

World Health Organisation

CIMUN

Topic 1: Establishing access to nutritious food for minority communities

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Introduction

The United Nations recognizes global hunger as a significant issue for many individuals that is why solving it is part of the Sustainable Development goals to be achieved by 2030¹ clear targets have been created to ensure a future where even members of minority communities will have enough food to lead a healthy and happy life.

Minority communities are subject to food insecurity because of their differences from a more dominant group in their area, in some cases minority communities are well integrated in society and therefore can access more resources, in other cases they live completely separate lives because of their culture or geographical location. Many factors can be the cause of their food insecurity, for the first ones racial and cultural discrimination are often the case, the intensity varies around the world and it depends on the differences between them and the dominant groups. Other minority communities, as said before, live a life completely excluded from the other groups, and their exclusion is often what causes their lack of food. Many of these communities do not have the same level of education and the same quantity of proper infrastructures, this leads to poverty and food insecurity.

The Covid-19 pandemic has only enlarged the already existing gaps between minority communities and other groups, fear for the virus has led countries and communities to mainly think for themselves and minority communities in some cases have been left alone.

Key Terms

Minority communities: a group of individuals different from a more dominant group, with whom they coexist, culturally, ethnically or racially. They often suffer unequal treatment because of their diversity or live amongst themselves.

¹ United Nations, *Goal 2*

Food insecurity: when a person does not have regular access to nutritious food to sustain a healthy lifestyle, it is measured and could take place at different levels of severity using the Food Insecurity Experience Scale created by FAO.²

Developing countries: nations with a lower gross domestic product (GDP) and an overall less developed economy if compared to developed nations. Quality of life is usually lower and the poverty rate is higher due to the presence of lower wages.³

Nutritious food: food that contains beneficial nutrients and is not harmful for the individual who ingests it. The food needed and considered nutritious changes depending on age and the special needs of a person who might not be able to ingest a specific food that might be nutritious for others.⁴

Infrastructures: structures and facilities necessary. This report will focus on those needed to produce, deliver and sell food.

Covid-19: infective virus discovered in China in December 2019, affects lungs and the respiratory system. It has developed different variants which must be taken into consideration depending on the country. Vaccinations are taking place world wide however they are not completely effective against variants and many cannot afford them or the country is not equipped to provide enough doses.

² FAO, *Hunger*

³ BDC, *Developing country*

⁴ Gains, *What constitutes a nutritious and safe food*

Background Information

Unequal distribution of resources is a widespread reality in today's world, even for necessary goods such as food. Despite the decrease in extreme poverty in the last years, the increase in prices of food⁵, the insufficiency of proper infrastructures to transport it⁶, and other factors such as the lack of educated farmers or land, led many members of minority communities to suffer from malnourishment and hunger. The most targeted areas are developing regions that have registered a level of undernourishment of 12.9% or 779.9 million people⁷ between 2014 and 2016 according to the Food Insecurity report made by the Food and Agriculture Organization. However with the growing population and the underdeveloped status of certain countries, it's hard for the actual level of undernourishment and hunger to be calculated. The Covid-19 pandemic has increased the state of food insecurity in the world and minority communities have been the ones who suffered the most as transportation of many goods was slowed down or cut. Countries with functioning and organized facilities managed to maintain supply of food, smaller communities on the other hand had to rely on their own products which is often insufficient.

In the last two years the world has been going through a strong sensibilization about diversity, the increased globalization and presence of many different individuals on social media has brought many not only to realize the different cultures and ideologies, but also the struggles that members of a minority community go through. It is imperative to realize that even less excluded minority communities also face food insecurity because of discrimination, the pandemic had highlighted racial disparities that caused members of minority communities to be the first to lose their job⁸ and this led to food insecurity as they did not have an income to support their families.

⁵ Humanium, *The unequal distribution of resources: the food crisis explained*

⁶ The Encyclopedia of World Problems & Human Potential, *Maldistribution of food*

⁷ FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, 8

⁸ Feng, *Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Food Insufficiency Persists During the Pandemic*

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

This International Organization specializes in defeating world hunger and their goal is to ensure that people have regular access to nutritious food to lead healthy lives. Over 194 countries are signed as member states, this allows the organization to be active in over 130 countries and create projects to help local communities.⁹

World Food Programme (WFP)

This programme is the largest humanitarian organization that works in order to help communities affected by conflict and natural disasters and offer food in order to help individuals and entire communities. Their projects are targeted towards small and less developed communities that require external help in order to keep up with the changing world and overcome challenges.¹⁰

United States of America

Despite being a nation with a well developed economy, minority communities part of the American population still face food insecurity even if well integrated. The most critical case is afflicting the Black Community: it's recorded that they are the most likely to suffer food insecurity during the pandemic despite being part of a large section of essential workers. Members of the black community are also more likely to lose their job and have less financial resources, leading to poverty.¹¹ Other minority communities are also subject to discrimination, especially after the aggressive stances that former president Donald Trump took causing members of these communities to suffer backlash even months after the establishment of the new president Joe Biden.

⁹ FAO, *About FAO*

¹⁰ WFP, *Who we are*

¹¹ Feeding America, *Hunger hits black communities harder*

The Federated States of Micronesia

The Federated States of Micronesia are part of the Pacific islands, which is an area where poverty is widespread. According to a WFP report in Micronesia 30 to 39% of the population lives below the poverty line, the location of the islands which makes them subject to natural disasters and their weak economies, this leads to insufficient nutrition and hunger. The country's agricultural production cannot sustain the needs of the population and climate change is affecting the sea and fishing which is one of their main sectors.¹²

Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a country where tribal culture still persists in some areas and is home of many different minority groups and ethnicities within the population, and it is recorded that around 54% of the population lives under the poverty line. Issues such as conflicts, climate change are unabling the population to use the country's resources leading to around 12.5 million people suffering from severe food insecurity.¹³

Relevant UN Resolutions and Reports

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

This report tackles the different levels of food insecurity around the world giving statistics and more specific information about different world areas and how their undernourishment status changed during the years. Because this report was written in 2019 it does not tackle the effect of the Pandemic, however it is a reliable source of information for the creation of a resolution and a position paper.

¹² WFP, *Food security in vulnerable islands*

¹³ WFP, *Afghanistan*

Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities¹⁴

Adopted by the general assembly in 1992, reaffirms the right of a person to belong to a particular minority community and enforces everyone's right to fundamental freedoms even if they belong to a different country, ethnicity, religion, culture or speak another language.

UN report: Pandemic year marked by spike in world hunger¹⁵

This report tackles the effect of the pandemic on world hunger levels in 2020 including reliable quantitative data. It mentions other causes for the increase in world hunger levels in the past year such as conflicts and climate change, which are essential to develop ways to ensure access to nutritious food for minority communities. Furthermore it gives suggestions on what can be done to solve the current food crisis and mentions future UN reports.

Previous Attempts at Resolving This Issue

The World Food Programme and other international organizations have worked in the past and organized missions to send food and educate members of minority communities on ways to utilize their resources. However the Covid-19 Pandemic has put most missions on hold and volunteers and organizations are still trying to develop ways to continue but countries have developed different measures to protect their population from the virus and travelling is not back to normal. Furthermore it must be taken into consideration that some communities might not have come in contact with the virus because of their exclusion and risking exposing them to it might cause further crises as they might not have a strong health system to support them in case of an outbreak.

¹⁴ OHCHR, *Declaration on Minorities*

¹⁵ UN, *Pandemic Year Marked by Spike in World Hunger*

Possible Solutions

Educate populations on methods to farm efficiently with the resources they have available

Members of some minority communities do not receive sufficient education for their self-sustainment because of their exclusion from more developed communities, this can lead them to not knowing how to handle the resources they have available or how to use them to generate more food. Creating courses to educate the population on ways to farm and create arable land will increase the quantity of food they have available and ensure nutrition for populations who struggle to communicate and trade with the rest of the world. Associations such as the International Training Center of the ILO could send professionals and establish learning platforms.

Tests to spot illnesses and allergies

Less developed areas often cannot offer a public health system that can support the population in need, illnesses such as celiac disease and allergies can lead to suffering and people are most of the time unaware of them. Finding a way for members of minority communities to be tested will ensure that they are aware of what type of food harms their organism and they will try to cut or introduce some elements into their diets.

Create laws and standards to uphold in order to make sure members of minority communities are not being discriminated

Members of minority communities can be subject to food insecurity even if their community is well integrated with the more dominant group, this is caused by different factors one of which is discrimination. Creating strict laws and life standards will help the government making sure that all citizens are receiving food according to their financial possibilities or if in need receiving aid, and are not being subject to unequal discrimination because of their differences. One way to make sure these standards are being upheld could be to create a form to file if a member of a minority community feels like they are not receiving enough food for them and their family because of discrimination, another way could be to create a questionnaire that all citizens should file periodically so that the government can keep track of the state of food insecurity in their country and the anomalies.

For more information

[UN report: Pandemic year marked by spike in world hunger \(link\)](#)

Delegates should take a few minutes to read this report in order to have a general picture about the effects of the pandemic on world hunger levels.

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