



Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee

Topic 2: Development of transboundary solutions in order to guarantee food security and to combat poverty

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1. Definition of Key Terms

Food Security: physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet people's need

Food insecurity: lack of access to enough good, healthy and culturally appropriate food

Undernourishment: not having enough to feed

Malnutrition: not having the right balance of nutrients

Chronic malnutrition: a condition that children develop when they do not receive the right balance of nutrients in the first two years of life, resulting in an irreversible arrest of their physical and cognitive development

Famine: widespread lack of food in a definite area caused by several factors

Poverty: not having access to the goods needed to satisfy basic human needs

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals



SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

2. Introduction

When we talk about food security we intend that people at all times have physical and economic access under normal conditions to a right quantity of food with an adequate quality in order to satisfy their needs. Since it should involve all the suggestions described, ensuring food for everyone is a hard challenge. Food security is hard to measure, so usually it is food insecurity that is measured in order to estimate data; we have this condition when all the characteristics of food security are missing due to a lack of food, resources or an improper use of them. A key element in a strategy for food security is the reduction of poverty, that can make more of the basic human needs available. Poverty has always been present within all organized societies, especially in less developed countries, and it has increased over the last few decades, but every country is warmly invited to collaborate through partnerships in order to improve the life of the most vulnerable people.

3. Background information

We can consider the proposal made by Yugoslavia in the early 1930s as the first introduction of the world food problem into the international political area, in which the state suggested to spread information about the food position in representative countries of the world. In those years the Health Division of the League of Nations had already submitted a report which showed an acute food shortage in less developed countries, taking into account for the first time the existence of hunger and malnutrition in the world.

In 1945, during World War II, the Food and Agriculture Organization was established and it organized its first World Food Survey one year later, which tackled the immediate food crisis but also drew up a set of proposals related to food production. At the end the FAO found out that 1/3 of the global population didn't have access to food, making a distinction between those who were suffering from chronic malnutrition and from famine.

In October 1960 the United Nations General Assembly established the World Food Programme (WFP).

One year later, the World Health Organization and FAO created the Codex Alimentarius Commission in order to protect consumers' health and regulate food safety.

In 1974 the United Nations World Food Conference took place in Rome in order to agree on measures to ensure the end of suffering from food insecurity within a decade and for the first time food security was recognized as a common concern of all nations.

During the last decades, due to bad climatic conditions that caused the reduction of cereal production, different countries had to face food crisis where food insecurity and malnutrition have contributed to an increase of them. For example, between 1979-80 a big number of



refugees had to leave Afghanistan and Cambodia due to the food crisis; a drought in Africa lasted from 1983 to 1985, and again in 1992 a crisis due to unfavourable weather affected the harvests. These episodes captured the attention of the international community, that invested more resources in trying to solve the logistical problems related to the availability of food commodities in countries affected by malnutrition. In response to the general food crisis new governing body systems were created such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), a Committee on Food Security (CFS) and the Global International Early Warning System (GIEWS), working with FAO; the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programme (CFA) and the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) working with WFP.

In 1996 in Rome FAO organized the World Food Summit in which delegates of 180 countries have participated and drew up a plan of action to create conditions that would have reduced hunger before 2015; the result was the Rome Declaration on World Food Security that affirmed the right of having access to sufficient food to anyone and to be free from hunger.

Nowadays hunger, malnutrition and poverty are still predominant factors in people's lives. The 10% of the global population live in extreme poverty conditions and almost 800 million people are suffering from hunger, and it remains an alarming problem in regions such as Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, both East and Middle ones, and Southern America. In 2000 global leaders signed the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which they agreed to try to achieve the eight United Nations MDGs to combat poverty, hunger, illiteracy, discrimination by the year 2015. After the expiration date, the UN adopted the SDGs, 17 goals that call to action to end poverty and ensure prosperity with 2030 as deadline.

4. Major Countries Involved

Public action is vital as high and volatile food prices continue to affect the poorest people in the world. Seventy-five percent of the world's poor live in rural areas, and for their livelihoods many rely on agriculture. Furthermore, higher prices of food have increased undernourishment.

In April 2019 FAO published a report in which it drew up a list of the 10 countries that are facing food insecurity problem at that time and most of them are located in Africa. According to it, the countries at risk are Yemen, South Sudan, Venezuela, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Haiti, Afghanistan and Nigeria. In general, they report says that countries facing conflicts or economic crisis are the most vulnerable and the most likely to suffer from the effects of food insecurity.

- **Yemen**

Yemen is one of the countries that is at high risk in terms of food security. Because of the prolonged conflict, the economic situation in Yemen is likely to continue to deteriorate, which could lead to further increases in prices for essential food and non-



food items and thus threaten further access to food.

- **South Sudan**

The more than five-year-old war in South Sudan has left the country in desperate humanitarian and macroeconomic conditions. About 4.14 million people have been displaced and it is estimated that 6.87 million people will be food deprived.

- **Venezuela**

According to a new study, the ongoing political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela has led to increased food insecurity and malnutrition. Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore scientists say that 80% of households remain food insecure.

- **Haiti**

An unfavourable crop season compounded by high inflation in Haiti has resulted in increased food insecurity levels. The political situation in the country has caused 2.6 million people to be severely insecure.

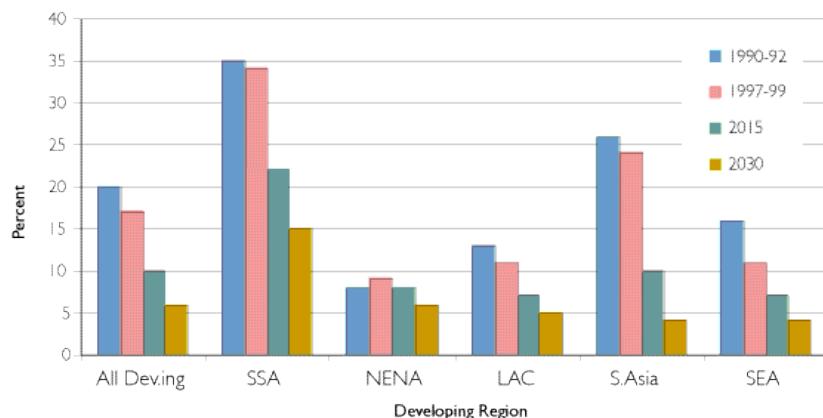


Figure 1: Proportion of Undernourished in Developing Regions. Actual and FAO Baseline Projections

5. UN Involvement

The UN has always been highly involved with the issue of combating poverty and guaranteeing food security. The UN has set goals to achieve the necessary. One of the most



critical dates is 2030. By 2030 The UN is aiming to:

- End hunger and maintain access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food throughout the year by all people, especially the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including children.
- Ensure sustainable food production systems and introduce robust agricultural practices that increase productivity and output, help maintain habitats, enhance capacity to respond to climate change, extreme weather, drought, floods and other disasters, and slowly improve the quality of land and soil.

Furthermore, The UN has also conceived organizations and a scale to combat the issue of food insecurity and poverty which are:

- **The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO):** the FAO was established in 1945 as a specialized agency of the United Nations. The FAO leads international efforts to address poverty and boost local economies by encouraging its Member States to modernize and develop agriculture.
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD):** Founded in 1977, the goal of IFAD is to catalyze country and global development for rural populations in order to overcome hunger and achieve food security by healthy and resilient living.
- **World Bank:** The World Bank was founded in 1944 and is actively involved in financing projects and programs for food.
- **The Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES):** The FIES is created by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; it is a Survey Module (FIES-SM) which consists of eight questions regarding people's access to adequate food, and can be easily integrated into various types of population surveys. This offers a common food insecurity metric that can be used around the world to monitor and research food insecurity.

6. Useful Links

<http://www.fao.org/3/y6265e/y6265e03.htm>

<http://www.fao.org/70>

<http://www.fao.org/WFS/>

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/food-security-and-poverty-a-precarious-balance>

<http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ERP/uni/F4D.pdf>

<https://www.wfp.org/nutrition>



<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>

<http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/meeting/009/y9825e/y9825e.pdf>

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2019/june/who-are-the-world-s-food-insecure-identifying-the-risk-factors-of-food-insecurity-around-the-world/>

<https://www.agrimarketing.com/s/124651>

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/un-names-10-countries-facing-food-insecurity/1455259>

<http://research.un.org/en/foodsecurity/key-un-bodies>

<http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/241/en/>

<https://www.globalgoals.org/2-zero-hunger>

<https://www.unenvironment.org/regions/asia-and-pacific/regional-initiatives/supporting-resource-efficiency/sustainable-food>

<https://sudan.un.org/en/sdgs/2>