

<b>Forum:</b>	Human Rights Committee
<b>Agenda:</b>	On measures to promote the accessibility of food resources to populations experiencing poverty
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## Introduction

Poverty became a global issue ever since it was discovered after the World War 2. Over time, there was rapid reduction in extreme poverty in which the effort to reduce global poverty reached a climax. From 2012 to 2013, the number of people living in poverty worldwide decreased by 130 million. However, ever since the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, it is found that 97 million more people are undergoing poverty. This leads to a consequence, food insecurity. Food security is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations as having access to adequate food for a healthy and active life. This includes easily accessible, nutrient-dense, and secure foods. This food ought to be accessible in ways that are accepted in society. Additionally, one must be free from stress or anxiety over having sufficient food for everyone residing in a home to be food secure. Not to mention it has been found that depending on the social and economic standing of the inhabitant, there are differences in who experiences hunger. People who are poor are more likely to experience hunger.

Areas experiencing poverty do not to have equitable access to food resources which can expose them to consequences like food insecurity, health conditions, or even slow down a country's growth. According to The World Bank, in 2022, COVID-19 will result in an additional 198 million people living in extreme poverty. This can result in countries to suffer from severe food famine and crisis. To intensify the situation, a FAO-WEP report projects that 53 countries and territories, a total of 22 million people will face severe food insecurity and require urgent assistance.

As previously mentioned, there are vital impacts to health which can be further broken down into: Obesity, mental health disorders, chronic diseases, and malnutrition. People with lower incomes are more likely to be obese and to experience food insecurity. In a 12-state study involving 66,553 adults, those who reported food insecurity had 32 percent higher odds of being fat. Adults with food insecurity may rely on cheap, high-energy items, which can result in excessive energy consumption and obesity. Additionally, food insecurity increases risk of anxiety by 257% and depression by 253%. Not to mention, people who lack access to food have disproportionately higher incidence of chronic illnesses including diabetes mellitus and HIV/AIDS, which raises the expense of their medical care. This starts a vicious cycle of illness and expenditure that widens the gap between those who have access to food and those who don't. Furthermore, malnutrition places its heavy effects on children. For instance, in Nigeria, there is approximately 2 million children who are suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM), however only two out of every ten of these children are now receiving treatment.

Equally important, the geographical location affects accessibility of food resources to population as well. As regional remoteness increased, most items become more expensive, and the quality or freshness of the food produced declines. In remote settlements, food pricing and quality may discourage residents from choosing healthier options. Also, living in a rural area has certain difficulties that make paying for food more difficult, such as a lack of transportation, low-paying occupations, and underemployment. Apart from this, as supply chains grow more vulnerable due to pollution, there may be significant hazards to food security. Additional stress factors

include the loss of agricultural diversity, the decline of pollinators, and the increased susceptibility of monocultures to disease.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been working with governments and setting Sustainable Development Goals to decrease poverty and increase food resource accessibility. In this case, government intervention is crucial and indispensable in guaranteeing the promotion of food resources in areas of experiencing poverty. In addition, having the right to access enough food is a long-standing international human right to which many nations are committed. Several nations have already established and put into effect constitutional changes, national laws, strategies, policies, and programs during the past few decades with the goal of ensuring that everyone has access to food.

## Key Terms

**Food Insecurity** - A constant lack of access to sufficient food for a healthy, active existence.

**Food famine** - Scarcity of food in a sizeable section of a region or nation's population.

**Mental health disorders** - Also known as mental health illnesses, these can impact emotions, thoughts, and actions.

**Depression** - Characterized by persistent sadness and a lack of interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or enjoyable activities.

**Anxiety** - Feeling of fear, dread, and uneasiness.

**Chronic diseases** - Long-lasting conditions that usually can be controlled but not cured. A condition that lasts for a year or longer, necessitates continuous medical care, restricts daily activities, or both.

**Malnutrition** - Deficiencies, excesses, or imbalances in a person's intake of energy and/or nutrients.

**Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)** - Indicated by a very low weight for height (below -3z scores of the median WHO growth standards), by visible severe wasting, or by the presence of nutritional edema.

**Obesity** - A complicated condition characterized by high body fat which can raise the chances of various illnesses and conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and some malignancies.

**Diabetes mellitus** - A class of conditions that have an impact on how the body uses blood sugar (glucose). If left uncontrolled, it can lead to heart attacks, heart failure, stroke which might result in death.

**Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)** - A virus that targets and attacks the immune system of a body, increasing a person's exposure to further infections and diseases.

**Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS)** - Caused by and the final stage of HIV infection when the virus has caused severe immune system damage.

**Poverty** - Lack of resources to meet necessities like food, clothing, and shelter.

**Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)** - A nonprofit company that is run without the involvement of any government and whose main goal is to address social or political issues.

## General Overview

Food insecurity, poverty, and food distribution are frequently associated, both in developed and developing countries. Food security can be impacted by changes in the global economy, including increases in the price of food and oil, with low-income countries suffering the most. As a result, it reduces a country's capacity to develop its agricultural markets and economy. As a result, many children have and still are affected by food insecurity in poverty areas. According to Feeding America, there is a link between food insecurity and developmental delays in early children, a higher chance of developing long-term conditions like anemia and asthma, and behavioral issues in school-age children like hyperactivity, anxiety, and aggression. Furthermore, as stated by Mercy Corps, extremely poor children are more likely to be underfed and malnourished, especially in rural parts of low-income nations. Every three seconds, a kid dies from hunger in the world, and undernutrition is to blame for close to half of all fatalities in children below the age of five.

Equally important, the WFP specified that 82 countries with 345 million people are facing acute food insecurity. In agreement with the Iowa Food Bank Organization, child hunger alone damages the American economy at least \$28 billion annually because undernourished kids have worse academic performance and need more money for long-term health care. Moreover, due to medical expenses related to food instability and famine costed \$130.5 billion. Finally, the West and Central African Food Systems Transformation Initiative was introduced. Its goal is to create nutrient-dense, climate-adaptive, market-driven food systems in West and Central Africa to improve nutrition, raise incomes, and ensure food security in the face of climate change.

On top of that, inefficient distribution of food is another contributing factor to food insecurity which makes it harder for everyone to access adequate meals. To break it down, the absence of markets, inadequate market access, and inability to bear the costs of production and consumption are thus the main issues with the current distribution system. In developing nations, 16% of the rural population lacks easy access to a market, which frequently discourages farmers from selling their produce. Only one-third of farmers sell to markets, and it is believed that only 40% of every harvest is really marketed. Nevertheless, to get people and goods to the concentrated markets, there aren't many high-quality roads or railroads which can distribute food effectively. Routes for transportation are expensive and virtually always need public funding and upkeep. In many areas, especially rural Africa, poorly maintained roads are a major issue since they render an area inaccessible and slow down the flow of products. Likewise, the volume of post-harvest waste while transportation is a significant issue. An estimated 25% to 50% of all produced food is lost or squandered. Due to inadequate storage facilities, India loses around 7% of its yearly grain production and 30% of its annual fruit and vegetable production. Consequently, a shortage develops due to the amount of food that is wasted. Although the prices for consumers are greatly

increased by this shortfall, the income of the farmers who originally sold the produce is unaffected. As a result, the producers' revenues are either flat or declining, which feeds the cycles of hunger and poverty.

### *Japan*

Japan gives food aid to developing nations in the near term to prevent food shortages, and in the medium to long term, it seeks to help these nations raise and enhance agricultural productivity to prevent and eradicate the causes of food-related issues, including famine. A nonprofit organization named Food Bank Kansai was established in the city of Ashiya to collect food items from stores and restaurants that would otherwise be thrown away. After that, the food was freely given out and delivered to needy families across the neighborhood. With the aid of partners and volunteers, FBK also made deliveries to nearby food banks in addition to making direct deliveries to the homes and neighborhoods of those in need.

### *Sweden*

Through its extensive social programs, the Swedish government meets the necessities of its impoverished citizens. Everyone in the country, for instance, has access to universal social insurance, reducing their economic vulnerability and preventing widespread hunger in Sweden. In 2018, Sweden's social spending accounted for 26.1% of its GDP. These funds support low-income households' ability to meet their essential needs. Sweden also has groups that help those in need by providing them with food, clothing, and lodging, such as Sweden's City Missions. Government representatives, people, and the commercial sector are all included in the Swedish International Agriculture Network Initiative's efforts to end hunger. On a bigger scale, the government-funded initiative Smart City Sweden strives to eradicate hunger by emphasizing sustainability. For instance, Smart City Sweden has achieved this goal by interfering with international agribusiness. The group has contributed a sizable sum of money to improving agricultural productivity, bringing the globe one step closer to achieving food security.

### *Austria*

Since 1947, Austria has belonged to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. This group seeks to end hunger on a worldwide scale. Just under 1% of the FAO's budget, or roughly \$2.6 million, goes toward Austria's contribution, which may not seem like much. The ADA plays a role in helping nations that encounter difficulties in providing the same for their own populations. The ADA supports water sanitation initiatives in nations like Albania and Uganda. Governmental organizations in Austria are not the only ones supporting the struggle for access to clean water; nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) like CAREAustria are also supporting the cause. For instance, CAREAustria has assisted in bringing sanitation technology to regions of Ethiopia ravaged by conflict and violence.

### *United Kingdom (UK)*

From April 2018 to March 2019, The Trussell Trust, a British nonprofit organization whose goal is to eradicate poverty and hunger in the country, provided 1.6 million three-day emergency food packages. Children received about 577,618 of the emergency food supply. Furthermore, compared to the previous year, the amount of food distributed has increased by 18.8%. The UK NGO Fare Share is assisting in the fight against hunger in the country by donating leftover food to organizations that use it to prepare meals

for residents. 1,500 volunteers from the group have given 24,074 tons of food to charities thus far. An estimated 14.1 million pounds of food are contained here. Importantly, this will support 10,962 nonprofit organizations and neighborhood associations. In total, the group has given 57.3 million meals to people who are food insecure.

## Timeline of Events

Date	Description of event
1951	In a report titled "The World Food Problem," of the Rockefeller Center's Mexican Agricultural Program expressly conceptualized the topic of global food scarcity in terms of geopolitical security: hunger, brought on by overpopulation, was seen as a major contributor to political instability.
1960s	The Green Revolution aided in raising the nation's food production. The main objective of the green revolution was to spread cereals of high-yielding varieties (HYVs) to reduce hunger and poverty.
Early 1970s	The first recognizable "global food crisis" may have resulted from the convergence of economic and meteorological circumstances. The El Nino weather pattern, the oil crisis, the dissolution of Bretton Woods, and pressures related to globalization were all contributing reasons to this catastrophe. Increased meat eating was a contributing factor. To maintain its determination to consume more meat than Americans, the Soviet Union had to import massive amounts of grain, which increased global prices and caused shortages. Famine swept the southern hemisphere, from Bangladesh to West Africa.
2000	By volunteers, the Second Harvest Japan project was launched. Their objective was to create Japan's first system of food safety. They have built up food pantry systems that go to restaurants and stores to collect leftovers that are still edible despite having passed their sell-by date. The SHJ project then distributes the food to pantries.
June 2009	The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) reported in June 2009 that there were one billion hungry people in the globe. They are mainly located in developing countries, and the financial crisis has made their hunger worse.
June 2012	The Zero Hunger Challenge was introduced. It requires: Zero stunted children under the age of two; 100% year-round access to adequate food; 100% increases in smallholder productivity and income; and 0% food loss or waste.

- 2018 A Strategic Partner Agreement was signed by the Swedish government and the United Nations World Food Programme to work together to end world hunger. With \$370 million, the government gave the organization its largest contribution ever. These funds support victims of food crises by providing food aid. Additionally, Sweden's government collaborates with the UN on international objectives, one of which focuses on hunger. The goal is to eradicate hunger globally while also enhancing food security and advancing nutrition.
- 2019 In what was the fourth-largest food crisis in the world in 2019, 9.3 million Venezuelans, or roughly a third of the population, were experiencing moderate to severe levels of hunger.
- 2020 An estimated 97 million people fell into extreme poverty because of COVID-19. Women lost at least \$800 billion in income due to job losses worldwide in 2020. Over one third of young children under the age of five had stunted growth in India and nearly 190 million individuals were undernourished. Stunting affected 149.2 million (22.0 percent) of children under the age of five worldwide in 2020
- 2020 End Hunger (UK), a partnership of 40 groups, is likewise fighting to eradicate hunger and poverty in the country. This group pushed the British government to provide funding for holiday meals and school programming. The government committed up to 11.8 million pounds in 2020 to support food-insecure families and offer nutritious meals to kids. The National School Breakfast Programme, which offers breakfast delivery funds and healthy food deliveries to schools around the U.K., will now serve up to 650 additional schools.
- September 2021 In September 2021, Kenya proclaimed the drought that continues to wreak havoc in the Horn of Africa a national catastrophe. It has caused about 2.4 million cattle deaths, dried-up water sources, and drastically diminished crops over the course of the past four unsuccessful seasons.
- 2021 Around 46 million more people were impacted by hunger in 2020 than in 2020, and 150 million more since the COVID-19 pandemic epidemic, bringing the total number of hungry people on the planet to 828 million in 2021.
- June 2022 By June 2022, there were 345 million individuals in 82 nations who were experiencing acute food insecurity, up from 135 million in 2019. This increase was caused by the conflict in the Ukraine, supply chain problems, and the ongoing economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

October 2022

The average price of wheat, maize, and rice in October 2022 is 18%, 27%, and 10% more than it was in October 2021, respectively. In the meantime, prices for rice are 21% lower than in January 2021, but those for wheat and maize are 38% and 4% higher, respectively. 21 nations had enacted 26 food export bans as of October 10, 2022, while eight had implemented 12 export restrictions.

## UN Involvement, Relevant Resolutions, Treaties and Events

- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN places a priority on achieving food security for all people. Making sure individuals have frequent access to enough wholesome food to live active, healthy lifestyles is its primary goal. Food security was defined in 1983 by the FAO as "Ensuring that all people at all times have both physical and economic access to the essential food that they need" based on the balance between the demand and supply sides of the equation. High-level plans, like CELAC's Plan for Food Security, Nutrition, and Hunger Eradication 2025, have been effective in reducing hunger and inspire confidence in other regions.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) is constantly responding to emergencies and seeks to provide food assistance to more than 80 million people in 80 countries. WFP, however, also strives to combat future hunger.
- Goal 2 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to ensure food security and find long-term solutions to abolish all types of hunger by 2030. The goal is to guarantee that everyone, everywhere has access to enough wholesome food to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Better food access and extensive promotion of sustainable agriculture are necessary to meet this goal.
- The World Bank Group is providing up to \$30 billion which is accessible over a period of 15 months in areas like agriculture, nutrition, social protection, water, and irrigation as part of an all-encompassing, international response to the ongoing food security crisis. With this funding, initiatives will be made to promote the production of food and fertilizer, improve food systems, promote commerce, and assist producers and impoverished households.

## Possible Solutions

The war between two of the largest producers of fertilizer, oilseeds, and staple grains worldwide, Russia and Ukraine, has not only increased the number of refugees in Ukraine, but also 1 in 3 people are estimated to be food insecure according to WFP. Not to mention, the results of this war was disruption of the global food supply chain, export restrictions and a relatively high oil price. Furthermore, COVID-19 has heavily impacted the world economically, physically, and socially. This pandemic has caused rising costs and shortages of food items which had a huge impact on low-income countries. As hunger and food insecurity increases due to current events, humans have the right to have food to sustain life for all and food resources should be equally distributed to developing countries.

*Decrease commercializing*

Food insecurity will fall if food is grown to feed the community or country. If there are sufficient food crops available on the market, farmers can produce additional food crops as well as cash crops. If there is enough food on the market, there will be a lower risk of it being commercialized. Additionally, governments ought to put in place procedures that let producers determine when there is enough food for everyone.

#### *Improve level of industrialization*

By fostering large grain growers and leading grain production enterprises, this will encourage farmers to join forces with production and management enterprises, to form a model of cooperation in production and marketing, develop economies of scale, and reduce operating costs by extending production chains. In addition, seizing the major opportunity of new infrastructure, increasing investment in new grain infrastructure and the support for the construction of distributed urban and rural cold chain, intelligent supply chain system, large-scale industrial production bases, and intelligent grain storage equipment, and promote the implementation of key technologies such as artificial intelligence in the grain industry.

#### *Reduce food waste*

Eliminating food waste is conducive to better safeguard our national food security. Due to the behavior of catering waste, it leads to the invisible waste of a lot of food that should have been reasonably used, and over time, it weakens our national food security ability. It is beneficial to save social resources. Food and beverage waste is not only a waste of food itself, more important is also a waste of social resources, such as capital, social atmosphere and so on.

#### *Increase awareness in climate change*

Crop yields, livestock production, and seafood catches may all decline because of climate change. In Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, where agricultural families are disproportionately poor and vulnerable, around 80% of the world's population is most at danger from crop failures and famine brought on by climate change. This will exacerbate the current problems with food production and put more strain on the world's food security. As a result, increasing awareness of a change in the climate would lead to a substantial reduction effect. Additionally, reducing emissions and more efficient irrigation methods would build food security against climate change.

#### *Government intervention*

Due to unjust trade regulations, some farmers are unable to feed the local population. Food has already been commercialized by powerful corporations, making it more difficult for small-scale farmers to sell their goods. Therefore, governments ought to enhance such policies and ensure that participation is equitable for all.

#### *Assistance programs*

Because of inadequate roads, storage facilities, and food processing equipment, some farmers are unable to get their produce to market. Instead of being delivered to those in need or processed, it ends up going bad in the farms. More food will be available on the market and the levels of food insecurity may decrease if the infrastructure is strengthened. It is crucial to note that food resources

should be accessible to all people, and assistance programs should direct especially to those in poverty.

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