

## SAIMUN 2017 Research Report

<b>Forum:</b>	General Assembly 2 (Economic and Financial)
<b>Issue:</b>	Combating food insecurity in urban areas
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### Description of the Issue

The problems regarding to food insecurity in urban areas are the major concerns that the world is facing today. Despite the fact that there is mass production of food from many areas, many people are still undernourished. It is not just the rural areas who make up the world population on poverty and food insecurity, there are lots of urban poor who also charge up; and these urban poor are the people who have an unstable supply of food. It is estimated that in the next 25 years, the urban population of the world is going to be doubled where 60% of Africans and Asians will be living in cities. However, in the past few years, governments, organizations and international agencies were neglecting this issue of countries undergoing rapid urbanization, as they thought it is not a major problem as the food insecurity of rural areas.

The major factor that causes food insecurity in urban areas is the increase in the number of migrating people from urban to rural areas. In Africa, over 40 percent or above of the population are receiving low-middle income which means there are lots of town dwellers and urban slums. Not just migration, there are other problems associated with urbanization, like growth in poverty and malnutrition. According to studies, eight countries containing 66% of the world's population results show that there is a great increase in the absolute number of poor people living in urban areas over the last 20 years and a significant amount of increase in the proportion of malnourished children. Over 600 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America live in slums and are town dwellers, where basic needs and services are not adequate despite the fact they are living in urban areas. Also, due to the increase of urbanization, there has been a rapid reduction in agricultural lands and adverse impacts of climate changes produced by the increase in secondary sectors by industrialization.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **Food insecurity**

The state of having a lack of access to sufficient amounts of nutritious food for normal growth and development in order to live an active and healthy life

### **Malnutrition**

The state when people receive unbalanced nutrition, caused by not having enough food to eat, or not eating foods at right proportions or having a balanced diet with an overloading of nutrients

### **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

An organization whose goal is mainly aiming to eradicate hunger, and help everyone to achieve food security by eliminating poverty.

### **The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**

An agency of the United Nations that combats hunger and poverty in developing countries through low-interest loans and direct assistance. Also, they give aids to agricultural development projects financially for food production in developing countries.

### **United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)**

The WFP is the largest humanitarian agency fighting against hunger worldwide that is funded by the United Nations. They work together with other agencies like the FAO and the IFAD to achieve the four main objectives:

1. Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies;
2. Support food security and nutrition and rebuild livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies;
3. Reduce risk and enable people communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs;
4. Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger

### **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

The Millennium Development Goals are set up so that it could be achieved until 2015; where the goals ranges widely across the world problems starting from halving extreme

poverty to ceasing the spread of HIV/AIDS. The first MDG relates to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger which directly helps the boost of food production.

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The Sustainable Development Goals is a set of aspiration goals with 17 goals and 169 targets. The second SDG states: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” which directly links to the question.

### **Background Information**

As the world population is growing, more effort on producing food and improving agricultural methods must be putted in to feed the world’s population. For the past few decades, the United Nations have payed particular attention in order to decrease the number of people to eradicate hunger and poverty. The first MDG had to be accomplished by 2015, however, due to environmental issues like climate changes; the goal had to be extended to be one of the SDGs. Poverty and hunger are rural and urban problems, that smallholder farmers, urban poor and their families make up a part of being poor and hunger. In rural areas the lack of food production from farmers does contribute greatly in poverty however, in urban areas food insecurity is not triggered by food shortages. It is due to the lack of ability from urban households to secure access to food. There are minor differences between food insecurity in urban areas and rural areas. Although they both lead to poverty, malnourishment and undernutrition; the factors that causes food insecurity is more to do with the urban livelihoods and low- middle income affecting their lives.

### **Urbanization**

The increase of people migrating from rural areas to urban areas is the biggest cause on having lack of food security in certain households. As cities develop and grow the length of rural to urban increases which mean that the food must be transported in long distances. This will definitely create food safety issues and low quality food to be transported across which loses at least 65% of the micronutrients in the urbanising countries. As a result of urbanization there are areas where they have limited access to nutritious food causing the people to buy foods from convenience stores that are much more expensive and lack all nutrients needed for a healthy diet. This forces the urban poor or dwellers to use their income

on transportation to go to supermarkets or just live with the food they have access to increasing the chance to get prone to chronic diseases. Also, when there is a high migration rate then it means that many people have to live in compacted areas, creating slums which will have little spaces for kitchen or any other rooms. This will cause sanitation to be very poor and also have poor access of clean water.

### **Food consumption and access**

In 2006-2008, there has been a massive increase in food prices in 38 developing nations resulting in the urban poor to work longer hours to receive the same income and reduce food quality and consumption. For the urban poor, food consumption is one of their largest expenses as they would spend 70% of their income buying basic foods for their households. Therefore, the rise in food prices will impact greatly to the urban poor. For example, in Nepal and Mozambique the urban dwellers spend more of their income on buying food than rural residents in that country. Not just consumption is a problem, the availability of food in the market systems also contribute largely towards food insecurity in urban areas. Urban food production is mostly reliant on imported goods and having access to rural areas as most of the fresh food and crops come from the agricultural areas. However, urban household food consumption pattern changed to have access to higher energy density products which created a “double burden effect.” Since higher energy density products contain lots of fats rather than micronutrients, the population became overweight and became obese along with undernutrition.

### **Climate Change**

Climate change also contributes greatly into food insecurity in any areas; it affects all of the main components: access, stability, utilisation and availability. The majority of the food are produced from the rural areas or is imported, but when there are any disruptions to the weather it would affect the storage of the food, and transportation processes. Not just these are the problems; climatic changes will affect the origin of the food source which is the rural regions. The growth of crops and livestock performance will definitely be interrupted in the rural regions. Climatic changes can be a sign for natural disasters that are not expected. Natural disasters have the potential to destroy our food source whether the problem is long term or short term. For example, earthquakes only disrupt the area for a short time as the land or buildings can be rebuilt again. However, droughts can cause a long term effect to the

agricultural productivity as crops won't be able to grow for such a long time, and insufficient water in the soil will be eroded away clearing all the nutrients. This means that there won't be any healthy land to grow any sorts of crops in such a quick time.

## Positions of Key Member Nations and Other Bodies on the Issue

### The World Food Program (WFP)

The WFP is the important organization that helps to promote food security. Their main objective of food aid is to eradicating the need of food aid and gain food security. They mainly target on people who are poor; who are in crisis or are in situations that are unable to have the resources to obtain food. WFP was established in 1961 after the FAO conference in 1960 that debated on the issue of starting the food aid program.

### The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

This organization was established to help the poor people living under poverty and particularly aims to eradicate poverty and guide the poor people to have their own ability to lead their own development to avoid them to be in the state of hunger. They have supported projects and programs that were done in areas around the world and target the poor people who really needed the help to survive. As a result they were able to make 450 million farmers to have better motivation to harvest crops and a higher income.

### Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

The FAO leads efforts to defeat hunger in both developed countries and developing countries. The FAO negotiates equally and debates about modernizing agriculture, forestry, fisheries to make sure there is enough nutrition available and also achieve food security. In 1996, the World Food Summit was organised by the FAO where governments gather around signing which achieved the goal of halving the number of people suffering from hunger.

## Timeline of Key Events

Date	Description of Event
<b>16 October 1945</b>	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was created to solve the issue of hunger and malnutrition.
<b>1945</b>	The <b>World Food Day</b> is celebrated every year on this date to celebrate the

	establishment of the FAO. From 1981, it started to have different themes to celebrate and the themes were mostly related to agriculture as this was the highlighted area that was needed focus.
<b>1946</b>	<b>The First World Food Survey</b> was done to have some knowledge on the situation within food problems. It surveyed across 70 countries which was around 90 percent of the population back then. The survey gave a good analysis on the situation of World Hunger which gave out some ideas on how to solve this issue.
<b>1950</b>	<b>The World Census for Agriculture</b> is a measurement to measure and compare figures on defining agriculture. Through this measurement it was easy to identify the statistics on how each country was developing with its agricultural sector by knowing the number and area of farms by size and number of livestock.
<b>1963</b>	<b>The World Food Programme</b> was born as well as the World Food Congress. The WFP worked with the FAO in concentrating to eradicate poverty and hunger. The World Food Congress aims to strengthen the ways food security and improve technology to secure the world's food sources.
<b>1974</b>	<b>The First World Food Conference</b> was held in Rome by the FAO due to the famine in Bangladesh that went on for two years. Governments enter this conference to solve and proclaim statements to help solve the world issue relating to food.
<b>1994</b>	The WFP adopted the Mission Statement for the first time for the United Nations.
<b>1997</b>	The FAO launches a TeleFood campaign to raise awareness on the problem of hunger to find a situation. It used concerts, celebrities and the power of media to help fight hunger. The money raised through this campaign was used to help farmers produce food for their families.
<b>2000</b>	The Millennium Development Goals were created so that the goals could be achieved by 2015.
<b>2001</b>	"Food for the Cities" Program was launched by the FAO aiming to challenge the

	problems brought by urbanization by building more sustainable and resilient food systems.
<b>2015</b>	The sustainable development goals have been created during the conference where the deadline was until 2030. There are 17 goals and every goal relates either directly or indirectly with the same idea.

## Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

### Purchase for Progress

WFP has launched a five year project called the Purchase for Progress (P4P). It was commenced in September 2008, where P4P supports smallholder farmers by giving opportunities to be part of the market place and be competitive. This project expanded across 20 countries in Africa, Asia and America and helped approximately 800,000 farmers to improve their agricultural methods, handling with harvests and also some finance. The project made a tremendous progress towards improving the conditions for smallholder farmers to get a better living condition. This will eventually stop migration from farmers and will produce a better output.

### Program for Food Security

The Programme for Food Security was the most effective solution to solve hunger, undernourishment and poverty. There are 102 countries participating in the programme and the programmes are now being run inside the nation. To maximize the work the FAO is doing, they strongly encourages promoting the national ownership and local power in the countries. In order to prevent the use of pests and plant diseases to make sure the production is productive, they created an International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to maintain the crops.

## Possible Solutions

### Increase support from NGOs and UNOs

Non-Governmental Organizations and United Nations' Organizations currently play a huge role in eradicating food insecurity. Their financial helps through donations and their huge amount of investment in agricultural advancements are well-known in the global society. Increasing the support from NGOs and UNOs reduce poverty and famine, while

increasing the food security. This also allows UN mediators to give less effort and focus on other issues since the problem of securing food is solved. Organizations such as United States' Agency for International Development (USAID) or Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) are typical and main organizations involved in this context.

### **Embracing Technology**

Technology advancement is the most fundamental and necessary solution to eradicate food insecurity as it increases the efficiency of the global food system giving people to have more access to safe food resources with full of nutrients. Through bioengineering and biotechnology can undergo genetic improvements that would create genetically modified crops like having a gene to become drought resistant, and have specialised fertilisers that would optimize the output at one go. Also, an improvement on communication technologies, providing farmers access to financial services, market information and biotechnology in order to improve the productivity of the crops and hence eradicating food insecurity.

### **Improvement in urban agriculture**

Instead of only having agricultural sectors in rural areas, it is best to have farming areas near the outskirts of the urban areas so that transportation costs can be reduced and the nutrients of the food can be preserved before it starts to lose the micronutrients. For example, improving the African agriculture near the urban areas will create a massive amount of improvement in food security as it can provide food source for almost 60 percent of the African population. Also, the productivity gap between some areas can be reduced dramatically if we can support the smallholder farmers and creating land for food production. This will definitely help almost everyone in Africa to achieve food security and also alleviate poverty and increase food source.



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