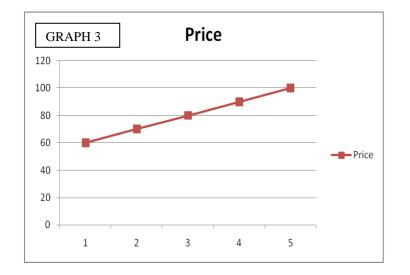
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The Impact of Changes in Food Prices

The graphs show three different simple changes in the **price** of an imaginary food product e.g. wheat, over a period of five years. The vertical scale shows prices in US\$ per tonne.

TASK:

Imagine that you are working for the government in a **poor**, **developing country**. The farmers in your country are unable to grow enough food to feed everyone, particularly all the people in the <u>cities</u>. You are the new **government minister** in charge of buying extra food for the people in your country. This extra food is mainly sold in the cities. You normally buy about **one million tonnes** of food each year.

- 1. For <u>each</u> graph, note down what you feelings would be over each of the five years as you did your job.
- 2. In which graph would the government have extra money to spend on other things e.g. schools, roads, hospitals.
- 3. What would the government do if the situation in Graph 3 happened? What would happen if you asked the **Prime Minister** for more money to buy food? What would happen if you were unable to get more money?

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- 4. Imagine a <u>new</u> graph in which the price of food changed a lot each year (went up, then down and then up again) how would this make your job more difficult?
- 5. If your country did **not** have enough money to pay the extra price for the food, you could do <u>two</u> things:
- a) **Borrow** some money from a rich country such as the UK or the USA. In Graph 3, how much <u>extra</u> money would you need to borrow <u>each</u> year? Why would it be difficult to pay back? What would happen if it took a long time to repay?
- b) Ask some of the rich countries to send 'food aid'. How long might it take to get the food to your country? If the food aid was given out <u>free</u> to the people in the cities, what might happen in the next year when farmers from the countryside tried to sell their food in the cities?
- 6. If food in the city shops started to <u>run out</u>, what would the people in the cities do? How would the city people feel about their government?

