



Shenzhen College of International Education Model

United Nations (SCIEMUN) Conference 2024



**UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Background Guide

**Topic: Eliminating Global Hunger and
Ensuring Food Security**

Committee: General Assembly

Topic: Eliminating Global Hunger and Ensuring Food Security

Deputy Chair: Taryn Lin



Letter from the Chairs

Esteemed delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the SCIEMUN2024 and the General Assembly (GA). We are honored to have you join us as part of this thought-provoking committee, and we look forward to sharing different perspectives with you.

My name is Taryn Lin, and I am thrilled to be serving as your deputy chair for this committee, along with the chair Max Liang.

In the General Assembly, we will be tracking the topic of Analyzing the Ethical, Political, and Social Implications of Artificial Intelligence, as well as the topic of Eliminating Global Hunger and Ensuring Food Security. These topics will challenge you to think critically, requiring innovative solutions and diplomatic abilities.

As a delegate, you are expected to prepare your opening speech in advance, talk about your solutions, and raise as many points of information (POIs) as possible throughout the conference. It is crucial for you to come prepared with an understanding of the country's background information, historical context, and current situation.

We are here to support you with your work. If you have any questions about the topics, rules of procedures, or any other aspects of the conference, please feel free to reach out to us. My email address is s23332.lin@stu.scie.com.cn. I will be delighted to help with your inquiries.

Finally, I look forward to meeting you at the General Assembly, and excited to see the debates unfold.

Best regards,

Taryn Lin

Committee Background and Mission Statement

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the United Nations. General Assembly (UNGA) is one of the six principal organs and the main policy-making organ of the United Nations (UN). The UNGA serves as a platform for 193 member states to share their dialogue, policymaking, and decision-making on pressing international issues. There are 3 main objectives of the UNGA: Promoting International Cooperation, Deliberating on Major Issues, and Facilitating Consensus Building.

Since the establishment of the UNGA in 1945, this committee has been instrumental in constructing international relations and passing crucial resolutions. The UNGA's past achievements include the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), enabling numerous nations to gain independence, promoting global action on climate change, and setting the agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015.

One of the important factors of the UNGA is to make key decisions for the UN, including appointing the Secretary-General on the recommendation of the Security Council, electing the non-permanent members of the Security Council and approving the UN budget. By serving as the pivotal connecting link between the United Nations membership, the Host Country, and the United Nations System at large, we aspire to contribute to effective multilateralism and to serve the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter. The UNGA is dedicated to its clients, providing them with comprehensive, timely and impartial protocol-based services and guidance. However, there are also limits to power in General Assembly. For instance, resolutions made in GA are non-binding and there is no jurisdiction over disputes. Overall, General Assembly plays a significant role in the United Nations, affecting decisions made and influencing the direction of international affairs.

Key terms

Hunger

Hunger is an uncomfortable or painful physical sensation caused by insufficient consumption of dietary energy. It becomes chronic when the person does not consume enough calories (dietary energy) regularly to lead a normal, active, and healthy life. For decades, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has used the Prevalence of Undernourishment indicator to estimate the extent of hunger in the world, thus “hunger” may also be referred to as undernourishment.

Global Hunger Index (GHI)

The global hunger index captures three dimensions of hunger: insufficient availability of food, shortfalls in the nutritional status of children, and child mortality (which is largely attributable to undernutrition). Accordingly, the index includes three equally weighted indicators: the proportion of people who are food energy-deficient, as estimated by FAO; the prevalence of underweight in children aged under 5 years, as compiled by WHO; and the mortality rate of children aged under 5 years, as reported by UNICEF. A regression analysis of the global hunger index on gross national income (GNI) per capita is performed to identify countries that are notably better or worse off regarding hunger and undernutrition than would be expected from their GNI per capita. Countries are ranked on a 100-point scale, with 0 and 100 being the best and worst possible scores, respectively.

Food Insecurity

A person is food insecure when they lack regular access to enough safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. This may be due to unavailability of food and/or lack of resources to obtain food. Food insecurity can be experienced at different levels of severity. FAO measures food insecurity using the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) shown below:

FOOD INSECURITY BASED ON THE FIES: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



Figure 1: The meaning of food insecurity

General Assembly is related to the topic of global hunger and food security because it serves as a unique forum that provides the 193 member states spaces to discuss about full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations includes health, economic, social, and other problems. Therefore, global hunger and food security, as an important part of health, play significant roles in the General Assembly.

Meanwhile, the intention of the General Assembly throughout the conference is to eliminate global hunger and ensure food security. The General Assembly prioritizes food security for all, aiming to eliminate the existence of global hunger and food insecurity.

Introduction

There are multiple causes of food security, including but not limited to factors such as ongoing wars, geographical disadvantages, and economic inequality that led to the excess of resources in some regions.

First and foremost, conflicts between countries made the situation of global hunger and food insecurity even worse. For instance, the Russo-Ukrainian war has led to one

of the most important food insecurity crises. After the war started, the number of exports of agricultural commodities in Ukraine was largely reduced since there was a five-month maritime export blockade executed by Russia, leading to a lack of crops worldwide. Hence, global food prices hit an all-time high in March 2022, reported by CISS (Center for Strategic and International Studies).

Furthermore, geographical disadvantages further lead to shortages of food. Middle Africa, as the worst spot for hunger, with a total of 31.8% of hungry people as a proportion of the population included, has unique geographical features that are not beneficial for agriculture farming. The equator directly runs through the middle of Central Africa; hence, the extremely high temperature made it hard to grow crops. Meanwhile, tropical rainforests and jungles are the dominant environments in the region. The typical clay particles in these terrains have poor nutrients and could be washed away easily, making these areas almost impossible for agriculture usage.

Economic inequality was also one of the factors that led to global hunger and food security. This is because, in some MEDCs (More Economically Developed Countries), the countries can afford excessive resources that cannot be used up, leading to waste of food and other resources such as water, electricity, etc. This is particularly shown in countries and regions such as the United States, the European Union, and China.

Consequently, the limited remaining resources are insufficient for LEDCs (Less Economically Developed Country), making it increasingly challenging for these countries to afford necessary goods. The phenomenon of food insecurity is caused partially by the gap between the rich and the poor countries.

The consequences of the issue can be profound, holding substantial impacts on a global scale. Speaking from a personal perspective, if a person has not been ingesting enough nutrition for a long time, serious consequences such as physical defects might happen unexpectedly. It is stated by a feeding organization in America that people who experience food insecurity are more likely to experience malnutrition and chronic conditions like heart disease and diabetes. Economically speaking, if a person

gets physically weak day by day due to food insecurity, the labor force might not be strong enough to handle the work, leading to economic loss. Furthermore, if people are chronically underfed, there might be widespread dissatisfaction within the country. Dissatisfaction may eternally evolve into protests and even violent opposition towards the government, causing a chaotic social environment which is a greater challenge. Moreover, in areas of chronic hunger, the situation of overusing resources will likely occur. People that can no longer bear the lack of necessities will overuse resources such as farmland, making subsistence farming nearly impossible.

With these severe consequences, the phenomenon of global hunger and food insecurity should be treated with urgency. It is our mutual responsibility to shoulder up the future of the world, and the countries in the General Assembly ought to promote the quality of life of people via solving one of their most pressing problems.

History and Current Situation

The issue of global hunger gained attention in 1914 with the onset of World War I. The British Royal Navy blockaded the ports of Central Powers, including Germany and its allies, which severely disrupted the transportation of goods. In the United Kingdom, the conscription of single men aged 18 to 40 led to a significant reduction in the agricultural labor force, hampering the ability to grow, harvest, and transport crops. Moreover, resources and food were prioritized for soldiers at the frontlines, leaving the civilian population without sufficient food to sustain daily life, resulting in widespread hunger and food insecurity. In response, organizations like the League of Nations and the American Relief Administration provided assistance to Germany, helping to rebuild its war-torn agricultural sector. Additionally, infrastructures such as roads and railways were restored, enabling more efficient transportation of goods.

A similar crisis arose during World War II, compounded by labor shortages, blockades, and the destruction caused by extensive bombings in cities such as Tokyo,

Osaka, and Berlin. By the war's final years, reports indicated extreme food shortages in urban areas, particularly in Japan. According to *Food and War in Mid-Twentieth Century East Asia*, children's daily rations in Japan decreased from 19.2 ounces to 14.4 ounces between 1943 and 1945. The introduction of a rationing system proved essential in addressing these shortages, ensuring equitable food distribution. This system, first implemented in Britain in 1940, covered essential items like meat, fats, and sugar and was later adopted by other nations, including the United States, Germany, and Japan, following localized adjustments.

In more recent history, the 2011 drought in East Africa, described as the worst in 60 years, triggered a severe food crisis across Somalia, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya, affecting the livelihoods of 9.5 million people. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) played a key role in mitigating the crisis, providing shelter to over 440,000 people in the Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.

Global hunger has remained a persistent issue through various historical events. In 1994 and 1995, catastrophic floods in North Korea caused substantial crop losses, with the United Nations reporting that 1.5 million tons of grain were destroyed. Researchers estimate that between 600,000 and 1 million people—about 3 to 5 percent of the pre-crisis population—died from starvation and hunger-related diseases. Organizations like UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) provided critical assistance during these disasters, along with countries like China and the United States.

In response to the ongoing threat of hunger, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was established in 1997 to support vulnerable populations such as smallholder farmers, pastoralists, and fishers. IFAD provides access to weather information, disaster preparedness resources, and technology transfers, enabling these groups to improve food production and feed growing populations.

East Africa experienced another severe drought from 2010 to 2011, which affected 12 million people and was deemed the worst hunger crisis on the continent in 60 years. Around the same time, the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement began, promoting collaborative efforts to combat malnutrition.

Despite progress in addressing global hunger and food insecurity through various initiatives, the issue remains urgent. Regional hunger continues to be exacerbated by conflicts, such as the Russo-Ukrainian War, which disrupts food supply chains and destabilizes economies. Nations worldwide remain committed to eradicating global hunger, as reflected in the adoption of solutions such as diversified crop production, the importation of goods, and improved agricultural systems.

In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) identified the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger as a primary objective. Between 1990 and 2013, the proportion of underweight children in developing countries declined from 28% to 17%, marking significant progress, although regional disparities persisted. In 2016, the United Nations declared the period from 2016 to 2025 as the Decade of Action on Nutrition, tasking the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) with its implementation.

More recent efforts include the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021, which aimed to accelerate progress towards achieving zero hunger by 2030. Similarly, the World Food Forum, held in Rome in 2023, focused on ensuring sustainable agrifood systems through innovation, investment, and climate finance under the theme "Good Food for All, for Today and Tomorrow."

While many solutions have shown success in alleviating hunger, ongoing global cooperation and innovative strategies are crucial to fully eliminate this pressing issue.

Timeline

Date	Events
1914-1918	World War I
1939-1945	World War II
1994-1998	Arduous March in North Korea
1997	The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was founded in responses to a global food crisis
2000-2015	Millennium Development Goals launched by the UN
2003	the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was introduced
2010	Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN)
2010-2011	drought in East Africa
2014-now	Russo-Ukrainian war
2015-2030	Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)
2016-2025	United Nations decade of action on nutrition
2020-present	Famine in Horn of Africa
2021	UN Food Systems Summit
2022	UNICEF and WFP mobilized resources to save lives in South Sudan
October 2024	World Food Forum held by UN Food and Agriculture Organization

Bloc Positions

African Union (AU)

Most countries in the African Union suffer from food insecurity. Hence, countries together advocate for the reinforcement of agricultural sectors, aiming to boost natural economic growth. Meanwhile, due to the extreme weather conditions in Africa, building resilience to weather conditions is a top goal. Action such as setting up the organization of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) has been taken, aiming to help African countries eliminate hunger and reduce poverty by raising economic growth through agriculture-led development. Furthermore, AU wishes to deepen the partnership with UN and other international organizations, getting technical and economic support from MEDCs.

China

Food insecurity is a remaining concern in China, with the uncontrollable variables of over-dependence on food imports, as well as the disparity between urban and rural areas. Hence, it is indispensable to remain and promote a friendly relationship with other countries and enhance farming ability at the same time. For instance, China has improved the agricultural trade routes, by cooperating with more than 150 countries particularly in Africa, such as Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Egypt and Indonesia to build up the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), further ensuring food security. Meanwhile, China is dedicated to help with countries in food hunger. The Chinese government has provided considerable agricultural technical assistance to developing countries.

European Union (EU)

Food insecurity in Europe has become a pressing concern in 2024 due to a combination of factors, including the war in Ukraine and the lingering economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic where there were not enough crops yielded and food cannot be transported to the destination due to traffic inconveniences. Most of the countries in EU have no choice but to rely on crops yielded domestically. In the

meantime, there is a rising price of input in agriculture. This indirectly led to the increase in prices of food. To deal with the predicament, action has been taken by the European Union. From 2020 to 2024, over 18 billion euros have been collected to support foods over 70 countries. EU also supports international initiatives to ensure global food security and addresses the root causes of hunger, such as poverty and inequality.

More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)

Up to now, most economically developed and high-income countries have succeeded in overcoming the difficulty of hunger and are willing to share the triumphant experiences of combating hunger with countries that have existing hunger issue. But with the turmoil of war, food insecurity is still an existing problem. To promote the living quantity of citizens, MEDCs expect better cooperation with other countries, so that when there are not enough resources, MEDCs can import goods from other countries and maintain the high living quality within the country, ensuring that people are secured in necessities.

The USA

The United States prioritizes food security as a growing global concern and has been a major donor in international food aid through programs such as The U.S.

Government's Global Food Security Strategy, aiming to end global hunger.

Meanwhile, since there is a large gap between the rich and poor in U.S. society, there are still U.S. citizens experiencing hunger. The inequalities are leading to potential dangers, hence programs such as End Hunger Programme has been launched in the U.S. to deal with local hunger issue. It is imperative to eliminate hunger both domestic and worldwide. The country wishes to deal with the dilemma by setting up stable relationships with institutions, cooperating with food bank to make sure food pantries can provide assistantship for citizens and working with the United Nations.

Possible Solutions

To address the root causes of food insecurity, reducing unnecessary food waste should be prioritized. According to United Nations News, each person wastes an average of 79 kilograms of food annually, which equates to 1.3 meals per day for every individual affected by hunger. The report highlights this disparity, emphasizing the importance of addressing it. One proposed solution is the "Clean Plate Campaign," which encourages consumers to order only what they can reasonably consume. This approach addresses the issue from a consumer behavior standpoint, promoting responsibility in food consumption. However, it also requires widespread educational campaigns and collaboration with restaurants and food retailers to be effective. This solution is viable, as many countries are open to implementing such policies in pursuit of a shared goal of reducing food waste.

Further, diversifying crop production is recommended, particularly in regions with extreme climates. In cold areas, root vegetables and brassicas are suitable because of their ability to thrive in cooler temperatures. For example, beets are commonly grown in North America and Eastern Europe due to their resilience in cold conditions. Crop diversification is a sustainable and practical strategy for ensuring food security, even in harsh weather. Although it requires significant research and investment, the long-term benefits of crop diversification in preventing hunger and securing food supplies are considerable.

Moreover, innovation in the agricultural system is essential. Implementing new policies that address inefficiencies in the food supply chain could significantly increase crop yields. By advocating for such reforms, food insecurity can be mitigated, benefiting not only farmers but also transporters and consumers. This approach is both practical and advantageous, as it improves the overall efficiency of the agricultural system.

Additionally, establishing organizations and programs to raise funds for global or local hunger crises is crucial. Proactively raising funds enhances the ability to respond effectively to emergencies, ensuring that sufficient resources are available when a crisis

occurs. With adequate funding, hunger can be managed more effectively, making this a feasible and proactive solution.

Finally, improving food access in underdeveloped regions through infrastructure development, such as constructing roads and railways, is vital for addressing hunger and ensuring food security. By enhancing transportation networks, the distribution of resources becomes more efficient, facilitating better access to food in remote areas. This solution is practical, as transportation infrastructure is a cornerstone of national development, enabling the smooth flow of goods and resources.

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