BULLSMUN III

Food and Agriculture Organization

Topic I: Climate Change and Global Food Insecurity

Topic II: Ethical and Equitable Distribution of Food Aid

Meet Your Chairs

Haran Mahesh - Chair

Haran is a Sophomore currently at the University of South Florida, he is majoring in Political Science and plans to go to law school. In his free time, he enjoys binge watching TV-shows. Feel free to give him any recommendations. He is very excited to hear your creative arguments about your resolution papers.

Sabrina Karazoun - Chair

Sabrina is a Junior at the University of South Florida majoring in International Relations and Spanish. She has been in Model UN for the past 2 years, having chaired at BullsMUN II, and is also involved in the UN Women at USF! In her free time she enjoys baking, playing pickleball, and spending time with her sisters. She is ready for BullsMUN III and cannot wait to hear all the amazing arguments you all have come up with!

Committee Format

This committee will serve as a single delegate General Assembly. Though delegates have been given two topics in this background guide, they should expect to only debate one topic over the course of BULLSMUN weekend. Delegates on the Speakers List will advocate for the topic of their choice at the beginning of the committee. The topic of debate will then be decided via a majority vote.

Committee Introduction

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations, founded in 1945 to lead global efforts to eliminate hunger, improve nutrition, and support sustainable agriculture. With 194 member nations, the FAO works to ensure that people everywhere have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food.

The organization supports countries by providing data, technical expertise, and policy guidance on a wide range of issues, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and food systems. It also helps coordinate international responses to food crises and promotes long-term strategies for building resilient food systems worldwide. Through its work, the FAO fosters collaboration among nations to address the interconnected challenges of food security, rural development, and environmental sustainability.

Topic I - Climate Change and Global Food Insecurity

Introduction

Since the early 2000s, the intersection of climate change and food insecurity has emerged as one of the most pressing global challenges, with major implications for human development, economic stability, and international peace. Increasingly erratic weather patterns, prolonged droughts, rising temperatures, and shifting growing seasons have significantly undermined food production in vulnerable regions. For example, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that global agricultural productivity has declined by over 21% since 1961 due to climate-related factors, with the sharpest declines observed in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America (IPCC, 2022).

This growing disruption has led to alarming trends in food insecurity. In 2023, over 281 million people across 59 countries experienced acute food insecurity, marking the highest level recorded in recent history (Global Report on Food Crises, 2024). In East Africa alone, a combination of severe drought and conflict left nearly 60 million people in need of urgent food aid. Climate extremes—such as the 2020–2023 Horn of Africa drought, the worst in 40 years—have destroyed harvests, killed livestock, and displaced millions (FAO, 2023). As a result, food prices have surged; the World Bank reported that global food commodity prices were 30% higher in 2022 than in 2020, exacerbating hunger and malnutrition in low-income nations (World Bank, 2022).

However, the effects of climate-induced food insecurity are not distributed evenly. Low-income countries, particularly those dependent on rain-fed agriculture, are the most

severely impacted. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), over 80% of the world's farms are smallholder-operated, and these farms are the most vulnerable to climate shocks due to limited access to finance, infrastructure, and adaptive technologies (FAO, 2021). In many parts of Africa and South Asia, crop yields are projected to decline by up to 30% by 2050 if emissions continue unchecked, even as population growth accelerates demand (IPCC, 2022).

Infrastructure limitations further compound these challenges. Food production systems depend on stable infrastructure for irrigation, transportation, and storage. Yet in sub-Saharan Africa, nearly 60% of rural communities lack access to irrigation, and post-harvest losses account for up to 30% of total food production (World Resources Institute, 2020). Without reliable systems to preserve and distribute food, climate variability translates quickly into hunger and economic distress.

Financial barriers are also central to the crisis. Adaptation strategies require investment that many low-income nations cannot afford. A 2023 UNEP report estimated that developing countries will need at least $160 billion annually by 2030 to adapt their food systems to climate change, yet current global adaptation finance stands at less than $30 billion per year (UNEP, 2023). These funding gaps have left many communities without the means to prepare for or recover from climate shocks.

The growing threat of climate-induced food insecurity underscores the urgency of international action. Without coordinated, well-funded solutions to improve agricultural resilience, millions more people may face chronic hunger, migration pressures will rise,

and global stability could be undermined. Addressing this crisis will require innovation, equity, and sustained multilateral cooperation.

Current Situation

Climate change is increasingly threatening global food security, with vulnerable regions like sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and parts of Latin America bearing the brunt. Extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and storms have disrupted crop production and livestock, leading to widespread food shortages. Many low-income countries struggle with inadequate infrastructure, including poor irrigation, limited storage, and weak transport systems, resulting in high food loss and reduced access. Financial barriers further hinder adaptation efforts; funding for climate-resilient agriculture falls far short of needs, limiting access to technologies like drought-resistant crops and early warning systems.

Conflict and political instability worsen the crisis in regions such as Yemen and the Sahel, disrupting food production and aid distribution. These overlapping challenges create a cycle of vulnerability, where climate impacts deepen food insecurity, which in turn fuels social unrest.

International organizations like the FAO and WFP emphasize the need for coordinated global action, improved funding, and innovative solutions to build resilient food systems. However, achieving equitable access and effective implementation remains a critical hurdle.

Past International Actions

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been at the forefront of global efforts to address the intersection of climate change and food insecurity. In 2010, the FAO launched the Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) initiative, which promotes agricultural practices that increase productivity, enhance resilience, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This framework has since been adopted by over 60 countries to guide national agricultural adaptation strategies and inform rural development planning.

In 2017, the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA) was established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This landmark decision formally recognized agriculture's role in climate negotiations and created a platform for countries to share best practices, technical knowledge, and policy tools aimed at building climate-resilient food systems. The KJWA marked a turning point in mainstreaming agricultural concerns within global climate frameworks.

Additionally, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has played a key role in producing voluntary guidelines and policy recommendations on food security and climate risk reduction.

Conclusion

Addressing climate change and global food insecurity requires a comprehensive and coordinated strategy that integrates sustainable agriculture, climate adaptation, and international cooperation. Despite advancements in agricultural technology and climate

science, major obstacles, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, and growing environmental stress, continue to threaten food security, particularly in low-income nations. Key priorities include scaling up investment in climate-resilient farming, reducing food system emissions, and strengthening support for smallholder farmers. Member States must work collaboratively through existing frameworks, including the FAO, WFP, and UNFCCC, while partnering with NGOs and the private sector to implement effective, long-term solutions.

Questions to Consider

1. How can food systems be made more inclusive and equitable while addressing the challenges of climate change?
2. Should the international community prioritize adaptation or mitigation when addressing food insecurity caused by climate change?
3. Should Member States prioritize public-sector investment and policy coordination, or incentivize private-sector innovation through market-based approaches?

Topic II - Ethical and Equitable Distribution of Food Aid

Introduction

Hunger and food insecurity continue to pose some of the most urgent humanitarian challenges worldwide. In 2023, around 2.33 billion people, almost 29% of the population, were moderately or severely food insecure (UNICEF, 2024). Of these, over 864 million were severely food insecure, meaning they sometimes went entire days without food due to a lack of resources. Acute hunger has continued to rise sharply in

recent years, pushing food insecurity to crisis levels in several regions. In Haiti, nearly half of the population—about 4.9 million people—struggles to access sufficient food, and the World Food Programme (WFP) has been forced to cut assistance for almost 100,000 individuals (Lederer, 2025). In Sudan, an estimated 25.6 million people face acute shortages as conflict and economic collapse undermine access to basic supplies. Meanwhile, Gaza is experiencing what experts describe as a full-scale famine: the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification reports that more than 20% of the population suffers from extreme food scarcity, and one-third of children are afflicted with severe acute malnutrition (Graham-Harrison & Tantesh, 2025).

One of the most important strategies for combating hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity in areas hit by crises is food aid. In 2024, the World Food Programme (WFP) raised approximately $9.8 billion, providing aid to 124.4 million people and distributing 16.1 billion daily rations (WFP, 2025). Millions of lives have been saved thanks to international efforts — however, there are substantial logistical, political, and ethical obstacles to the distribution of food aid.

Conflict and insecurity often make it impossible for aid convoys to reach communities in need, while weak infrastructure—such as damaged roads, ports, or storage facilities—slows the movement and preservation of supplies. In Yemen, for example, warring factions have repeatedly diverted shipments or restricted access as a means of control, leaving entire regions cut off from relief. In South Sudan, flooding and a lack of navigable roads mean that aid must often be delivered by costly airdrops, limiting both the quantity and consistency of assistance. In Gaza, humanitarian organizations have warned

that border closures and security blockades severely delay deliveries, causing critical shortages even when supplies exist nearby. A key theme behind these examples is that, even when food reaches its destination, problems such as corruption, theft, and unequal targeting can prevent it from reaching the most vulnerable.

At the center of this issue is not only whether aid is delivered, but also how it is distributed. Questions of allocation—who receives aid, under what criteria, and through which intermediaries—often determine whether food relief stabilizes a community or fuels further inequality. In Ethiopia's Tigray region, for instance, a discovery that donated grain was being diverted to commercial mills and markets led the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to suspend food aid distribution to the region in 2024 (Paravicini & Stecklow, 2024). Meanwhile, in Haiti, urban areas have been increasingly deprived of food aid compared to other parts of the country due to the prevalence of gang violence, which prevents food aid from being effectively distributed (Mercy Corps, 2024). Ethical dilemmas also arise when governments or militias manipulate aid to reward allies and punish opponents, as seen in Syria, where food distribution was at times withheld from opposition-held areas as a weapon of war (BBC, 2014). Beyond these immediate challenges, aid programs can unintentionally undermine long-term resilience when reliance on imports disrupts the local market, as has been documented in sub-Saharan Africa during prolonged relief campaigns (Ferrière & Suwa-Eisenmann, 2015). Together, these cases highlight that ensuring fair distribution requires not only neutrality and efficiency, but also an awareness of the political, cultural, and economic contexts in which aid is delivered.

Delegates are challenged by this issue to consider how governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and local communities might develop frameworks that are equitable and efficient. Delegates must also consider ways to improve transparency, encourage self-reliance in recipient communities, and stop corruption and abuse. There has never been a more pressing need to create a fair and sustainable model for the distribution of food aid as armed conflict, economic instability, and climate change intensify the world's food challenges.

Past International Actions

The international community has long recognized the need to address global hunger through coordinated action with the UN and its specialized agencies playing a crucial role. Past initiatives have sought not only to increase the volume of food aid but also to ensure that its distribution is transparent, impartial, and responsive to the needs of affected populations.

Created by the UNGA and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), WFP has become the largest humanitarian agency delivering food assistance worldwide. Its mandate includes both emergency relief and development-oriented food security projects. Over the decades, WFP has refined its operational guidelines to emphasize impartiality, neutrality, and needs-based distribution, in line with humanitarian principles.

Initially signed in 1967 under the International Grains Arrangement, the Food Aid Convention committed donor states to provide specific annual quantities of food aid to developing countries. In 2012, it was replaced by the Food Assistance Convention, which broadened the scope beyond grains to include nutritional support, and emphasized

needs-based, united, and flexible aid delivery. The FAC's signatories include major donor states and aim to coordinate resources during crises.

The Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 2- Zero Hunger, commit all member states to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. This framework calls for equitable access to food aid and long-term strategies that reduce dependency through local capacity-building.

However despite decades of international efforts, significant challenges remain in ensuring that food aid is distributed fairly, transparently, and without political or discriminatory bias. Many regions continue to face logistical barriers, funding shortfalls, and instances where aid is manipulated for political gain or diverted away from those most in need. The World Food Programme and other humanitarian actors continue to call for greater international cooperation, strengthened accountability mechanisms, and needs-based approaches to food assistance. By addressing these systemic challenges, the global community aims to ensure that all individuals, regardless of geography, political or circumstances, have access to adequate nutrition and the dignity of food security.

Conclusion

The ethical and equitable distribution of food aid is not merely a logistical challenge, it is also a moral responsibility shared by the international community. While past initiatives have saved millions of lives, ongoing crises demonstrate that aid delivery systems remain vulnerable to political manipulation, corruption, funding shortfalls, and operational bottlenecks.

Delegates must weigh both immediate humanitarian imperatives and long-term development strategies, ensuring that solutions address root causes as well as emergency needs. Strengthening global cooperation, investing in innovative delivery mechanisms, and upholding humanitarian principles will be essential in creating a system where no individual is left without access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food. The challenge before this committee is to move beyond pledges and towards actionable, lasting frameworks that embody fairness, dignity, and human rights for all.

Questions to Consider

1. How can the international community ensure that food aid is allocated solely based on need and not influenced by political or strategic interests?
2. What mechanisms can be implemented to improve transparency and accountability in the delivery and distribution of food aid?
3. How can donor countries and organizations balance the urgency of short-term emergency relief with the need for long-term food security and self-reliance in recipient communities?
4. What steps can be taken to secure sustainable funding for food aid operations, especially in protracted crises and underfunded emergencies?
5. How should the global community address situations where governments deliberately block or manipulate access to food aid?

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