

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

**AGENDA: STRENGTHENING FOOD SECURITY AND
SUSUTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Letter from Executive Board

Dear Delegates,

At the outset on behalf of the Executive Board, we extend a warm welcome to all of you and congratulate you on being a part of the Food And Agriculture Organisation simulation at BHIS FairGaze MUN 2021. We believe that 'study guides' are detrimental to the individual growth of the members since they overlook a very important aspect of this activity, which is - Research. We are sure however that this background guide gives you a perfect launching pad to start with your research. The Background guide would be as abstract as possible, and would just give you a basic perspective on what the executive board believes you should know before you commence your research. This being clear, kindly do not limit your research to the areas highlighted, further but ensure that you logically deduce and push your research to areas associated with the issues mentioned. The objective of this background guide is to provide you with a 'background' of the issue at hand and therefore it might seem to some as not being comprehensive enough. We are not looking for existing solutions, or strategies that would be a copy paste of what countries you are representing have already stated; instead we seek an out of the box solution from you, while knowing and understanding your impending practical and ideological limitations. The onus is on you, members, to formulate a resolution which gives a fair attempt and frame practical solutions for impairment of treaties, failing and showing no progress, crippled by political interest pushing humanity towards the brim of war. Wishing you all a very warm good luck and hoping to see you all at this conference discussing imperative issues of international interest and we look forward to meeting you all at BHIS FairGaze MUN 2021.

Warm Regards

Sagar Sareen

Chairperson

COMMITTEE OVERVIEW

Introduction

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), founded in 1945, is the leading intergovernmental organization coordinating efforts towards the eradication of hunger and food insecurity. FAO facilitates partnerships between the United Nations (UN), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Member States, the private sector, and other stakeholders. Through the variety of functions that FAO performs, it works to reduce hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity; increase the sustainability and productiveness of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; reduce rural poverty; enable inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems; and improve the resilience of livelihoods to disasters. The International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) was founded in 1905 in Rome to study the state of agriculture and disseminate the information gathered. In 1943, the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture was established in order to create a permanent agricultural organization, which eventually led to FAO. Shortly after the end of the Second World War, the constitution of FAO was signed at the First Session of the Conference of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and entered into force on 16 October 1945. FAO inherited the statistical functions of the IIA and while FAO has a much broader mandate and reach, the core mission between the IIA and FAO remained largely the same: the needs of farmers, agriculture, and economic development. In its first two decades, FAO oversaw the establishment of important international agricultural agreements and institutions, including the World Food Programme (WFP) in 1961. In 1974, amid famine and global food crises, the first World Food Conference convened in Rome, Italy. Member States adopted the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (1974) proclaiming that, “every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties.” In commemoration of the founding of FAO, the FAO Conference adopted in 1979 Resolution 1/79, establishing World Food Day, which shall be observed on 16 October. At the World Food Summit in 1996 the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action were adopted. Both recognize seven broad commitments such as, the eradication of poverty, implementation of policies to improve physical and economic access of nutritionally adequate and safe food, and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and rural development practices. Governance, Structure, and Membership FAO is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) and reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). FAO currently consists of 194 members, two associate members (Faroe Islands and Tokelau), and one member organization (European Union). The primary body of FAO is the Conference of Member Nations established by Article III of the FAO constitution, which meets every two years in regular session. The Conference can vote to meet the following year in a special session. Each Member State and Associate Member is represented by one delegate carrying one vote; other international organizations may attend by invitation but do not have the right to vote. The purpose of the Conference is to determine the policy and approve the budget of FAO. The Conference may make recommendations to Member States and Associate Members, by a two thirds majority, related to food and agriculture for consideration with the objective to implement these recommendations by national action. In addition, the Conference may make recommendations to any international organization regarding issues pertaining to the FAO and may review any decision made by the council or subsidiary body and may establish Regional Conferences. There are Regional Conferences

for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Near East and North Africa. These are the highest governing body of FAO at the regional level and their purpose is to be a forum for Member States from the same geographic region to meet and discuss regional priorities, challenges, and to formulate coherent and aligned positions on global policy. The Council of FAO is the executive body of the organization and meets between the biennial FAO Conference years. The council acts on current food and agricultural activities and situations, and activities of the organization of the whole, including the development of the Programme of Work. The Council's powers are delegated by the Conference and various subcommittees, for example the Programme Committee and the Finance Committee, assist its work. A body of 49 Member Nations is elected to serve three-year terms on the Governing Council. The Director-General leads FAO and is appointed by the Conference for an initial four-year term that can be renewed once, for a total tenure of eight years. The current Director-General is José Graziano da Silva, who was re-elected in 2015 to serve his second and final term. The organization is composed of six main departments: Agriculture and Consumer Protection; Economic and Social Development; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Forestry; Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance; and, Technical Cooperation. Specialized divisions further support these departments. For example, the Agricultural Development Economics Division supports the Economic and Social Development Department through preparing evidence-based policy analysis on agriculture and economic development. Funding for FAO is derived from various sources, with the majority of the funding coming from obligatory, assessed contributions by Member States, as well as voluntary contributions by Member States. The current 2016-2017 FAO planned budget is \$2.6 billion; 39% of its current funding comes from assessed contributions and 61% comes from voluntary contributions from Member States and other partners. The amounts Member States are assessed are determined at the FAO Conference. Further funding is provided specifically for programs and includes contributions from Member States, international financial institutions, and the private sector, with funding often directed towards specific programs.

Mandate, Functions, and Powers

FAO's primary responsibilities are outlined in the Basic Texts of FAO that include FAO's Constitution (1945) and the applicable Rules of Procedure. The mandate of FAO, as outlined in the preamble of the constitution, is to address the following: "raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples; improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; bettering the condition of rural populations; and contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger". FAO is primarily responsible for increasing the level of nutrition but is not responsible for the direct provision of food. FAO works closely with the World Food Programme (WFP) and other agencies to facilitate the provision of food, particularly in times of emergency. The core functions of FAO, outlined in the Constitution, are to collect and analyze information related to nutrition, food and agriculture and to make this collection and analysis of data available. In addition, FAO provides technical assistance to Member States, organizes programs and missions, cooperates with Member States, and takes necessary and appropriate actions to implement the mandate of the organization as set forth in the preamble. In addition to its core functions, FAO also provides assistance in emergencies. FAO is involved in disaster risk reduction activities to increase the

resilience of communities to disasters. Due to the relationship between food insecurity and disasters, and the further relationship to decreased levels of nutrition, FAO has implemented programs in multiple regions to reduce the risk of food insecurity through a multi-sector approach with four broad thematic pillars: “Enabling the Environment; Watch to Safeguard; Apply Risk and Vulnerability Reduction Measures; and Prepare and Respond.” FAO also co-leads the Food Security Cluster with WFP. The cluster works to ensure that adequate nutrition and food are provided in humanitarian emergencies through the coordination of multiple partner agencies including WFP, FAO, the International Federations of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and other international NGOs. Recent Sessions and Current Priorities In the last decade, FAO has continued to promote policies aimed at food security, eradication of hunger and malnutrition, and economic development. In 2004, the Council of FAO adopted the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (Right to Food Guidelines) that provides Member States with practical guidance to successfully implement the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. Since, FAO has reaffirmed its commitment to eradicating hunger, and in recent years has focused on the impact of climate change on agriculture, fisheries, and forestry and promoted the adoption of adaptation and mitigation measures such as climate-smart agriculture, sustainable agriculture and fisheries practices. Many of FAO’s goals are integral to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) in order to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. FAO’s broad goals of the 2030 Agenda are: end poverty, hunger and malnutrition; sustainable development in agriculture, fisheries, and forestry; and, combat and adapt to climate change. These broader SDGs mean that FAO’s work towards the successful realization of the 2030 Agenda will touch all of the 17 SDGs in significant capacity. FAO’s current priorities focus around the implementation and monitoring of the success of the SDGs. FAO is the custodian of 21 indicators across SDGs 2, 5, 6, 12, 14 and 15. As a custodian agency FAO is responsible for collecting, analyzing, verifying, and distributing data from Member States and tracking global and regional estimates; contributing to SDG reports that are component of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development’s review; and establishing partnerships with other international agencies to monitor and report on the indicators. To achieve these goals, FAO is expanding its data collection and analysis through expanding its access to technologies such as, partnerships with companies like Google to access geospatial archives and harnessing satellite technology to monitor fisheries. The 40th Session of the FAO Conference was held from 3 July to 8 July 2017 and Member States discussed and reviewed the work of FAO on the SDGs and its programmatic work. In addition, the conference adopted the 2018- 2019 Biennial Theme, which is “Climate Change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO.” The 2017 Programme Evaluation Report found that most of FAO’s alignment of its programs to national and regional and global priorities, satisfactory or highly satisfactory through strengthening the Organization’s ability to work closely with stakeholders to achieve favorable outcomes. FAO’s programs aimed at food security, nutrition, forestry’s, fisheries, were among its best performing which was determined by FAO’s ability to realize stated program outcomes. FAO indicated its continued work towards aligning its strategic objective and climate change through the adoption of the 2018-2019 Biennial Theme, “Climate Change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO.” The primary goal of FAO in this context is to improve Member States’ food and agriculture systems to be resilient to the effects of global climate change. Additionally, the Director-General’s Medium Term Plan 2018-2021 (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019 (PWB) build upon

the organization's work towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and more broadly food security and sustainability. The PWB's assessment showed that FAO's strategic objectives contribute to 40 targets of 15 of the SDGs. The MTP sets out the five strategic objectives of FAO which are: eradication of malnutrition and hunger; increase the productivity and sustainability of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; reduce rural poverty; improve the inclusiveness and efficiency agriculture and food systems; and, increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. The PWB outlines the program's priorities and outcomes and the allocation of FAO's resources to achieving its strategic objectives.

Conclusion

FAO will play a crucial role in meeting the targets of the 2030 Agenda as its strategic objectives and programmatic work will intersect with nearly every SDG in some capacity. FAO, along with its partner organizations, is in a position to further reduce the burden of hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity on future generations and have aligned its strategic objective towards achieving these goals. Through organization-wide activities FAO will further enhance its position to appropriately respond to pressing situations, such as famine and food insecurity, while still meeting the outlined goals to eradicate hunger, malnutrition, and combat poverty.

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction Agriculture is fundamental to human activity, providing the nutrition necessary for human survival and good health. In the 20th century, the global population rose from 1.6 to over six billion; this increase required increased agricultural output driven, in part, by the use of fertilizers and pesticides. By 2050, the global population is estimated to grow to approximately 9.7 billion people, necessitating agricultural production to increase by 60% worldwide. The largest increases in population will occur in developing countries, which will need to double their food output to meet future demand. Additionally, climate change will cause extreme weather events, including droughts and heat waves, and impact how much crop is produced per unit of land, or yield. In the near future, agriculture must be capable of feeding a larger population in spite of these and other challenges. The high-input method of the 20th century results in lower agricultural yields, due to environmental degradation, putting the ability of future generations to feed themselves at risk. In addition, agriculture contributes to climate change, generating 21% of greenhouse emissions, resulting in the moderate to severe degradation of one third of global soil, and contributing to a loss of biodiversity. Furthermore, agriculture has failed to be inclusive with respect to the income of farmers; three quarters of the world's poorest people, totaling 810 million people, depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. The United Nations (UN) World Commission on Environment and Development (WECD) report *Our Common Future* (1987) defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Definitions of sustainable agriculture vary; one definition is, agriculture that makes use of practices that consider its impact on animals, soil and crops. This definition also states that sustainable agriculture should use as few environmentally harmful inputs as possible, and should utilize techniques and processes which are adapted to the local environment. The concept of sustainable development is comprised of three parts, as determined at the 2005 World Summit: economic, environmental, and social. This guide will follow this structure,

beginning with a look at the economic challenges of promoting sustainable agricultural practices and reducing food waste. Secondly, this topic will look at how best to continue increasing output without further harming the environment, and how to adapt agriculture to the consequences of climate change. Finally, the guide will examine the role sustainable agriculture can play in fighting rural poverty and malnutrition.

International and Regional Framework

At the 1974 World Food Conference, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) was established with the purpose of reducing poverty and hunger in rural areas through financial investments. The Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (1974) was also adopted at the conference. This declaration acknowledges that solving world hunger does not only require greater amounts of food production, but also improvements in its distribution. In 1996 and 2002, FAO convened World Food Summits to incorporate the principles of sustainability into agricultural practices, as well as improving efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation. The 1996 summit produced the World Food Summit Plan of Action (1996). This plan aimed to halve global rates of malnourishment by 2015 through its seven commitments. For example, commitment three pledged to broaden the genetic diversity of crops, and promote the use of more productive crop varieties and technologies, which can sustainably increase yields. Commitment six focused on creating economic investment in food security and rural development, through measures such as micro-credit for rural smallholders, particularly for women. The 2002 World Food Summit was responsible for the creation of an Intergovernmental Working Group, consisting of various stakeholders. The group created the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (2004), better known as the Right to Food guidelines. This document contains eight guidelines that outline how to ensure that everyone has adequate access to food. Guideline 2.6 contains measures to address poverty and hunger through rural and agricultural development. Guideline 8 notes the importance of allowing access to land, water and technology, particularly for traditionally disadvantaged groups. Sustainable agriculture is integral to fulfilling the aims set forth in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their successors, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While the MDGs helped to reduce poverty, targets with regards to environmental degradation, gender, and wealth inequalities did not fully meet their objectives. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) and the SDGs build upon the efforts of their predecessors, while bringing a renewed focus to issues which were not key aspects of the MDGs. Many of the SDGs are relevant to sustainable agriculture, including, but not limited to: eradicating poverty (SDG 1), eliminating hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2), mitigating and adapting to climate change (SDG 13), promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns (SDG 12), and protecting life on land (SDG 15). Importantly, each SDG has several comprehensible targets that enable clear assessment of achievement. In 2014, FAO organized the Second International Conference on Nutrition, in cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). This conference resulted in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition (2014). The declaration acknowledged that food systems are currently straining to provide food that is nutritious and diverse enough to meet global requirements due to environmental degradation, lack of resources, food losses, and unsustainable consumption and production patterns. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted by 191 UN Member States, and committed them to limiting their carbon emissions in order to ensure that global temperatures do not rise by more than two degrees Celsius. The agreement also acknowledges the importance of protecting food systems through climate change mitigation and adaptation. Role of

the International System In addition to the existing international documents, FAO and other organizations have implemented concrete actions and programs to promote sustainable agriculture. One such collaboration is the joint FAO and WHO Codex Alimentarius, which ensures food health standards, and facilitates trade in agricultural products between Member States. Facilitating trade helps to enhance food security in Member States unable to produce enough of their own food; furthermore, it provides necessary investment to make agricultural systems more sustainable and resilient to climate change. FAO further engages in cooperation with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) around the world, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs). CSOs benefit from the expertise and global reach of FAO, while FAO benefits from working with partners with local knowledge and an ability to reach areas often overlooked or inaccessible to international organizations. For example, FAO has cooperated with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to help over 255,000 Malawian farmers recover from two years of floods followed by devastating drought. FAO and CRS organized seed fairs, which allowed farmers access to the best-suited seed varieties for their environment. Using these varieties enabled them to produce larger yields while maintaining greater environmental protection. Likewise, FAO works closely with the private sector in line with the standards and guidelines established by the UN Global Compact, a voluntary UN initiative established by the UN General Assembly in 2000 that encourages businesses to integrate principles of sustainability into their everyday practices. The UN Global Compact established six agricultural business principles ranging from environmental protection to sharing best practices and technology. In this sense, FAO cooperates with agricultural businesses, such as the Kuehne Foundation, combining knowledge and expertise to help them transition towards sustainable agricultural practices. FAO leverages the expertise of its regional and sub-regional offices to assist Member States in developing sustainable agricultural practices that take into account their unique needs, and to use methods that are appropriate for their environment. FAO has, for instance, worked closely with the European Union (EU) and the Sri Lankan government to assist farmers in bringing an area of abandoned farmland, approximately the size of Manhattan, back to productive use. This was done by repairing 54 irrigation tanks, which had fallen into disrepair, and by clearing and levelling overgrown terrain. Furthermore, 11,000 farmers were given assistance in sustainable and ecologically sound crop production. In doing so, this project has helped to provide employment to those families seeking to recover from conflict, and to improve their food security situation, while protecting the environment through water conservation. In July 2017, FAO held its 40th annual conference, which was attended by representatives from 181 Member States. The conference discussed FAO's future priorities and resulted in the endorsement of the 2018-2019 biennial theme, "Climate Change and its impact on the work and activities of FAO." Making climate change the theme of this conference signals the importance of climate change mitigation and adaptation for FAO.

Conclusion

Agriculture faces many challenges currently, most of which can only be met through international cooperation and a greater focus on implementation. As stated by the Director-General of FAO during his statement to the European parliament in May 2017, "[t]he future of agriculture is not input-intensive, but knowledge-intensive." Initiatives to address hunger and poverty need to target those engaged in agriculture, as disproportionate amounts of women and poor people rely on agriculture for their

livelihoods. FAO and other international actors can provide the technical and financial support to help Member States make the transition from the high-input methods of the past, to a new sustainable future. Further Research To further research this topic, delegates should consider questions such as: How to increase collaboration between international actors, states, and local governments to better regulate and extend social protections to the global agricultural workforce? How can efforts to safeguard our soils and restoration of degraded land be accelerated? How can FAO reach farmers located in the world's most isolated regions, so as to help them adapt to climate change through measures such as CSA? How can international conferences and meetings be more effective in promoting sustainable agricultural practices? Furthermore, how could their outcomes be implemented more effectively?

IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) works in different fields to improve the livelihood of malnourished people, among others the agricultural sector.³²⁷ Developing countries greatly rely on the agricultural sector as their primary source of economic growth; therefore, disasters pose a unique threat to development and resilience.³²⁸ Currently, both human-caused and natural disasters are increasing in frequency; for this reason, improving implementation of strategies to sustain agriculture development is necessary for the recovery process.³²⁹ Emergency response plans aim to mitigate the impact of a crisis on the population and the environment. ³³⁰ Post-emergency response plans focus on rebuilding population resilience within which agricultural development represents a key factor to achieve this goal.³³¹ They are initiated in the immediate aftermath of an emergency, when a high number of human lives are still at risk, to minimize damages and assure mid and long-term recovery.³³² It is within the emergency response that the UN, together with other international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local governments, is called upon to implement strategies to restore lasting stability.³³³ Among these strategies, social assistance to vulnerable people, including children and women, supply of resources, and economic aid to agricultural producers, are all essential steps for recovery.³³⁴ Furthermore, the agricultural sector represents the basis of food production and livelihood, which is crucial to ensure nutrition and food security for populations affected by a crisis.³³⁵ Formulating emergency response also means taking into account the emergency-rehabilitation-development continuum, which illustrates the interconnection between post-emergency and rehabilitation interventions. ³³⁶ Particularly, FAO has recognized that the continuum for food and nutrition security consists of mitigation, relief, rehabilitation, and development.³³⁷ This connection requires action during the emergency and immediately after, taking into account the ultimate goal of development and enhancement of resilience.³³⁸ Implementing systems to strengthen social capital, which means to empower a community to be able to deal with an emergency by using its own network and resources, needs to be included in any initiative aimed at building community resilience.³³⁹ International and Regional Framework In 1991, the General Assembly adopted resolution 46/182 on the topic of "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations."³⁴⁰ In this resolution, Member States underlined the importance of coordinating the response among international entities in cases of emergency, and formed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), to that end.³⁴¹ In 2005, the Humanitarian Reform

Agenda was created by IASC to innovate the ways in which the international community intervenes in cases of emergency.³⁴² By introducing several new elements within emergency response plans, the agenda focused on the introduction of the cluster approach.³⁴³ The aim of the cluster approach is to coordinate the efforts of humanitarian organizations, to avoid unnecessary overlap within specific sectors of intervention.³⁴⁴ The Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security was adopted by the African Union (AU) in 2003.³⁵³ The declaration focuses on various aspects of food security, such as maternal and infant nutrition, potable water for rural communities, and pollutants in water resources used for agricultural irrigation.³⁵⁴ Further, in 2014, the AU adopted the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods.³⁵⁵ The Malabo Declaration directly builds on the Maputo Declaration and stresses the importance of implementing sustainable agriculture in developing countries, in order to restore the agricultural sector and ensure nutrition in areas where human-caused emergencies and natural disasters have a more detrimental impact on fragile economies.³⁵⁶ Similarly, the Kazan Declaration Pledges to Strengthen Food Security was adopted by the 21 members of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in 2012.³⁵⁷ It calls for international institutions and the private sector to create a framework to address regional food security issues.³⁵⁸ The declaration stresses the role of external stakeholders, like local governments, in fighting hunger and addressing food insecurity in cases of emergency.³⁵⁹ Furthering regional efforts, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) met in Cuba in 2014 and adopted the Caracas Declaration and Action Plan of the Authorities of Social Development for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty.³⁶⁰ Within the Caracas Declaration, CELAC stressed the importance of food and nutritional security, particularly the creation of a plan to eradicate hunger and promote food security through new agricultural techniques.³⁶¹ As a result, the CELAC Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the Eradication of Hunger 2025 was adopted in 2015.³⁶² The plan recognized that it is crucial to focus on vulnerable categories and the importance of livelihoods, which represent not only a source of nutrition, but is also a method of preserving food habits.³⁶³ Likewise, early warning systems are useful tools able to technically and scientifically evaluate the condition of crops and, in general, of agriculture, by providing important insights about annual growing, condition of nearby aquifers, and potential natural and human-caused threats.³⁶⁴

Case Study: The Horn of Africa Cross-border Plan for Drought The Horn of Africa can be considered a key example of the work of FAO in regards to aiding an emergency and developing mid- to long-term strategies for agricultural development.⁴⁰⁰ In early 2017, FAO adopted the Horn of Africa Cross-Border Drought Action Plan to help the devastating situation caused by drought in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda.⁴⁰¹ The severity of this emergency situation has been evaluated based on several factors, including receiving only a quarter of expected rainfall in the region, and the desertification of large areas previously utilized for growing crops.⁴⁰² The Horn of Africa Cross-Border Drought Action Plan prioritizes intervention to reduce food insecurity in the region and improve the resilience of drought-affected households involved in pastoral and agricultural activities.⁴⁰³ The main priority of the plan is to safeguard the livestock of the rural population.⁴⁰⁴ The immediate action that has been undertaken by FAO is aiding rural and poor communities in managing water resources, rotating crops, and providing shelters and food for livestock, which altogether lays the groundwork for sustainable agriculture.⁴⁰⁵ FAO is working with local communities, in particular vulnerable groups, in

order to implement initiatives to take advantage of areas that are still suitable for crops, taking into consideration the availability of aquifers.⁴⁰⁶ These initiatives allow producers to gain financial support for themselves and their families, as well as to make the local economic sector more dynamic by promoting local products.⁴⁰⁷

Case Study: Agricultural Development As a Tool for Stabilizing the Economy During Emergencies In the case of ongoing human-caused emergencies triggered by civil wars or transnational tensions, effective emergency recovery can also be accomplished by working on agricultural initiatives that build resilient communities.⁴⁰⁸ Yemen, with its agricultural-based economy, is suffering because of a protracted conflict which has led to a humanitarian and economic crisis.⁴⁰⁹ Currently, 55% of the Yemeni population lives in poverty; half of Yemen's population is affected by hunger. ⁴¹⁰ The scarcity of both natural resources and food, and a lack of employment opportunities, have caused an unprecedented food emergency.⁴¹¹ In fact, recent figures show that over 13 million Yemenis are suffering from food scarcity and an additional 6 million are at risk of starvation.⁴¹² The agricultural sector is a fundamental aspect of the Yemeni economy, including crops, fisheries, livestock, and forestry production.⁴¹³ Prior to the conflict, Yemen was able to provide much of its population with locally produced staple food products.⁴¹⁴ Currently, Yemen has to rely on importing 85% of its staple cereal and grain products at high prices.⁴¹⁵ For this reason, FAO is currently working to address and strengthen agricultural development within the country, trying to avoid dependence on foreign sources of food.⁴¹⁶ Moreover, since the civil war began in 2015, the fighting has severely limited access to water.⁴¹⁷ The destruction of water transport infrastructure has led to an increase in the price of water, coupled with the difficulty in delivering water.⁴¹⁸

Further Research

As delegates commence further research into the topic, it is important to keep in mind some of FAO's most recent actions. Within their research, delegates should look to answer some key questions: Can FAO implement further practices to better coordinate efforts with the other Rome-based agencies when it comes to agricultural development? How can FAO and WFP enhance their level of coordination within the Food Security Cluster? Does agricultural development need to be considered a key priority in case of natural disasters, human-caused emergencies, or both? Is the FAO, and more generally, the international community, taking full advantage of technologies, such as early warning mechanisms or systems for land mapping?

FOOD SECURITY

Food security 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. - 1996 World Food Summit. About 850 million people in the world are undernourished - a number that has hardly changed since the 1990-92 base period for the World Food Summit and Millennium Development Goal commitments on reducing hunger by half by 2015. Of particular concern are hunger hotspots, marked by the widespread persistence and prevalence of food insecurity, especially in protracted crises. As of May 2006, 39 countries in the world were experiencing serious food

emergencies and required external assistance for dealing with critical food insecurity: 25 in Africa, 11 in Asia and Near East, 2 in Latin America and 1 in Europe.

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