

SCENARIO 2

INDONESIA

*Physical characteristics
and the freedom of
the individual*



INDONESIA



INTRODUCTION: GEOGRAPHY AND THE PROBLEM

Indonesia – the Problems of Sumba Island

Indonesia is an island country located in Southeast Asia and Oceania. One of more than 13 thousand islands in Indonesia is Sumba, for centuries isolated from the rest of the world, as a result of which it has preserved its own unique culture, customs and beliefs. Most of its inhabitants are followers of the traditional Marapu religion, in which they worship ancestral spirits and in difficult situations ask for the help of local shamans. The villages consist of unique-looking houses with pointed roofs, the same as those inhabited by the ancestors of the island's inhabitants. These houses are divided into 3 levels – the lowest for animals, the middle for people, and the highest for the spirits.

The Sumbanese livelihoods are based around agriculture, and in everyday life they do not usually use any money at all. They often cannot afford to buy medicine or necessary insecticides.

Sumba is one of the poorest islands in Indonesia. It lacks drinking water and food, so many children are malnourished, weak, and susceptible to disease. The incidence of malaria transmitted by mosquitoes is among the highest in Southeast Asia. In some parts of the island, every third mother has lost at least one child due to malaria.

Malaria continues to be a global problem. In 2017, 219 million people worldwide contracted the disease. Every year, more than 400 000 people die of this disease, most of whom are children under the age of five. To date, no effective vaccine has been created for it. Limited access to healthcare combined with the presence of the most dangerous species of malaria-bearing mosquitoes makes it a serious problem on Sumba.

The Sumba Foundation – fighting malaria

The Sumba Foundation is a non-governmental organisation operating on the Indonesian island of Sumba, which implements health, educational, water and food supply programmes.

Such actions are closely linked to the attempt to eradicate malaria on the island. Water projects are designed to provide clean, drinkable water for the island's inhabitants. Health programmes are primarily preventive medical tests for inhabitants carried out both in clinics and in the field. Thanks to them, employees of the organisation are able to start treatment of people infected with malaria in the early stages of the disease. An important element in malaria prevention is providing the inhabitants with mosquito nets containing an insecticide, which are a simple but effective way to protect people from the bites of mosquitoes spreading the disease.

Project supported by the Kulczyk Foundation

The Kulczyk Foundation supported the fight against malaria and the water projects carried out by The Sumba Foundation by donating funds for prevention and for providing access to clean water for the residents.

Physicality – Why is it worth discussing this topic?

Health, as defined by the World Health Organisation, is not just the complete absence of disease or disability, but above all, full physical, mental and social well-being.

In this context, adolescence is a major challenge in both physical and mental terms. Am I still a child or a teenager? – children wonder, looking in the mirror. The growth spurt heralds sexual maturity. This is a time when the body goes through physiological changes which have their consequences in the area of emotions and self-perception. Physical changes, although they may be fascinating and exciting, also bring problems causing shame to the child who would rather not experience them, such as: increased sweating, deterioration of skin conditions, oily hair, an increase in body fat.

You can prepare for a pole vault by training, gradually raising the bar. It's harder, though, to prepare oneself for a growth spurt. This is because it occurs rapidly in children. Especially boys between the ages of 12 and 15 gain about 20 kilograms and grow about 20 centimetres. In girls it starts two years earlier, and the weight gain and growth is less intensive and shorter. Puberty not only consists in changes that can be measured and weighed. Hormones play an important role, the brain changes, the body looks different. Intensive transformation can be observed through a significant change in the shape of the body, the voice or the way in which one moves.

There are some differences in how boys and girls look at their bodies. Some boys are proud of their muscles and physical abilities and because of the psychological changes they undergo, they get into fights – they become brutal and aggressive. They are not aware of their strength and may inadvertently be dangerous to their environment, so it is worth redirecting that strength and using it in a positive way, e.g. in sports activities.

Girls are more likely to be anxious and lost when their bodies start to get out of control; the changes in their bodies often become a source of fear and anxiety. They look at their bodies critically, looking for external examples to follow. The media promoting very slender models and their unrealistically slim figures has become the canon of beauty, and what's worse, of self-evaluation. Studies of blind teenagers have demonstrated that those who were blind from birth accept their body to a much greater degree than those who lost their sight at a later stage. They managed to see the models of femininity which they later want to follow. Results of similar studies have shown that in South America, on an island cut off from civilisation, women valued their bodies until television broadcasting American films became available in their area. Within a few years, a previously non-existent problem of eating disorders appeared, when women tried to look similar to the American actresses.

In the 1950s, Erik H. Erikson coined the term "the sense of physical identity" to describe "feeling at home in one's own body". Helping children in accepting their own carnality is, therefore, a huge task for educators and parents. This is particularly important because the 'home' also refers to the bodies of sick and disabled children for whom self-acceptance is a challenge consisting in overcoming real physical problems.

Appearance can affect our sense of freedom. We will feel free if we accept the body as our own home, which we want to take care of, look after and appreciate. This requires help so that children can find sources of self-esteem not only in their physical appearance and strength, but also in their potential and abilities, in what is inside them. At the same time, it is necessary to promote health among children consisting not in counting calories, but in conscious, healthy eating, doing sports, having an active lifestyle, sleeping properly and having regular medical check-ups. Children are often unaware of the threats. It is important that adults are vigilant, that they talk to children about how they feel and react in time.

It is important that children see dependencies – the more they take care of themselves, the greater their chances of a healthy, fulfilling life are; the more sick people, the greater the risk of contracting a disease; the worse our nourishment is, the more susceptible we are to diseases, and thus the more difficult it is for us to focus and learn, which in the long run makes it difficult to pursue our plans for life. The same applies to taking care of one's mental health, self-acceptance, naming emotions, the ability to function and communicate with others. Taking care of oneself is a fundamental step towards freedom, towards the children learning to take responsibility for themselves and towards becoming aware of one's needs, feelings and life goals.

Physical traits and individual freedom

Key issues: freedom – health-based limitations of freedom, the impact of a person's physical traits on their sense of freedom and their right to freedom.

Teaching aids: a film, a large sheet of paper, sheets of paper for each group, markers, post-its, pieces of paper for jumbled word, work sheets with a fish skeleton.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CLASSES



- **I KNOW:** A student knows that everyone has the right to freedom. They also understand that this right may be limited or violated. They know that there are conditions that limit human freedom and the factors that help in exercising it.
- **I FEEL:** The student knows what emotions they can feel when the physical traits of the body affect their sense of freedom. They know how a person whose development is limited by such factors may feel.
- **I HELP:** The student is willing to help people whose freedom is limited.

BEFORE THE CLASS

Arrange the classroom for group work. Print attachments and prepare a film screening. Get to know the entire episode of the documentary series "Domino Effect. Sumba" (Season 6) available at www.kulczykfoundation.org.pl Also read the introduction to the classes *Why is it worth discussing this topic* and the *Introduction: geography and the problem*, which discusses the problems caused by malaria on the Indonesian island of Sumba.

LESSON PLAN

Do physical traits affect our freedom?

BRAINSTORMING

Remind your students that in the previous class you talked about freedom. Say that people define it and its scope in different ways, e.g. depending on cultural conditions. Highlight the aspect of responsibility for one's own decisions. Announce that in today's classroom you will start talking about what can support freedom and what can limit it. You will consider how much our physicality, our physical traits can determine our freedom. Ask the students if they can point to such traits. Ask them to write them down on post-its and stick them on the board. Then organise them together, distinguishing groups of similar traits.

Domino Effect. Sumba

FILM, INDIVIDUAL WORK, DISCUSSION, JUMBLED WORDS (OPTIONAL)



Tell your students that you will soon be screening part of an episode of the documentary series "Domino Effect", which shows some of the factors influencing freedom exemplified by the situation on Sumba, one of the islands of Indonesia. Let them write down their observations on post-it notes – one proposal on each note.

After the screening, ask the students what they think about the story shown in the film and what particularly touched them. You can refer to the reactions they showed while watching the report.

Ask them to say what freedom factors they noticed in the film. Let them stick the notes with the factors that hadn't been listed before the screening on the board. The film focuses on physical (dis)ability, health and illness, but students may also notice other factors which are important to them.

Make sure that they have isolated the factors related to physicality, i.e.:

- sickness,
- physical ability,
- age,
- the model of an attractive body promoted in the media,
- height,
- weight,
- body proportions,
- skin colour,
- eye colour,
- hair colour,
- gender.

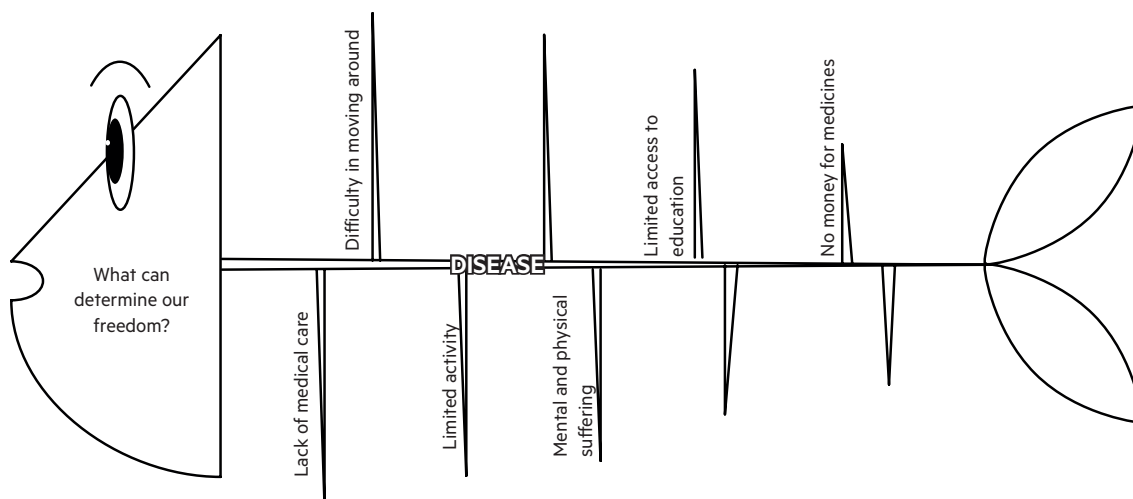
If students show little activity or have difficulty listing the factors that affect freedom, print the enclosed list to make it into jumbled words, and then ask them to choose the factors that affect freedom in the physical sense.

How do physical traits affect our freedom?

WORK IN GROUPS, WORK WITH A DIAGRAM

Divide the students into 4-5-person groups. Let the representative of each group draw one issue from the list of factors you prepared in the previous task. Then draw a skeleton of fish on the board or give the pupils a work sheet with the diagram.

Explain that this method allows you to analyse a problem in many ways. You write the problem down on the fish head in the form of a question, e.g. What can determine our freedom?; on the thick bones – broader categories, e.g. disease; and on the thinner bones – details of the larger issues, e.g. difficulty in moving around (mobility restrictions), inability to take up activities (physical restrictions), no access to medicine (financial restrictions), no medical care, emotional and physical suffering; limited access to education; limited access to the labour market.



A TASK FOR A GROUP OF OLDER CHILDREN

With a group of older students, discuss all the categories of factors together, leaving gender until the very end. After you mention gender, ask if students see any differences in the way that men and women are treated. What do the differences consist in? What do they think of the problem?

*My freedom – what strengthens it and what limits it.
We share our experiences*

| CONVERSATION

Talk to your students about what strengthens and what limits their freedom. The course of the conversation depends on the results of the previous exercise. Its aim is to share experiences connected with the broadening and limiting of freedom. It is important for the class to notice that physical factors affect our freedom. Ask the students to add real-life examples to the factors listed.

We are creating the fan of freedom – Physicality

| INDIVIDUAL WORK, SELF-ANALYSIS

Ask the students to think about the question: To what extent does my physicality allow me to be free, to be myself? Then ask them to paint the leaf of the fan at the correct level. Let them consider the extent to which today's class changed their general sense of freedom, and let them mark that on the appropriate leaf of the fan.

Can we help someone and how can we do so?

| SUMMARY OF THE CLASS

Ask the students whether they see situations in their immediate environment where someone's freedom is restricted because of their physical traits, or whether they know someone who needs support in exercising their right to freedom which is limited because of their physicality. If they are able to provide such examples, ask them what actions they could take to help someone with different limitations ([I HELP](#)).

Ask the students what was important for them in the class and how they have benefited from it ([I KNOW AND I FEEL](#)).



| DEAR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS!

In today's class, we talked about the subject: *Physical traits and individual freedom*

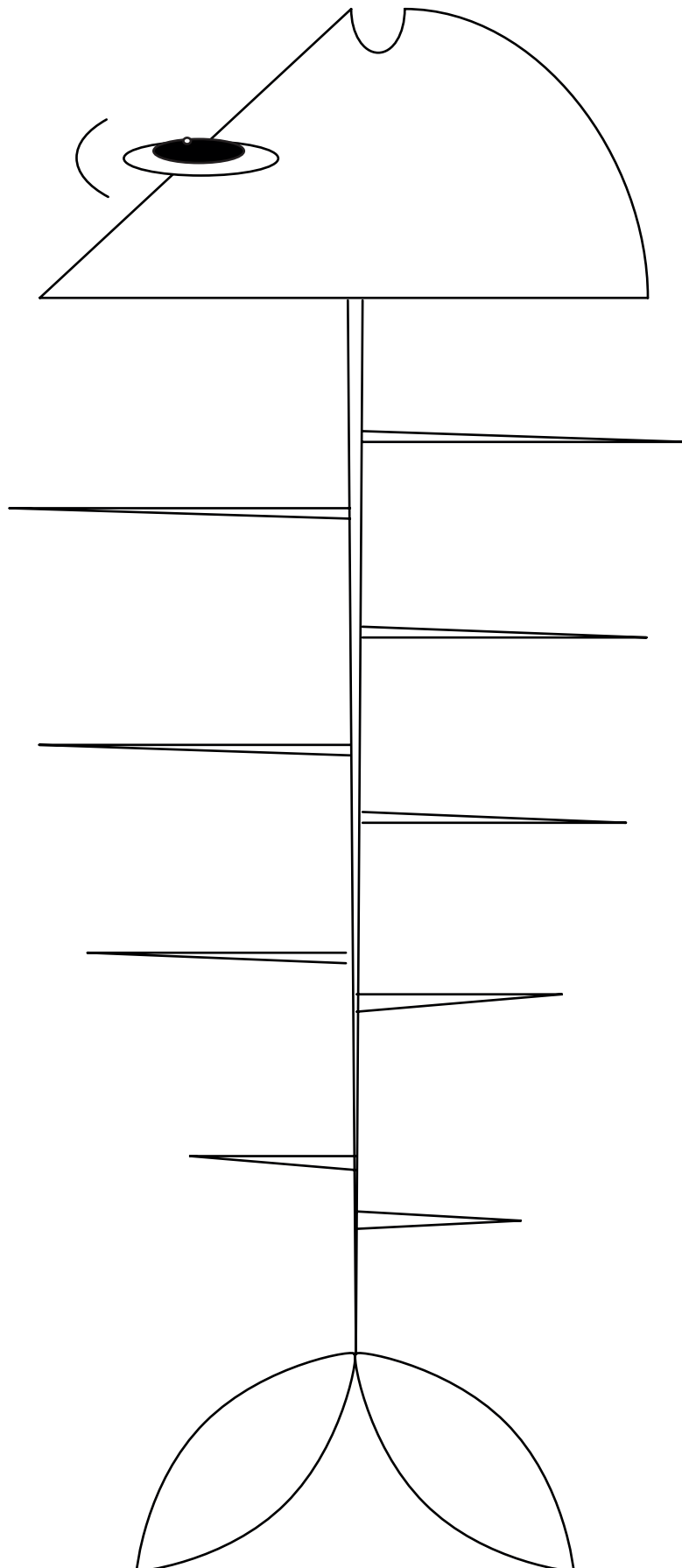
Proposals for activities:

- Pay close attention to the health of your child. They won't always show that they are not feeling well, and sometimes may not even realise that something wrong is happening to them. When something worries you, when you see that your child is not in a good physical and mental shape, react – talk to the child, and if necessary, seek the assistance of a specialist.
- Think about what your child might say if you asked them how their parents treat their bodies and how they take care of their health.
- Plan an activity that you could perform together for the benefit of your health.
- Think about your attitude towards the body. You are your child's role model. They look up to you and follow your example. If you are critical about your body and make your self-esteem and well-being dependent on appearance, then your child can also build their self-esteem on that, focus on striving towards unrealistic perfection, get frustrated or feel inadequate.
- Find a quiet moment to talk to your child about puberty. Prepare in advance and read about what you would like to say. If you feel it's too difficult for your child, suggest that you can always talk to them about it when they feel like it.
- Suggest your child specific books about adolescence so that they can read them in their own time when they need it. These could be, for example:

The Period Book. A Girl's Guide to Growing Up
by Karen Gravelle, Jennifer Gravelle,
published by Bloomsbury USA Childrens

Guy Stuff: The Body Book for Boys
by Cara Natterson,
published by Amer Girl Pub

What can determine our freedom? – fish diagram



Attachment to the task "How do physical traits affect our freedom?"

DISEASE

PHYSICAL ABILITY

AGE

**THE MODEL OF AN ATTRACTIVE BODY
PROMOTED IN THE MEDIA**

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

BODY PROPORTIONS

SKIN COLOUR

EYE COLOUR

HAIR COLOUR

GENDER