Introduction

Food insecurity, lack of agricultural development, and nutrition around the world can be an alarming issue to families and individuals who live in areas which do not have a strong foundation of agriculture. Regions such as refugee camps and areas of post-conflict zones suffer from food insecurity, and due to war; crops have been damaged and any hopes of agriculture development have vanished. Currently, conflict and war are the biggest reasons for food insecurity as it stops agricultural development and destroys infrastructure. This alarming issue at hand should be a priority to all nations present in the UN General Assembly; since it targets the Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger. Food insecurity is one of the greatest epidemics of our current generation since it affects a lot of people around the world. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are currently 337 million children in areas of conflict who do not have access to a sustainable and stable source of food.

As well as that, across the globe, there are currently 224 million undernourished children, 462 million underweight adults and 836 million people live in extreme poverty defined as less living on less than $1.25 a day. Development in agriculture in rural areas and securing better food security in that region would solidify progress towards ending the suffering of millions. Lack of Food Security may result in a substantial amount of people emigrating and seeking refuge in different countries as economic migrants. Furthermore, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates around 815 million out of the world’s 7.6 billion people are undernourished. This is also caused due to the low levels of food security in the region. If this number does not decrease it may cause extensive dilemmas for the international community. This further shows us that even though through the amazing technological advancements in agriculture development, world hunger still hasn’t gone down; however, it’s gradually increasing. Other than war and conflict, various factors affect food security. Factors include but are not limited to overpopulation, climate change, and water scarcity.

Many nations and organizations have taken the initiative to eradicate world hunger and increase worldwide food security in various methods. However, locating a sustainable and stable method of
maintaining food security should be the next goal on the agenda. A simple way of doing that would be by increasing funds into agricultural programmes through several UN organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). By 2050 the demand for food will be 60% greater than what it is right now and we will be forced to be able to feed 9 billion people. Thus, if a solution is not to be found in the upcoming years the damage will be irreversible by 2050.

**Definition of Key Terms**

**Food Insecurity**

Inconsistencies in a person’s access to food. If a person or a group has a problem with the availability, usage, or distribution of food, then this gives an indicator that they suffer from food insecurity. Lack of availability of food can be caused by a lack of agricultural development.

**Agriculture**

It is the practice of farming, growing and harvesting crops, crops are then used for food and trade. Agriculture plays a huge role in food security and nutrition as it has a positive correlation with levels of food security and nutrition in a region.

**Nutrition**

Nutrition is the process of providing a range of food that provides the people with the necessary nutrients for growth and living. The availability of nutrition determines the status of food security in the nation.

**Extreme Poverty**

Extreme poverty is living when an individual lives with less than $1.90 a day. This therefore adjusts the GDP per person in the region. High levels of poverty often cause low levels of food security.

**Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)**

Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is a method used to compare the purchasing power of different currencies and is measured by the number of services and goods in the region. Countries with lower PPP are often the ones who have higher numbers of food insecurity and less nutrition.

**Famine**
The scarcity of food in a region, due to uncontrollable events such as climate change or the destruction of crops. Conflict and war can also affect famine. Famine is mainly caused by food insecurity but can be affected by other factors.

Post Conflict Zones

It is an area where a conflict situation in which open warfare has come to an end. Post-conflict zones usually contain destroyed infrastructure, for example, Somalia’s current state after the civil war, where most of their land is currently destroyed and their people are displaced. Post-conflict zones have a severe lack of agriculture due to war and therefore suffer from food insecurity.

Malnutrition

A person or people not having access to enough nutrients due to either food shortages or lack of accessibility, and therefore not having the recommended intake of nutrition and energy. Symptoms for this include significantly shorter height caused by lack of food, significantly low weight, or insufficient vitamins and minerals. Malnutrition is caused when a region doesn’t have regular access to food.

Background Information

Food shortage is one of the most vital issues in today’s world; many deaths are being caused by the consumption of unsafe or contaminated food, and starvation. As well as that, many vulnerable communities are living through famines in some of the most unfortunate parts of the world.
Reasons for food insecurity

Food security is defined as the access of a population to a reliable source of food and nutrition. Reliable, in this context, refers to the sustainability of the current source of nutrition and the probability that a population will have access to a proper source of nutrition in the near future. Food insecurity is declared when it is highly probable that a demographic will not have access to a healthy source of nutrition in the near future or they currently do not have access to such a source.

Food insecurity can be caused by civil war and political instability, which goes on to affect agricultural growth and eventually a country’s nutrition. In many countries such as Somalia and Syria, political instability becomes one of the most widespread causes of lack of nutrition. When the government and the people are in conflict, transportation of food to rural areas is disrupted due to weapons of mass destruction and bombings. War also destroys arable land and ruins the soil, this further increases food insecurity and decreases the availability of food.

Moreover, climate change and overpopulation play a huge role in agricultural development and the sustainability of food. The sudden change in climate has affected many regions as the number of floods, droughts and natural disasters have seen an increase over the past couple of years. This is evident in floods in Japan and Southeast Asia, in addition to droughts in various parts of Africa such as Climate change can also affect water levels, as there are possibilities of whole farm and damage crops, or limit the amount of water and increase water scarcity. With the increase in climate change also comes an increase in the population of the Earth. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, CO2 emissions increased by 49% from 1900 to 2002. As the population of the world increases the demand for food increases; therefore an efficient solution is needed to fulfil the needs of the people.

Integrated Phase Classification

The Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) also known as the integrated food security phase classification is a system of classification for levels of food insecurity in a region. The system contains five different phases which show the food severity in an area. The IPC is often used to address the severity of food insecurity.

Phase 1 - Minimal Food Insecurity

This is considered to be in a society where there is a secure access to food for the vast majority of households. This food access is continuous and reliable for the future.

Phase 2 - Stressed
This is when a small, but significant part of the population is left without secure access to food, or in the case where they have to sacrifice other necessities in order to obtain food.

**Phase 3 - Crisis**

This is where there is noticeable malnutrition in a household.

**Phase 4 and 5**

These phases are referred to as Emergency and Famine, where malnutrition is widespread and food security is very low. Countries that suffer from food insecurity and lack of agricultural development usually fall between phases 3 to 5.

**Somalia and the IPC**

According to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), 1.5 million people stand at risk in Somalia, with fifty thousand children facing death. This is the second famine in the last decade in Somalia, the first being in 2011, this being significantly worse than the first. Although the statistics are better than the projected outcomes of 2.7 million people at-risk in February, these 1.5 million have been classified as Emergency, Phase 4 on the IPC. Thus they require immediate care in order to avoid Famine. Moreover, an additional 3.1 million people were classified as Stressed, Phase 3. This resulted in a total of 4.6 million people suffering from severe food insecurity and requiring care in the near future. To combat this, humanitarian organizations and many countries have attempted to continue providing humanitarian assistance while simultaneously publicizing the issue and raising funds on its behalf. Many NGOs such as Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Program (WFP) and UNICEF have raised funds through charities and donations from other countries in order to provide food and shelter for the people of Somalia. According to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), $710 million were given to the people of Somalia for drought relief activities.

**Yemen and the IPC**

Yemen is facing one of the greatest food crises in its history, classified as phase 5 on the IPC: Famine. Currently, 22 million people need immediate humanitarian aid and malnutrition levels are at an all-time high. According to the World Food Program (WFP), a total of 50,000 children died due to hunger and disease in 2017. Yemen is currently host to 1.8 million undernourished children and 8 million children who do not have secure, reliable access to food and water. This famine is the product of the Yemeni Civil War, a conflict that began on 22nd March 2015, and has since continued. Although food is arriving at the ports of Yemen, it has no way to reach the
people of Yemen due to blockades constructed along the coast. Any food that does pass the blockades is not able to be distributed among the civilians.

Famine and Starvation

The United Nations classifies malnutrition as a case of starvation where 20% of the population face extreme food shortages with limited ability to cope; acute malnutrition rates exceed 30% for children under 5; there are 2 deaths per 10 000 people, or 4 deaths per 10 000 children per day. Famine and starvation almost always show their effects in symptoms such as disease and epidemics (for example cholera in Yemen), as malnutrition leads to weaker immune systems and therefore a greater chance of getting the diseases. Malnutrition also affects the mental capacity of children and there for disrupts their ability to receive information and eventually disturb their education. The 21st century has seen relatively few cases of famine as compared to the 20th century, which saw significant amounts; however, there remain areas around the world where famine is prevalent and more severe than ever in history.

Agriculture

Agriculture is one of the main pillars that build up a country’s food security, and this evident in countries such as China, USA and Indonesia which have high levels of agricultural development. As well as that, agricultural development is very closely linked to ensuring food security. When agricultural productivity is high, food prices lower, increasing accessibility to the public. Agricultural growth can have a huge impact on a country’s economy, as produce can then be traded with other nations for goods and money. The FAO estimates that the potential annual increase in global welfare from freer trade in agriculture as high as US$165 billion. This further shows us that countries should invest more into their agriculture sector which will then have positive outcomes, some of which are ensuring food security and increasing trade profit.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is one of the most well-known organizations when it comes to dealing with environmental issues. This organization has shown great efforts in solving the issue at hand, as it has made food security and nutrition one of its priorities. They are currently working on providing all countries with an opportunity to voice the issues of their availability of food. This is being
achieved by setting up multiple interviews with citizens of those countries and hosting people from different affected places, in their region or around them. “The listening revolution” podcast is a great example of this. Furthermore, the FAO has worked on ensuring food security in refugee camps, which includes areas such as Uganda (which now has a population which is 89% food secure, this was mentioned in the final report the FAO made regarding food security in Uganda, and has access to at least three meals a day) and other countries in east Africa. They have done that by entertaining donations from the international committee as well as funds provided by the UN. The FAO has already reviewed multiple cases of food insecurity around the globe and have released a couple of well-known studies regarding the issue such as “The state of food security and nutrition in the world” as well as “2017 Near East and North Africa Overview of food security and nutrition” in addition to many more reports regarding food security. The FAO has worked efficiently in taking the initiative of combating this issue alongside other organizations. Not to mention the FAO is part of the HLTF which is mentioned above.

The High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on Global Food and Nutrition Security

As food prices continued to rise during the year of 2008 due to the financial crisis, the former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon decided to establish and fund the High-Level Task Force (HLTF). Ban Ki Moon is the chairman of the Task Force, assisted in this function by the FAO Director General as Vice-Chair. The HLTF currently holds 23 members mainly made up of UN agencies, funds and other organizations such as FAO, International Labor Organization (ILO) and UNICEF. The main goal of this high-level task force is to combat the increase of food prices and to also ensure that there are food and nutrition security around the globe, such as in regions such as Sub Saharan Africa. The HLTF later produced the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). The CFA outlined activities related to meeting the immediate needs of people, such as investing in food assistance as well as activities related to the longer-term structural needs. This included scaling up investment in agriculture within developing countries. In the years after the creation of the HLTF, the international community experienced the global
economic slowdown, with oil prices decreasing, leading to many commodities and food prices decreasing along with it, declaring the food crisis over. By June of 2012, the issue of the “soaring food crisis” was over; it was agreed that the HLTF would refocus its activities on advancing the Secretary-General’s vision of a world without hunger, which is the Zero Hunger Challenge. The HLTF now plays a big role in ensuring food security around the world, since there isn’t another crisis such as the “soaring food crisis” present, and could perhaps be the primary key to solving this issue. After the assignment of the Sustainable Development Goals by the UN, the HLTF devoted its efforts towards SDG 2- Zero Hunger. They are doing this by reconsidering their goals and updating their framework. They are also working in the field of food security and nutrition ever since its establishment.

Japan

Food Security has become one of Japan's main focuses. The nation has made significant technological developments to aid or improve Food security. In recent years, the topic of food insecurity has become widely discussed in Japan. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, have acknowledged and established a new goal for Japan with regards to the issue of food insecurity. The goal is to enable all citizens to have access to quality food at reasonable prices. Currently in Japan, deaths caused by malnutrition make up 0.18% of the total deaths in the country, which is one of the lowest rates amongst all countries, due in a large part to innovative technologies. For example Japan has introduced various new technological innovations such as using Artificial Intelligence and the internet in farming which allows the nation to further advance to their goal of a permanent solution. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in Japan, has acknowledged and established a new goal for Japan with regards to the issue of food scarcity. Examples of some technological innovations that Japan has begun to execute is the introduction of high-rise urban farming and indoor food factories, which has increased production yield and made the whole process faster. Japan is one of many countries in the UN that has shown that it is open to transfer its technologies to help other places that are food insecure such as post-conflict zones, this shows that Japan has taken the initiative to take a step into solving the issue of food insecurity.

United States of America (USA)

On November 3, 1961, the former president of the USA, John F. Kennedy, founded the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The USAID is an independent agency of the United States federal government that is primarily responsible for administering civilian foreign aid and development assistance. The USA currently spends $1.62 trillion annually on food (as part of the annual US government budget) and beverages. In 2016, enactment of the Global Food Security Act solidified
the U.S. Government’s continued, bipartisan commitment to reducing hunger, malnutrition and poverty around the world. Ever since then, the USA has been playing a big role in ensuring food security around the world. Although the USA plays a significant role in combating food insecurity, food insecurity is still prevalent in the nation. As of 2018 around 11.1% of US households were food insecure, which is approximately 14.3 million citizens, this is mentioned in an article written by Yusuke Kuwayama who is a well-known researcher in the field of environmental issues.

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**

The UNHCR has been working alongside the World Food Program (WFP) to implement Multi-Storey gardens (MSG) in refugee camps through its partners in Kenya and Ethiopia. These gardens are part of a food security strategy to ensure dietary diversity which enhances refugee contributions to their own food consumption. Since these areas have been suffered from conflicts and disasters, at times women lose their ability to feed or provide their children with sufficient nutrition. Therefore, the UNHCR seeks to provide nutrition to women and their children in times of crisis or refugee camps. This was done by bypassing the resolution “Refugee and displaced women and children” E/RES/1991/23 which states in its third clause that the UN and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) provide children and women refugees with their needs and resources. The High Commissioner for Refugees has put a high priority on improving the nutritional status of refugee populations by decreasing the burden of anaemia and other micronutrient deficiencies. This is further carried about by providing multiple medications to refugees affected by said deficiencies. The UNHCR works with 134 countries to this day and their efforts are primarily evident in countries such as Syria and Jordan.

**United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)**

The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) was established in 1972 as the international arm providing guidance and governance to environmental issues. One of the topics that UNEP addresses currently is food security. The UNEP has had many projects successful which regard the environment, such as water sanitation programmes, controlling nitrogen levels from climate change and various research documentations in climate change. It has now added the issue of food insecurity to its framework and has updated its framework to adapt to this issue. Ever since 2012, the UNEP has funded many projects such as domestic water and sanitation in LEDC’s and “Food production and Food security”. This will help find feasible solutions to the issue of food insecurity in areas which have been destroyed due to war or natural disasters. UNEP is currently putting efforts in order to help eradicate food insecurity.
## Timeline of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description of event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 November 1974</td>
<td>The Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition: This made it a fundamental human right for a person to be free from hunger and malnutrition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 November 1996</td>
<td>Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action: This placed the foundations for diverse paths for the common objective of food security.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 12 1999</td>
<td>General Comment 12: The Right to Adequate Food, which discusses the right to adequate food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 27 2004</td>
<td>Adoption of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food: This invited the FAO to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group to develop a set of Voluntary Guidelines to support member states.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 12 2008</td>
<td>First meeting of the UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis which created the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 18 2009</td>
<td>Adoption of the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security: This pledged and renewed member states commitment to eradicate hunger globally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 25 2015</td>
<td>Adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: This aimed to achieve the goal of zero hunger (Goal 2).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, General Assembly resolution 3180, 16 November 1974, (A/RES/3180)
- UN resolution on Agriculture development, food security and nutrition, 18 January 2019 (A/RES/73/253).
- Security Council resolution on conflict-induced food security, 24 May 2018, (S/RES/2417)
- Rome declaration on food security, 2009
- Second International Conference on Nutrition, 19-21st November 2014
- General Assembly resolution on Agriculture development and food security, 31 March 2010, (A/RES/73/253)
- Rio +20 challenge: zero hunger, 2012
- Food Assistance Convention, 2012

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Funds and Aid

A lot of well-known organizations have been working steadily to combat global food insecurity and specifically helping refugees and displaced people. Funds and aids have been provided primarily in areas of post-conflict zones such as Somalia where they received consistent funds to save lives; a report released by the UN estimated 1.6 billion dollars invested into Somalia. Unfortunately, this has not been equitably distributed, as refugee camps have not gained an equal share of these funds. The FAO has worked since 1990 to reduce the number of undernourished people globally, and has decreased it from 23.3% to 12.9% at present. This shows us that the FAO’s funds and aids have made a difference towards the issue of food security, agriculture and nutrition. The FAO has been supplying food to insecure regions and displaced people with funds and humanitarian aid such as; medicine, food, water and shelter. Ever since its establishment in 1990, globally, more than one billion people were considered food insecure, but by 2015 that number reached 797 million, according to the UN annual food security report. This further proves that the FAO are making significant improvements to eradicating food insecurity. We should praise this progress but also remember the long way we have to go to completely achieve food security. On the other hand, all the progress that has been made so far has been relying heavily on providing funds, which the FAO could have used more sustainably in other sectors such as agricultural advancements and nutrition. Many organizations work hand in hand with the FAO by contributing funds and aid. Some of these are the World Food Programme, Feeding America and the
United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Funds and aid assist in sending humanitarian aid to countries in need, as well as providing them with their necessities to maintain agricultural development.

**Modern Food Technology**

Modern food technology can be used to help reduce food insecurity as it would provide more efficient ways of agriculture and the fostering of crops. Natural and man-made disasters affect food security drastically as it limits the accessibility of food. As well as that, it also limits the land used for agriculture. For example, Madagascar has experienced multiple natural disasters which eventually cost the nation $333 million (according to the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery) of economic damage. Therefore; the FAO along with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) came up with the idea of providing people with drought-resistant seeds and root crops in Africa to help maintain the food supply. The evidence in favour of drought-resistant seeds is strong, says Kate Fehlenberg, from the Drought Tolerant Maize for Africa Seed Scaling project (DTMASS), funded by USAID. 2.9 million farmers in 13 countries which were covered by an earlier DTMASS project found an increase of 10% in their crop yield after sowing a variety of drought-tolerant hybrids. Another example would be the Zamboanga city in the Philippines, which is an area that has been affected by the conflict between the government forces and rebels. The use of modern food technology has made access to food easier and has increased produce. The FAO helped the people affected to restore their means of food production by providing fishery and crop harvesting tools to civilians. Modern farming technology is very common and has been made very accessible by the FAO as they have been offering it in huge amounts and at a very cheap price. For example in Kazakhstan, FAO designed an app which helps milk processors to geo-locate current and potential raw milk suppliers. This helped the farmers increase production and made Kazakhstan closer to national food security.
Possible Solutions

Summits

Solutions for this issue are very broad and widespread, that’s why UN member states and organizations should consider making the issue of ensuring global food security a priority. This is an important solution if we take into consideration that only 15 major events that tackle this topic, were noticed in the past 76 years. A great way to implement this would be by having more summits included to make sure that this topic is brought up in the General Assembly more often. The General Assembly is the biggest UN organ and when an issue is brought up to the UNGA, more countries should unite together to try and attempts to solve the issue. This solution would be feasible to all member states as it would be similar to UN General Assembly meetings. Benefits of having more summits would be, keeping the issue a priority, as well as it helping member states to find more solutions to solve the issue through means of negotiation.

On the contrary, it might not be a very strong solution since implementations of acts and resolutions should be seen instead of additional negotiation. LEDC’s will be given priority whilst solving the problem since they are more prone to food insecurity and lack of agricultural development. Solutions for MEDC’s could circle the country’s economy and benefit from it. This would buy investing more in the food production sector. During summits, funds and aids (as mentioned above) can be included as the methods of solving this issue and countries could participate in raising the funds via donations and other options.

Reducing food waste

Another solution to implement could address reducing food waste. The FAO estimated that one-third of the food produced each year is wasted which is approximately 1.3 billion tons. In many developed countries, endeavours have started reducing food waste in different methods. Methods such as educating the public on recycling techniques and efficient product use have been implemented by many nations. In a similar way, we can hopefully provide more food in regions which are in need by reducing the waste in areas that have a greater supply for food. An example of this is in Denmark. In Denmark, the WeFood project has opened two stores which sell excess food that is still safe, hygienic, and edible. WeFood is run by a non-profit organization which uses its funds to help combat food insecurity worldwide. Projects like WeFood could be enlarged and used in more areas where food waste is most prevalent.

However, this project may not be accessible in certain areas that have been heavily destroyed, as stores will not be a feasible option. Nevertheless, if this solution were to be implemented, it would
decrease the amount of food wasted annually, while at the same time, it would not cost the international community any losses.

**Education**

The governments of countries currently facing food shortages should invest in educating their population in biotechnology, as experts in this field would aid advancements in the agriculture sector. If the countries in question are Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDC’s), and do not have the finances to do so, UN member states could pledge to invest further in the field of biotechnology and share their findings for countries facing food shortages to understand and implement new methods. A collaboration between MEDC’s and LEDC’s is an example, as the USA is a member state and has conducted extensive research in biotechnology. By publishing such findings, LEDC’s could benefit immensely.

**Guiding Questions**

1. What has your country done to help ensure food security?
2. What would you recommend developed countries to do in order to help solve this ongoing issue?
3. Why do you think food insecurity is still an issue to this day although we have reached a very far point in technological advancement?
4. Why do you think that refugee camps and areas of post-conflict zones are prone to food insecurity the most?
5. How can nations use the internet and social media to make people more aware of the situations happening in post-conflict zones regarding food insecurity?

**Bibliography**


