



# Southern China International MUN

*United Nations Development Programme: On measures to combat food insecurity and food price inflations in LEDCs*  
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## 1. Description of the Issue

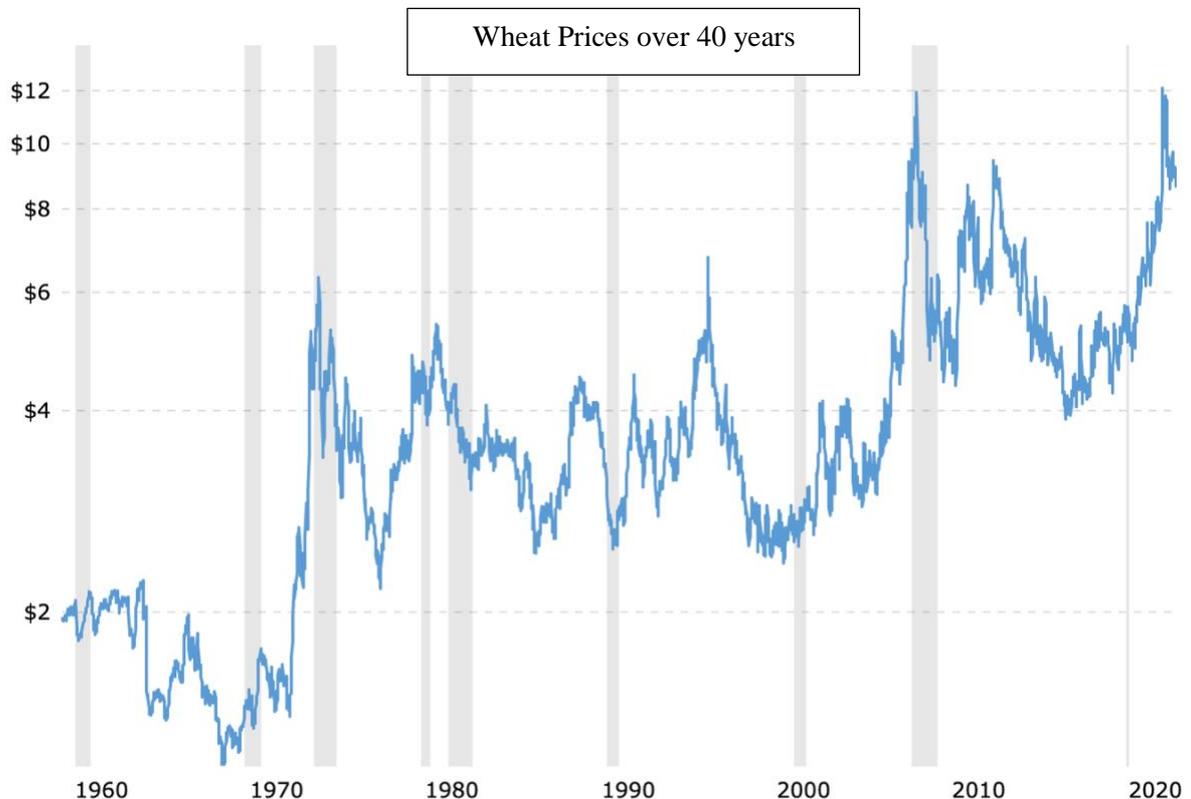
### 1.1 History of the Issue

**Food price inflations** and **food insecurities** are of utmost significance in this modern generation. Encumbering tribulations such as civil altercations and natural disasters, Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) across the world are constantly met with an inability in maintaining their availability of food. Due to their dire economy, these LEDCs are unable to improve aspects in their agricultural sector and would often depend on imports from More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs); this would, in turn, result in a substantial increase in inflation of food prices, further disabling them from reaching an equilibrium. Acknowledging these factors, it is imperative devise a feasible and reliable resolution to target this issue and bring a better future to underdeveloped nations.

As defined by the United Nations Committee on World Food Security, being food secure is “when one has the physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” The aim in achieving food security across the world has been an unavoidable need for the United Nations. Furthermore, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) –a specialized agency of the UN– founded the World Food Day, bringing awareness to people across the globe regarding the issues of food insecurities and inflations.

Food insecurities, in its general sense, could date back to the genesis of human civilization. Due to the presence of a social hierarchies, natural disasters, or dire environments, primitive human groups were not able to achieve food security. These problems are also reflected on countries today, especially towards LEDCs. Although food insecurities were ubiquitous around the globe throughout history, it was only until the 1970s, did the FAO document the severities of food insecurities. The 1974 food crisis had one of the most significant impacts towards the rise in food insecurities. With the amalgamation of droughts, floods, and an explosion in population growth, countries in Africa and South Asia (India, Bangladesh) experienced a prolonged famine and a massive spike in grain, wheat, and soybean prices. However, famine and food insecurity were gradually mitigated through a surplus of monetary support from the World Bank, International Development Association (IDA), and

International Finance Corporation (IFC). “Of this, the World Bank accounted for \$3 218 million, its soft-loan affiliate, the International Development Association (IDA), for \$1 095 million, and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) for \$203 million” (FAO).



Apart from natural disasters and overpopulation, the enhancement in technology could also potentially pose as a driving force of food insecurity. For instance, in the food crisis of 2008, due to the development of biofuel, the world met a major escalation in demand of vegetables, driving crop prices dramatically. Corn and wheat met a percentage increase of over 200% in prices (\$3.72-\$7.58 and \$4.56-\$9.43), in the span of one year. Countering this issue, the World Bank, partnering with several food assistance organizations, assisted in this food crisis by depositing an immense amount of financial aid towards reducing the inflationary gap of the crop products. Moreover, the Human Rights Council has passed Resolution 7/14: the right to food, combating the tribulations that has resulted from the crisis. This resolution includes clauses that provide political stability, humanitarian assistance, formations of philanthropic organizations, as well as preparations to avoid future crises regarding massive spikes in food prices.

Furthermore, surges in food prices are also dependent on the major events, such as pandemics. The coronavirus was one of the most impactful factors of food insecurities. One of the main elements in this disaster was the drastic increase of unemployment, which corresponded with a decrease in income, restricting families and citizens from obtaining food and other provisional supplies. According to the World Food Programme, “As many as 828 million people go to bed hungry every night. The number of those facing acute food insecurity has soared - from 135 million to 345 million - since 2019. A total of 49 million

people in 49 countries are teetering on the edge of famine.” Another consequence of the pandemic were the limitations on transportations. As acknowledged, many LEDCs are strictly dependent on imports from more economically developed nations in order to compensate for their lack of agricultural development.

Figure 1. **Volume of world trade and industrial production**



“Overall, the value of exports of services in OECD countries declined in 2020 by -16.7%, twice as much as the value of goods exports, which dropped by -8.2%. This was also one factor underpinning the comparatively large adjustments in output relative to those in trade, as services account for a larger share of the economy than their weight in international trade” (OECD). These effects from the coronavirus put the food security in the world (especially LEDCs) to a critical level. According to the World Bank, “the number of people suffering acute food insecurity increased from 135 million in 2019 to 345 million in 82 countries by June 2022.”

Less Economically Developed Countries are extremely vulnerable when dealing against food insecurity. Due to their lack of a financial budget, a stable agriculture sector, and an overcrowded population, they are not only unlikely to avoid the causes of potential food crises, but also limited and restricted towards making developments for price and security stabilizations. The escalation of food insecurity and inflations would also spark external conflicts and civil altercations affecting the balance on both a national and a global scale.

## 1.2 Recent Developments

The concept and the aim of food security has remained stable and have not been altered or modified since the declaration of the terminology. Despite this, there have been many developments in pursuit of food security since the 1970s. One of which is agricultural technology, utilizing moisture sensors, aerial images, and GPS technology to augment the

efficiency of crops and increase the harvest.

Moreover, due to the multitude of events –Covid-19, Ukrainian Russian War, natural disasters– the World Bank has initiated an action to provide provisional support to (mainly) LEDCs around the world. This plan consists of, according to Worldbank.org, “A \$125 million project in Jordan aims to strengthen the development the agriculture sector by enhancing its climate resilience, increasing competitiveness and inclusion, and ensuring medium- to long-term food security. A \$300 million project in Bolivia that will contribute to increasing food security, market access and the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices. A \$315 million loan to support Chad, Ghana and Sierra Leone to increase their preparedness against food insecurity and to improve the resilience of their food systems. A \$500 million Emergency Food Security and Resilience Support Project to bolster Egypt's efforts to ensure that poor and vulnerable households have uninterrupted access to bread, help strengthen the country's resilience to food crises, and support to reforms that will help improve nutritional outcomes. A \$130 million loan for Tunisia, seeking to lessen the impact of the Ukraine war by financing vital soft wheat imports and providing emergency support to cover barley imports for dairy production and seeds for smallholder farmers for the upcoming planting season. The \$2.3 billion Food Systems Resilience Program for Eastern and Southern Africa helps countries in Eastern and Southern Africa increase the resilience of the region’s food systems and ability to tackle growing food insecurity. The program will enhance inter-agency food crisis response also boost medium- and long-term efforts for resilient agricultural production, expanded market access.” Nevertheless, the World Bank has decided to form a coalition with FAO, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Food Programme, and the World Trade Organization, in order to successfully utilizes the donated supplies and vulnerable, facilitating trade and the international supply of food, boosting production, and investing in climate-resilient agriculture.

Despite the Ukrainian War being the most impactful towards food security, physical altercations such as the Haitian Wars as well as ubiquitous conflicts in the middle east. “An estimated 12.4 million people - about 60% of Syria's population – suffer from food insecurity. This represents a 57% increase since 2019 and is the “highest number ever recorded in the history of Syria,” according to the World Food Program. Syria faces multiple, interlinked crises” (OCHA services). Additionally, according to the United Nations, “a record 4.7 million people are currently facing acute hunger (IPC 3 and above), including 1.8 million people in Emergency phase (IPC 4) and, for the first time ever in Haiti, 19,000 people are in Catastrophe phase, phase 5...Increased violence, with armed groups vying for control of the vast and now lawless area of Port-au-Prince, has meant that residents have lost access to their work, markets and health and nutrition services.

The South-South Cooperation (SSC), launched by the FAO in 1996, is a special program for food security, collaborating with agricultural expertise to assist developing countries to improve their agricultural sector. “By April 2001, a total of 21 SSC agreements had been signed, providing up to 2,100 field experts and technicians, and a further 17 agreements were expected to be signed soon”(FAO).

Additionally, the FAO also proposes the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), which strives to achieve food security in low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) by aiding farmers to increase productivity and enable a better access to food. “By March 2001, the SPFS was in operation in 34 LDCs (25 in Africa, six in Asia and the Pacific, one in the Caribbean and two in the Near East) while projects had been formulated or were in formulation for five others... United Republic of Tanzania, the Government has adopted the SPFS as a national programme following the successful completion of activities that promoted improved water control, participatory transfer of improved technologies for crop and small livestock production, and income generation based on formation of participatory farmer groups”(FAO).

### **Key Terms**

**Food Insecurity**– “Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above. Household measurements: the focus on chronic hunger and poverty” (FAO).

**Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs)** – “low-income countries confronting severe structural impediments to sustainable development. They are highly vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks and have low levels of human assets” (United Nations).

**More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs)** – “MEDCs are also called developed or industrialized countries, or MDCs (more developed countries). The United Nations identifies the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and all the countries of Europe as MEDCs” (United Nations).

**Low-income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDCs)** – “LIFDCs are currently defined as nations that are: Poor - with a net income per person that falls below the level used by the World Bank to determine eligibility for IDA [International Development Association] assistance. At present, that means that their net income amounts to less than US\$1,395 per person [per year]”(FAO).

**Inflation** – “The annual percentage increase of the cost of living as measured by the consumer price index. Consumer price indices are based on a representative basket of goods and services purchased by consumers in an economy” (United Nations).

**Economic Growth** – “Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors” (United Nations)

## **2. Emphasis of the Discourse**

### **2.1 Stance of Intergovernmental Organizations**

The United Nations **World Food Programme** (UNWFP) and the **FAO** are integral parts of mitigating food insecurity and inflations. **WFP** has committed to, “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition...” while the Food and Agriculture Organization has a more generalized objective: “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, including land, water, air, climate”(World Food Programme). **WFP** prioritizes with through the **Country Strategic Plans** (CSP), which evaluates a nation’s agricultural capacities, economic disabilities, and physical altercations. On the other hand, the FAO adapts their own priority system; Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and developing countries in general all have precedence when distributing humanitarian aids. Furthermore, both IGOs are strongly in favor of advancing agricultural development in LEDCs, collaborating with a myriad of other NGOs and the World Bank in order to allocate monetary supplies. The two organizations have marginally different aims, but due to their extensive cooperation with one another, it is apparent that the **UNWFP** and the **FAO** are equally as important and impactful towards the food security in the LEDCs.

## **2.2 Stance of developed countries**

The overall stance of the developed countries, mainly the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Japan, South Korea, are in favor of promoting food security and reducing food price inflations. These countries have also dispensed an immense amount of monetary and medical supplies to IGOs such as the WFP and the FAO to improve the standard of living for suffering LEDCs around the globe. The United States by itself, has donated a totality of \$3.5 billion excluding prices of other provisional aid. However, it is important to mention MEDCs such as France and Spain, who despite contributing to IGOs, maintains as trade exporters towards LEDCs; according to Nations Encyclopedia, “France occupies 13.7% and Spain is responsible for 8.15% of exports to Algeria”. Therefore, though LEDCs are suffering from food inflations and an overdependency on imports, these countries would not be likely to discontinue their exportations due to its monetary gains.

## **2.3 Stance of developing countries**

Developing Countries or LEDCs are at the center of the problem regarding food insecurity and unexpected price inflations. According to data gathered by the FAO, more than 80 countries do not have the capabilities of producing ample food to provide sufficient nourishment to their populations. Hence, with this overwhelming amount of impoverish developing countries, comes a massive increase in demand for food imports, which eventually led to the consequence of extreme inflations. Not to mention, west African countries, Ethiopia and Kenya are experiencing prolonged droughts, further hindering their abilities in food security. Thus, due to the overwhelming majority of LEDCs suffering from food insecurity, most of the developing countries are strongly in favor of action of reducing their insecurity and equilibrizing their economy. However, it is imperative to acknowledge

the outliers of this group, China, despite being a developing country, is responsible for being a major exporter for a myriad of goods. Therefore, policies such as tariffs or quotas that would limit inflation in other LEDCs, may be presented as an economic burden to the financial sector in China.

### **3. Possible Solutions**

#### **3.1 In Favor of Developed Countries**

MEDCs still have space for improvement of food security. With their potent monetary supplies, they are able to provide solutions that benefit (or ultimately benefit) the status of both sides. One feasible resolution is the improvement in technology. A major aspect of the tribulations in food-diminishing developing countries is the low amount of harvest. Hence, MEDCs could invest monetary supplies towards developing enhancement in agricultural equipment and eventually selling or trading equipment to LEDCs that are in need. This potential solution provides economic and agricultural benefit to both the LEDCs and the MEDCs. Furthermore, this would also supply the developing countries with sustainable agricultural stabilities, promoting independence – in the ability to obtain food.

An efficient yet unfavorable (for the developing countries) solution is an implementation of a policy that would limit the reproduction of offspring in order to restrict and hinder human overpopulations in LEDCs. Nevertheless, it is important to consider that the implementation of a reproduction restriction policy entails countless political tensions (protests, boycotts, etc) which would, in turn, be a factor of intensifying conflicts in LEDCs.

#### **3.2 In Favor of Developing Countries**

On the other hand, there are approaches (for the sole benefit of developing nations) that could mitigate the issue of food insecurity in the LEDCs.

The economy is one of the most important factors when it comes to food insecurity. However, due to the overdependency towards MEDC for food, LEDCs often encounter a dilemma of whether to prioritize their economy or their food security.

MEDCs and other humanitarian organizations are able to resolve this conundrum by dispensing food assistance towards the LEDCs to stabilize their food security. This would not only provide the LEDCs with a short-term solution for their deficiency but would also create an opportunity for LEDCs to impose taxation policies such as tariffs and quotas to limit the inflation from influxes in imports.

In addition to the temporary (short-term) solution, LEDCs should also thrive to achieve a long-term equilibrium. Through a joint collaboration with MEDCs, NGOs, and IGOs, LEDCs are capable of employing specific personnel and equipment to construct agricultural-based

infrastructure, including but not limited to farms, food packaging facilities, food storage facilities. This solution would provide necessary employments for the impoverish population and would also contribute towards a long-term solution in that LEDCs will be self-sufficient and would not need to depend on other countries for food.

Yemen, one of the most food insecure countries in the world, has had a great improvement in their agriculture sector through cooperating with the FAO to fix their irrigation systems in farms. “With the support of the Government of Kuwait, FAO repaired and rehabilitated water canals and irrigation networks and constructed small-scale water infrastructures across Yemen, enhancing the availability of water for small-holder farmers” (OCHA Services).

#### **4. Keep in Mind the Following**

When researching your country’s stance on this topic, make sure to investigate the current situation of food insecurity and food price inflations in the scope of your country at a national level. Then, expand the scale to how your country is effecting the global food market and whether it is contributing or against food insecurities in the world. Lastly, consider how LEDCs could achieve food security with their current economic status. Some questions to guide you through your research are the following:

1. *What is your country’s current status in its economy and food stability?*
2. *How has your country contributed to promoting food security around the world?*
3. *What policies and actions have your country implemented in order to avoid/reduce food insecurity and price inflations?*
4. *Does your country retain any trade relations with LEDCs that might be a cause of their food inflation?*
5. *Does your country have any technological advancements in agriculture that would assist other LEDCs around the world?*
6. *What actions does your country take to guarantee an insecurity-free future?*

#### **5. Evaluation**

Food insecurity and food price inflations have plagued the world throughout history, it is of utmost importance to eradicate or at least mitigate this ever-lasting crisis. Overpopulation, trade overdependency, natural disasters, a lack of agricultural capabilities are the major causes of food deficiency in LEDCs. Although this conflict is ubiquitous around the globe, it is crucial for delegates of this committee to set aside their differing ideologies, religious differences and join together to construct a resolution that could bring a better tomorrow to people all over the world.

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