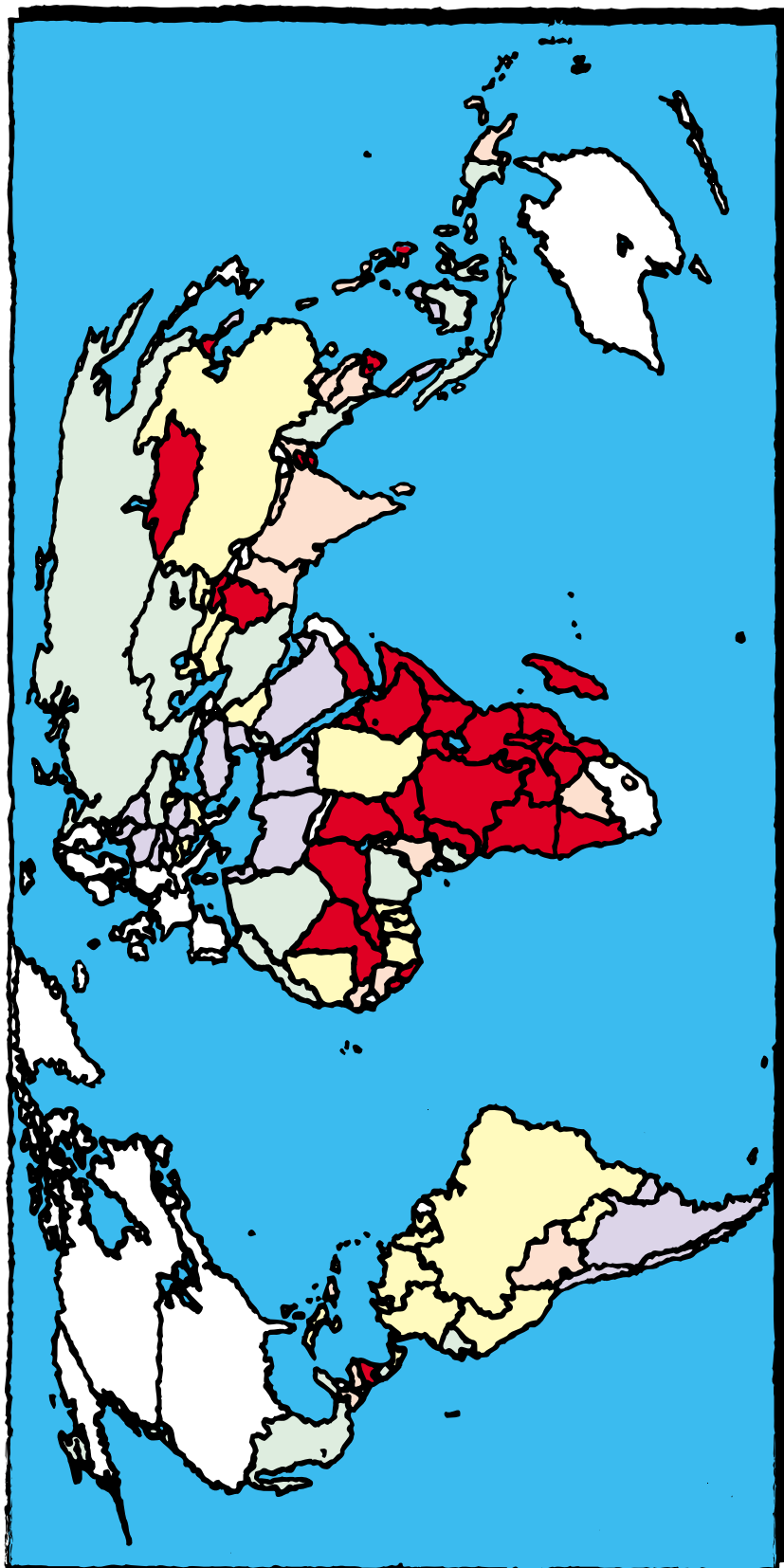


Picture: We Need Many Different Foods





Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
World



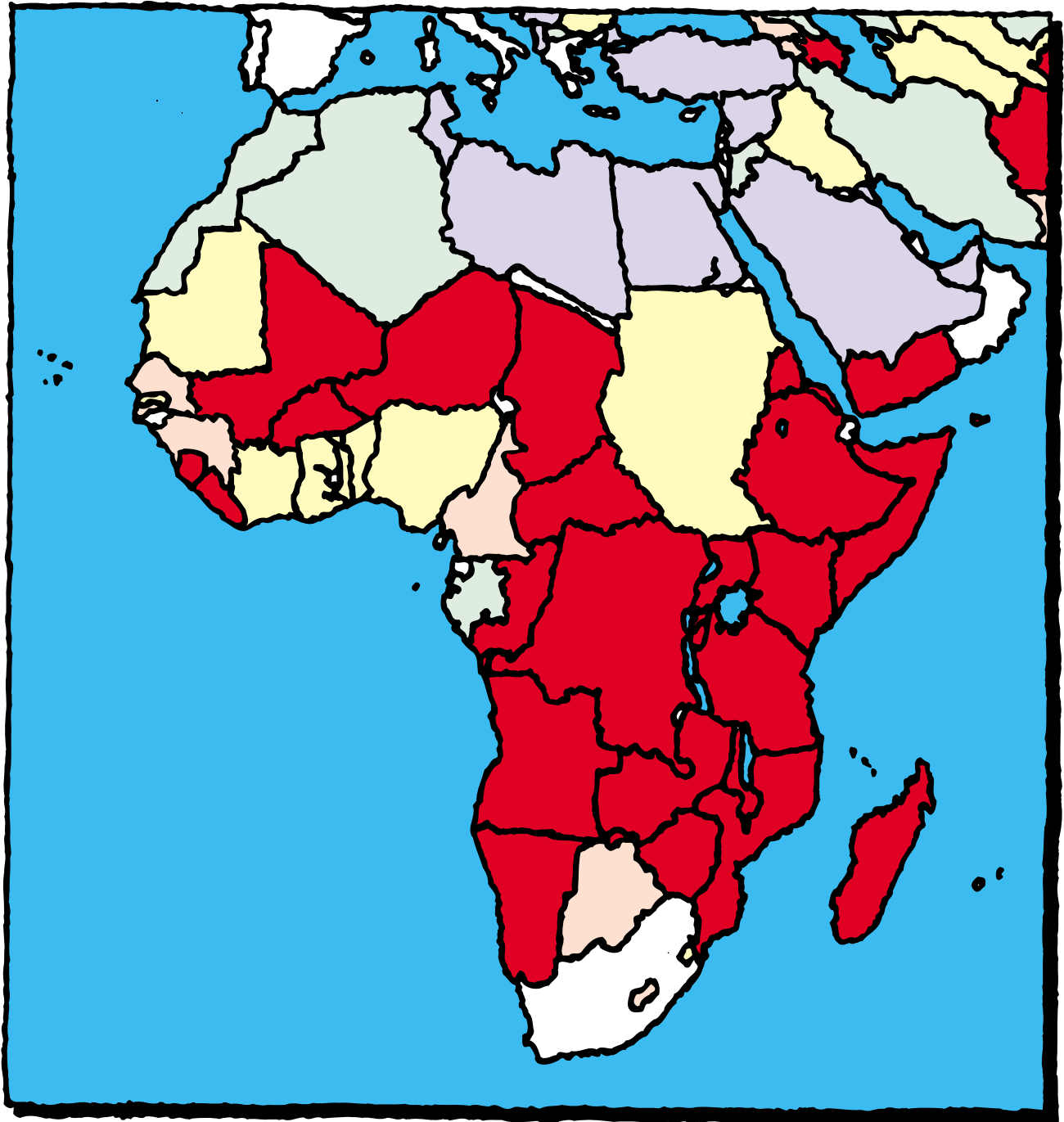
Percentage of undernourished individuals



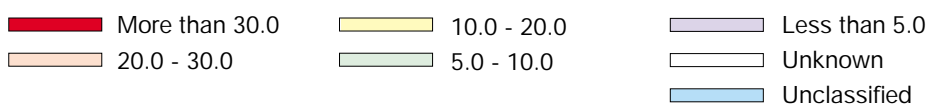
Source: ESN/WAICENT-KIMS, 2000



Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
Africa



Percentage of undernourished individuals



Source: ESN/WAICENT-KIMS, 2000



Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
South America



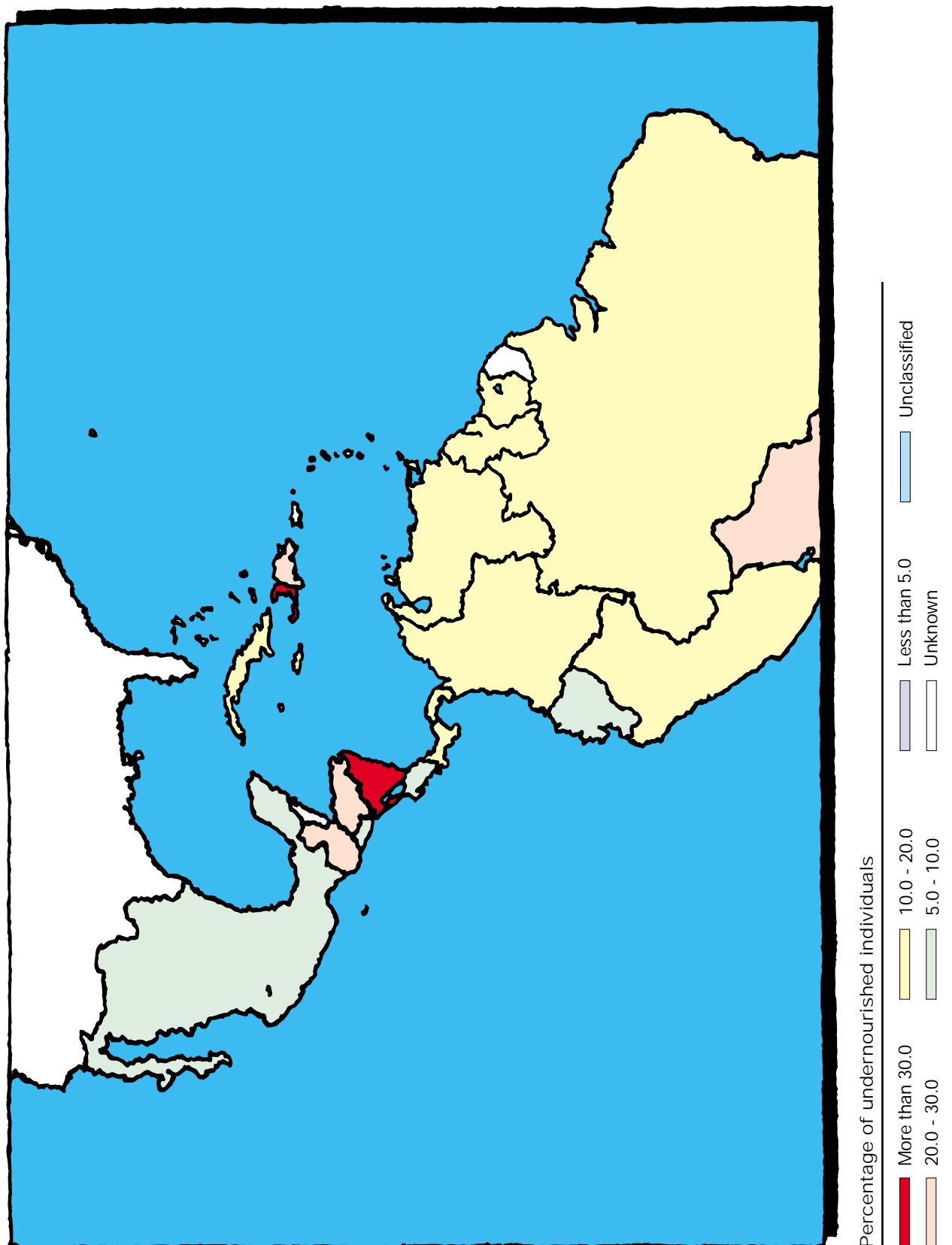
Percentage of undernourished individuals



Source: ESN/WAICENT-KIMS, 2000

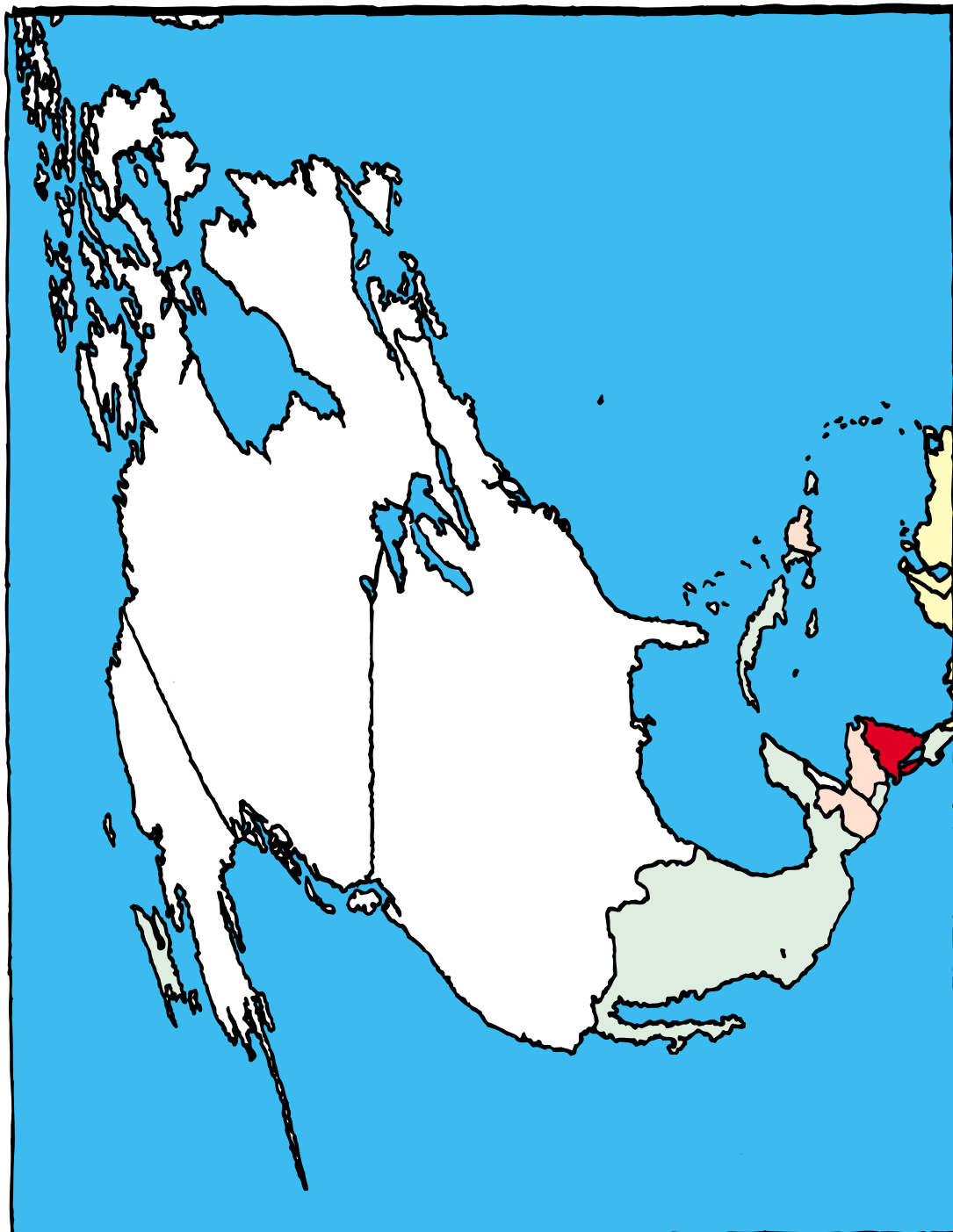


Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
Central America





Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
North America



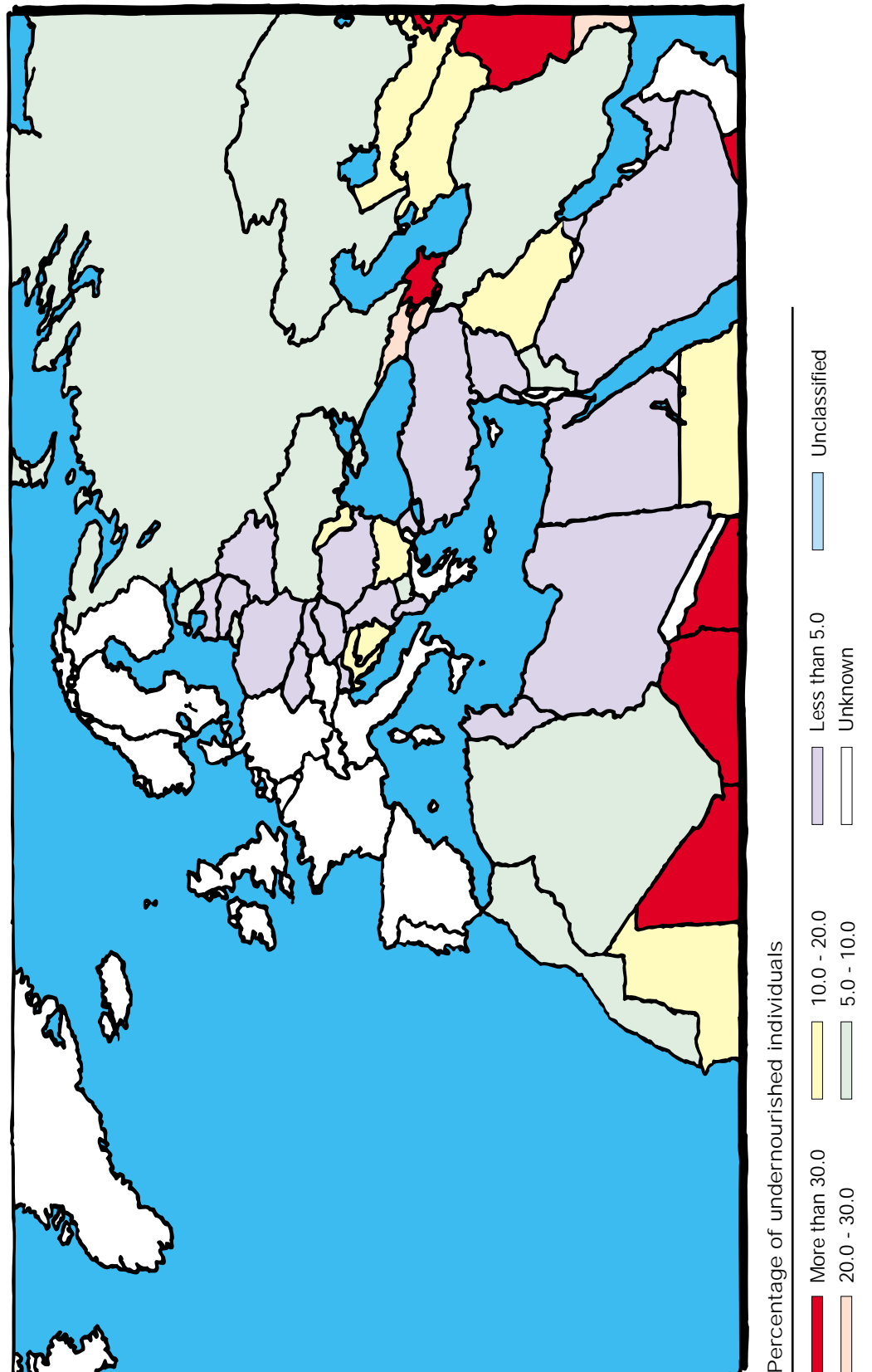
Percentage of undernourished individuals



Source: ESN/WAICENT-KIMS, 2000

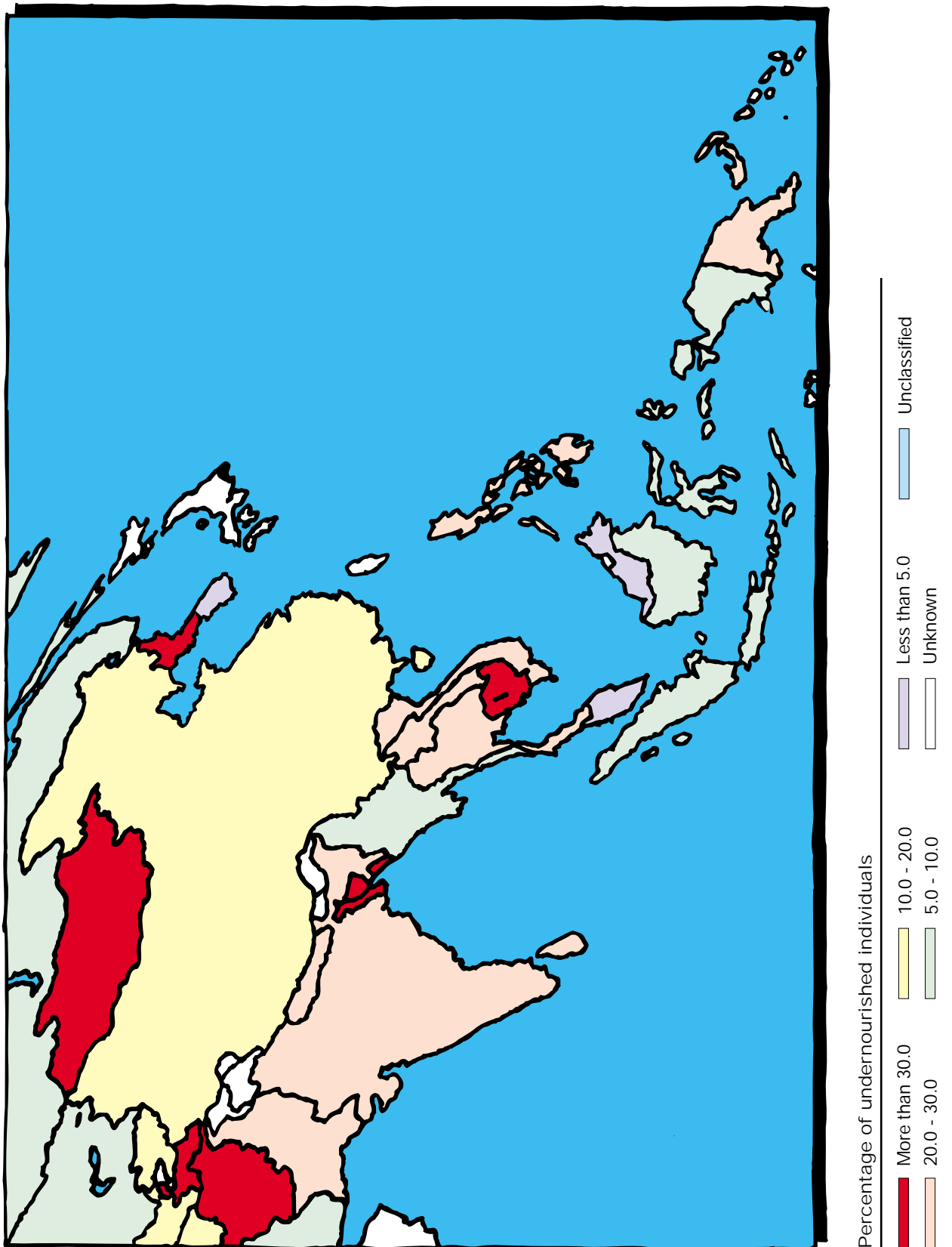


Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
Europe



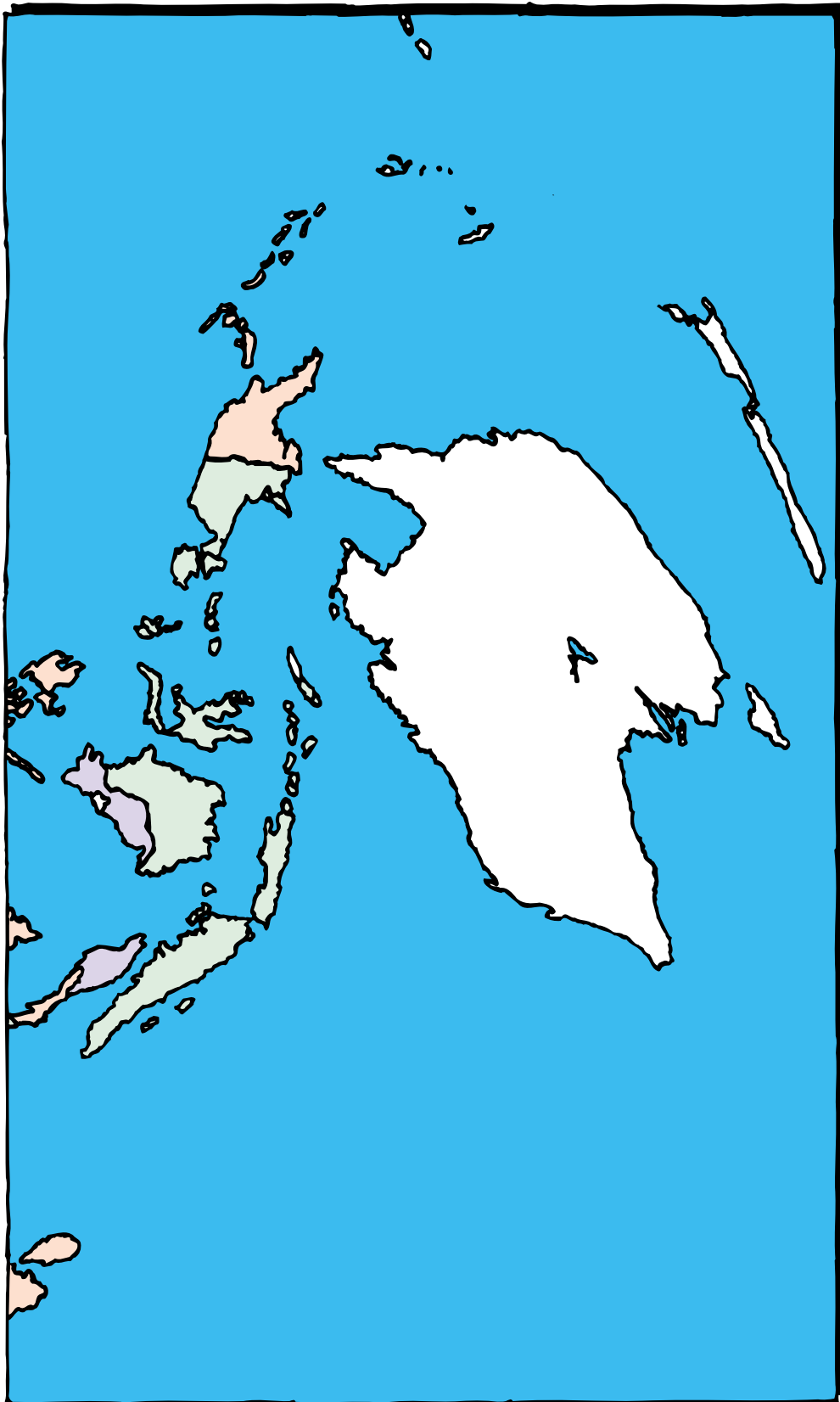


Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
Asia





Picture: Map of World Hunger
Proportion of undernourished people (1996-98)
Oceania



Percentage of undernourished individuals



Source: ESN/WAICENT-KIMS, 2000