

# FMUN 2018

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Topic I: Food Security and the Right to Food  
Topic II: Ensuring Access to Inclusive and Equitable Education

## **Topic I: Food Security and the Right to Food**

### ***Introduction***

Food is a basic and fundamental human right. However, millions of people around the world still go hungry every day. Hunger and malnutrition are the number one risk to health worldwide – greater than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.<sup>1</sup> This risk is the reason why ending hunger globally has always been on the United Nations (UN) list of goals to achieve. It is no coincidence the second Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is Zero Hunger. To be food secure means to have the availability and adequate access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to main a healthy and active life.<sup>2</sup> When analyzing food security, it is important to take availability, access, and utilization into consideration.<sup>3</sup> Tackling this topic from a human rights-based approach (HRBA) is the also key to ending the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. The task to "end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular, the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round by 2030" requires continuous and focused efforts by all Member States.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Current Situation***

The global community has been combatting food security for decades now. As the population increases, so does the amount of food necessary. In the mid-1970's, the World Food Conference defined food security in terms of food supply – "assuring the availability and price stability of basic foodstuffs at the international and national level to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices."<sup>5</sup> This definition continued to grow and become inclusive of individuals and household level as well as the regional and national level of aggression. Today the widely accepted definition created at the World Food Summit in 1996 reinforces the multidimensional nature of food security and includes food access, availability, food use and stability.<sup>6</sup> This definition states that food security is a condition that exists when "all people, at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."<sup>7</sup>

Today, the Sustainable Development Goal to end hunger has taken the ideas from these previous milestones and has created a new strategy that recognizes the inter-linkages among ending rural poverty, ensuring healthy lifestyles, and many other issues addressed within the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.<sup>8</sup> The corresponding health risk is the reason why this goal is crucial to achieve. Development in children increased the risk of diseases such as malaria due to a depressed immune system, and obesity is three major health risks people with food insecurity can experience.<sup>9</sup> With recent studies on food security, the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/food/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/node/359289>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg2>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitally/documents/pdf/pdf\\_Food\\_Security\\_Cocept\\_Note.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitally/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> <https://academic.oup.com/cdn/article/1/7/e000513/4259862>

<sup>8</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/foodagriculture>

<sup>9</sup> <https://academic.oup.com/cdn/article/1/7/e000513/4259862>

Food and Agriculture (FAO) designed the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, which measures the amount of food and dietary quality that individuals have access to in all economic ranges from low-income to high-income. The results show that a staggering 56.5% of individuals in low-income countries are food insecure and 29.5% are severely food insecure.<sup>10</sup> In high-income countries, 10.8% are food insecure, and 3.1% are severely food insecure.<sup>11</sup> Individuals who consume excessive amounts of calories as part of a heavily based diet of starches and added sugars can lead to many different health complications like undernutrition, infectious diseases, and obesity.

On top of the health risk, it is important also to discuss the right to food that is nutritious and wholesome to give individuals the opportunity for a healthy and active life. The World Food Summit achieved another milestone at the 1996 conference by adopting the Right to Adequate Food which pointed the way toward the possibility of a rights-based approach to food security.<sup>12</sup> Every human being has the right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger.<sup>13</sup> This international human rights law created by FAO is called “The Right to Food” and has a set of recommendations for Member States called the Voluntary Guidelines.<sup>14</sup> Policymakers follow a “twin-track approach, which means on one hand they seek to strengthen productivity and livelihoods and on the other to build social safety nets for those temporarily or permanently unable to provide for themselves.<sup>15</sup> The Guidelines are used for Member States to create a framework to monitor their efforts to achieve the World Food Summit and Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Case Study: India and Food Security***

India has made major strides to improve food security through government programs and anti-poverty efforts. There is plenty of room for improvement, especially in terms of inclusion of women and girls.<sup>17</sup> The Member States has achieved national food self-sufficiency; however, new environmental challenges have emerged such as slow agriculture growth, climate change, and land degradation.<sup>18</sup> To combat these challenges, the government launched a number of programs to double the income of farmers by 2022.<sup>19</sup> India was official independent of food aid in 2004 where they have continued to maintain their status as a net food exporter.<sup>20</sup> The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare in India’s National Development Council held its 53<sup>rd</sup> meeting in 2007 where they adopted a resolution to launch the Food Security Mission. This mission was designed to increase production of rice, wheat, and many other crops.<sup>21</sup> Just like many other government programs in India they are working towards greater agricultural productivity.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitally/documents/pdf/pdf\\_Food\\_Security\\_Cocept\\_Note.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitally/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.fao.org/right-to-food/resources/resources-detail/en/c/93437/>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> <http://in.one.un.org/un-priority-areas-in-india/nutrition-and-food-security/>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> <https://nfsm.gov.in/>

On top of the agricultural side of food security, the government is also implementing programs designed to reflect food as a human right. In 2013, the Government of India's Department of Food and Public Distribution passed the National Food Security Act (NFSA). The objective of this act is to provide food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity.<sup>22</sup> This act also has a focus on nutritional support for women and children. Women who are pregnant and six months after they have given birth are entitled to meals and maternity benefit.<sup>23</sup> Children up to age 14 are entitled to nutritious meals as per the nutritional standards.<sup>24</sup> The government in India has gone further in combat under- and malnutrition by introducing mid-day meals at schools.<sup>25</sup>

Along with national government support, the UN has also been involved in combatting this issue. The support given by the UN has been to address the linked nutrition and livelihood challenges and to ensure that vulnerable groups are included.<sup>26</sup> Members from UN group partners, like FAO, have helped assist the government's efforts to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the safety nets under the NFSA<sup>27</sup>. By all of these groups working together, India hopes to achieve food security for all citizens.

### ***Actions Taken by the United Nations***

The UN has many agencies working towards food security for all humans. Actions are being taken by organizations like the World Food Program (WFP), the World Bank, and FAO.<sup>28</sup> Each of these agencies is using their own expertise to work towards a world where everyone has access to nutritious food. The main goal of FAO, for example, is to end food insecurity and have created three main goals: "the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources."<sup>29</sup> These goals are prevalent within their Voluntary Guidelines when designing a framework Member States can use to monitor their own progress.

WFP has also made SDG Goal 2 a priority and created the Strategic Plan (2017-2021). This plan provides a coherent and transparent framework for WFP to make broader contributions towards the SDGs in several contexts, using the skills, capacities, and competencies that WFP has built up through humanitarian action and development initiatives.<sup>30</sup> WFP wants to help the Member States stay on track towards ending world hunger by starting with supporting the poorest and most food insecure people.<sup>31</sup> This plan takes into account how constant our world is changing by realizing the importance of strengthening innovation efforts. WFP is always working towards their goals in the most humanitarian ways possible, which has allowed it to establish both unique strengths and

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<sup>22</sup> <http://dfpd.nic.in/nfsa-act.htm>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> <http://in.one.un.org/un-priority-areas-in-india/nutrition-and-food-security/>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/food/>

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> [http://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000019573/download/?\\_ga=2.114323463.1639392088.1537320915-1430496081.1536803471](http://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000019573/download/?_ga=2.114323463.1639392088.1537320915-1430496081.1536803471)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

capacities to support food security and capacities to support food security and nutrition. The outcomes they provide the Member States must be opportunities for long-term success.

The World Bank has established the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), which deliver targeted financing for increased agricultural investments to boost sustainable food systems in low-income countries.<sup>32</sup> This program picks up where emergency and recovery assistance leaves off by targeting transformative and lasting long-term development by supporting comprehensive projects with many different components dealing with like climate change, nutrition, gender, and job creation.<sup>33</sup> This program provides funds to the Member States that have strategic, innovative, and credible plans already in place to improve agricultural productivity and food security.<sup>34</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

There are many great examples of current efforts being taken to end food insecurity and provide every human with the right to food. Much work still needs to be done for the millions of men, women, and children who go hungry every day. Creating a framework for the Member States to follow and monitor is key to providing people with this priceless resource. Taking into account what goals are set by the Sustainable Development Goals and using the recommendations in the Voluntary Guidelines is a great place to start working towards Zero Hunger by 2030. In order to succeed it is imperative to work together in order to achieve long-term advancement.

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<sup>32</sup> <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/03/30/global-agriculture-and-food-security-program-announces-new-round-of-grants-to-fight-hunger-and-poverty>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

## Topic II: Ensuring Access to Inclusive and Equitable Education

### *Introduction*

UN Human Rights experts have said that inclusive education is central to achieving high-quality education for all learners and for the development of inclusive, peaceful, and fair societies.<sup>35</sup> In Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, "that everyone has the right to education."<sup>36</sup> UNESCO created the Education for All (EFA) movement, which is a global commitment to provide quality and equitable education for all children, youth, and adults<sup>37</sup>. Children primary and secondary school age have the right to education regardless of gender. Lifelong learning such as vocational, technical, and university is entitled to all adults and to be diverse in all social, cultural, linguistic, economic, educational, and other backgrounds. Lastly, education must be inclusive to those with disabilities, the indigenous populations, and those in vulnerable situations such as refugees.

### *Current Situation*

According to the SDGs 2017 progress report on Education, "equity issues constitute a major challenge in education according to a recent assessment."<sup>38</sup> Children from the richest 20 per cent of households achieved greater proficiency in reading at the end of their primary and lower secondary education than children from the poorest 20 percent.<sup>39</sup> This assessment also showed that urban children are doing better in reading than rural children.<sup>40</sup> In the 2016 progress report, the quality of early education was touched on. Fortunately, more than half of children between the ages of 3 and 4 years old were developmentally on track in three of the following areas: literacy, numeracy, physical development, social-emotional development, and learning.<sup>41</sup> This progress report also mentioned worldwide in 2013, 1 in 10 girls were out of school, compared to 1 in 12 boys.<sup>42</sup>

Lifelong learning is an integral part of human life. At the 38<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference for UNESCO, looked back at principles set for the global community by several articles to create a new document of Recommendations for the Adult Education. Literacy, adult learning, and education contribute to the realization of the right to an education that enables adults to exercise other economic, political, social, and cultural rights.<sup>43</sup> The SDG Goal 4 strongly supports the reduction of disparities, even in adult education. In the 2013 assessment, two thirds of the 757 million adults (age 15 and over) who were unable to read and write were women.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/09/537952-inclusive-education-vital-all-including-persons-disabilities-un-rights-experts>

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/education/index.html>

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all>

<sup>38</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> [http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=49354&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49354&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

<sup>44</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

Inclusive education is critical for all humans, including those with disabilities. “Millions of persons with disabilities are denied an education, and for many more, education is available only in settings where they are isolated from their peers.”<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, the education provided for people with disabilities is often poor quality, sets low expectations and limits learner’s opportunities.<sup>46</sup> Inclusive education for those with disabilities is a challenge because it means transforming current culture, policy, and practice in all formal and informal educational environments, so education is available for all learners.<sup>47</sup> By making these changes in education for the disabled, changes are also being made in the society they in as it helps to combat discrimination and to promote diversity and participation.<sup>48</sup> The recommendation for inclusive education does not mean putting these students in mainstream classes without accompanying structural changes and educational strategies for these students – this does not constitute inclusion. “Rather inclusive education focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance, and achievements of all students, especially those who, for different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized.”<sup>49</sup>

### ***Case Study: Philippines and Inclusive Education***

The Philippines has taken the Universal Declaration Human Right on education and put it into law in the 1992 Philippine Law in the Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities.<sup>50</sup> This member state later ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2008.<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately, “only 2% of children with disabilities in the Philippines are able to access educational opportunities and those who do, drop-out rates are high because of the barriers of accessibility and the discrimination they face.”<sup>52</sup> These children are missing out on their potential talents and abilities as well as future employment opportunities and the possibility of living independently.

The inclusive education program the Philippines designed aligns with Article 24 in the UNCRPD, which states “the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity and parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning.”<sup>53</sup> The educational environment is one where children with and without disabilities are taught together as equals. This is different from traditional schools because the students are not segregated from each other; instead, they are being taught together. The Leonard Cheshire Disability Philippines Foundation is a Non-Governmental Organization leading this action plan to help people with disabilities in the Philippines through promoting the rights of disabled people through programs like Inclusive Education. This approach is working at a grassroots level and is grounded in community-based rehabilitation by supporting community leaders, families, and schools to implement inclusive

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<sup>45</sup><https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/09/537952-inclusive-education-vital-all-including-persons-disabilities-un-rights-experts>

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.lcdphilippinesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/brochures/iebrochure.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-24-education.html>

education into action.<sup>54</sup> Local centers for rehabilitation are set up to exchange information, give a diagnosis, provide therapeutic services, and training can be accessed.<sup>55</sup> They also provide assistant with assistive devices and medical services.<sup>56</sup> One of the most beneficial outcomes of the action plan is providing teachers with training on implementing inclusive education practices and how to manage specific disabilities in their classroom.<sup>57</sup>

There are a few benefits to this educational approach for both the children and their future. First, the children in this inclusive environment will have a sense of achievement since they are able to learn at their own pace, with peers at the same stage, and they respond better to the higher expectations placed on them in a mainstream learning environment.<sup>58</sup> Second, these students gain some confidence they may never have had before. By placing them in an environment where there is not an emphasis on their disability they are less insecure and are more confident in the abilities they do have so they can have better interactions with people with disabilities and those without disabilities. Lastly, having children of all abilities working in a classroom together is teaching them to grow a strong sense of equality and diversity. These are all amazing benefits, which can be implemented in primary, secondary, and adult education.

### ***Actions Taken by the United Nations***

Fortunately, the current efforts being made are proving to be successful. In the SDG's 2017 progress report stated that more children than ever are going to school.<sup>59</sup> In 2015, UNESCO and many other UN partners like UNICEF, the World Bank, and UNHCR, adopted the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030, which sets out a new vision for education for the next fifteen years.<sup>60</sup> The Incheon Declaration includes the Education 2030 Framework of Action, which provides guidance for implementing Education 2030. It proposes indicative strategies which countries may wish to draw upon in developing contextualized plans and strategies, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.<sup>61</sup>

These strategies take into the account the realities, capacities, and respecting the policies of all Member States. The action taken by each individual Member State will drive change and to the achievement of the SGD Goal 4. The governments of each Member State should set attainable benchmarks leading up to 2030. The allocation of resources in a more equitable manner across the socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged schools.<sup>62</sup> There also needs to be a shared understanding and viable strategies to measure learning in ways the ensure that all children and youth, regardless of their circumstances, receive a quality and relevant education, including in human rights, arts, and citizenship.<sup>63</sup> Lastly, when looking at providing equitable education for

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<sup>54</sup> <https://www.lcdphilippinesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/brochures/iebrochure.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.lcdphilippinesfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/brochures/iebrochure.pdf>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

<sup>60</sup> <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002456/245656e.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brasilgia/about-this-office/single-view/news/education\\_2030\\_incheon\\_declaration\\_and\\_and\\_framework\\_for\\_ac/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/brasilgia/about-this-office/single-view/news/education_2030_incheon_declaration_and_and_framework_for_ac/)

<sup>62</sup> [http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-cn\\_2.pdf](http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-cn_2.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.



students, policies should be established to address the uneven distribution of learning opportunities.<sup>64</sup> When addressing inequality and ensuring inclusion in the provision and in quality education outcomes requires deepening the understanding of teaching and learning in a given learning environment.<sup>65</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

Everyone has the right to education. There are many different approaches in place in several Member States based on UN policy. It is important to keep moving towards achieving the SDG goal so every human as the opportunity for a better future. Education is a crucial part of advancement in life so as a global community we can attain an inclusive, peaceful, and fair society. There are still millions of people who need access to this opportunity so they can learn how to express their voice through reading and writing. This task involved shaking up the current education system to make a change for a better future for our future leaders. Understanding diversity is an important lesson, and school is the best place to teach and develop this mindset.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.