AFRICAN UNION
Topic Guide

Chairs:
Anindia Sisodiya
and Anjali Anbu

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Junior Academy Model United Nations
- THE FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE -

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ANINDITA SISODIYA (HEAD CHAIR)

Dear Delegates,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you all to JAMUN V! My name is Anindita Sisodiya and I am so excited to be your head chair for AU this year. I am currently a sophomore at BCA's Academy for the Advancement of Science and Technology, and I have been doing MUN since freshman year. Ever since my first MUN conference at Yale, MUN has become an integral part of my life and has broadened my global perspective. Whether it be your first conference, or one of your last ones as a middle schooler, I hope that through the various debates and thought provoking discussions that you will partake in at JAMUN this year, you are able to create your own, unique perspective on the issue at hand. As your chair, I hope make your JAMUN experience as memorable as possible, so feel free to ask me any questions you may have. I am really looking forward to the cohesive solutions that you all have come up with to address the issue and can't wait to meet you all this year!

Anindita Sisodiya
Head Chair - African Union (AU)
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ANJALI ANBU (VICE CHAIR)

Welcome, delegates of the African Union!

My name is Anjali Anbu, and I will be your Vice Chair at JAMUN V! I am a freshman in the Academy of Engineering and Design Technology (AEDT), and I am looking forward to seeing the creative ideas and solutions brainstormed in our committee to address the widespread issue of Food Instability, specifically in Africa where this issue is particularly prevalent.

My time spent doing Model United Nations has been short, but since the beginning of freshman year, I have been to 4 conferences, 2 of which were college conferences. During my time in Model UN, I have seen delegates from all around the world come together to debate universal issues that affect real human lives, and I have seen these same delegates come up with creative, practical solutions with real-life applications to solve these issues. In my experience being a delegate, I have found that Model UN provides me an outlet to talk about applicable solutions for the problems that plague so many people's lives. Through chairing this year for JAMUN, I would like to inspire in as many delegates as possible the same love for Model UN that was fostered in me by providing the best committee experience possible!

Participating in Model UN bestows delegates just like you (and me!) with skills such as diplomacy, research, writing, and public speaking. I can say without a doubt that my participation in Model UN has improved my ability to talk on my feet and to write under pressure, and I wouldn't be where I am now if it weren't for my Model UN experience, limited as it may be. I hope that JAMUN V can be an experience that shows you, whether or not this is your first Model United Nations experience, not only an entirely new way of expressing your thoughts and ideas, but also strengths you did not know you had, just like it did for me. If you have any questions about JAMUN, the African Union, Food Insecurity, or Model UN in general, please feel free to contact me at anjanb22@bergen.org!

Best,

Anjali Anbu, Vice Chair - African Union (AU)

Introduction:

Topic:
Food Security

According to the World Hunger Education foundation, over 800 million people around

the world are living without access to the food necessary for their survival; while 800 million people all around the globe starve without appropriate nutrition, a whopping 1.9 billion are overweight or obese. Although obesity is not always caused by overconsumption, this disparity in worldwide access to food and adequate nutrition is a key sign of global food insecurity, in which food is improperly distributed and, as a result, some are held away from the food they need to survive and others are surrounded by far more food than they need. This inadequacy leads to widespread malnutrition, locking those affected into cycles of poverty and bars them from taking opportunities that would help them

break out. Malnutrition is an issue infamously widespread amongst numerous African Nations, and it is now up to the United Nations to find a solution that appropriately addresses this epidemic.

History Of The Issue:

Food insecurity is an unfortunately prevalent problem in a world that has progressed in so many ways and recessed in so many others.

The first signs of food insecurity were indicated by a survey conducted by the League of Nation's Health Division, which reported the existence of multiple cases of malnutrition and an acute food shortage in developing countries. To combat this issue, the League of Nations found it best to focus on increasing global food production, as this would boost the global economy and also become a means to provide food for those impacted by malnutrition. Addressing the issue of food insecurity was the first stage in assuring everyone had adequate access to food.

In the past, weather and conflicts have been very problematic for Africa. This is evident during Uganda's 1980 famine, which accompanied with it being involved in a political conflict, which both contributed to widespread hunger in Uganda. Then, in 1984, another famine occurred in Ethiopia, which resulted in approximately 1 million deaths.

Overall, African nations have been the most impacted by malnutrition in the past. This has mostly occurred due to political turmoil, various droughts which led to famine, and their inability to supply the masses with an adequate food supply. This combination of factors has made Africa as a continent particularly vulnerable to mass famine and the highest rate of mass malnutrition of any continent. The African Union recognizes the progression of food insecurity in African nations, and acknowledges that this issue can no longer continue unhindered lest the rising

population of Africa suffers as a result of the UN's inactivity.

Current Situation:

Food insecurity is a multifaceted issue with no singular cause or solution. Immense social stratification in insecure areas causes immense food disparity, where the large lower class cannot afford the rising prices of food and switching between classes (i.e. getting more money and rising in status) becomes more difficult. Refer to figure 1.1, a rough diagram of social stratification for clarification purposes. In the "ideal" to the left, the middle class is the largest class and the poorest class is the smallest; the gap between any given class is small and one could easily rise from one class to another because of the diversity in economic statuses. Although the presence of an upper class cannot be prevented and in fact should not be, in the ideal situation depicted above, it is not particularly far above the middle class.

In the "unhealthy" model to the right, one can see immense social stratification; the upper class is extremely elevated above the middle class, and it is nearly impossible for one to rise from the
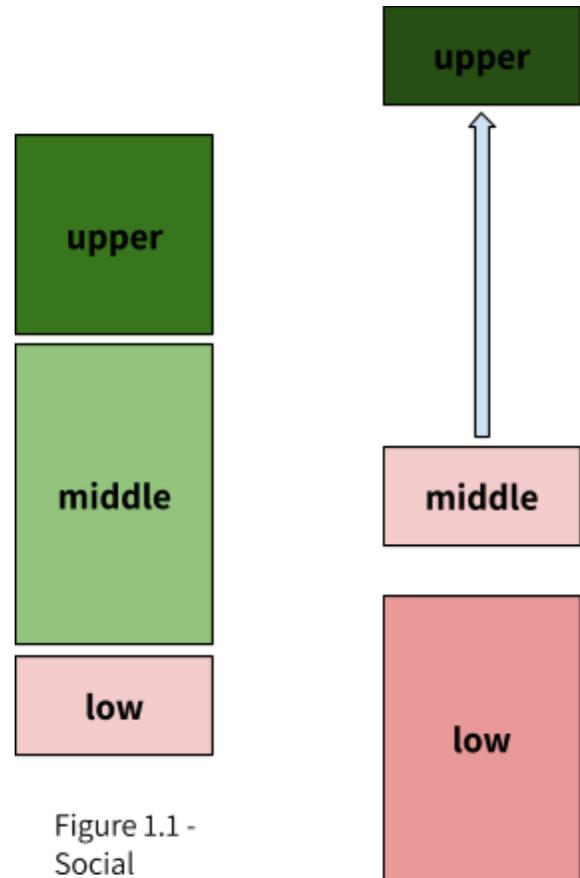

Figure 1.1 - Social Stratification

middle class to the upper class. This tends to occur because of the prevalence of job markets in which a hefty initial sum is required as an investment in a low-risk high-reward industry, such as resource extraction (i.e. mining); in these situations, the middle and lower classes cannot participate due to the lack of such funds, and

therefore are unlikely to have opportunities to earn money.

In the diagram, not only has the upper class elevated, meaning that there is a larger gap between the classes and therefore harder to rise in class/status, but the middle class has halved and assimilated into the lowest class. This means poverty rates rise and the poor are locked into their position while the rich get richer and prevent anyone else from getting rich alongside them. When this occurs, basic necessities, including one's access to food, become rare commodities.

Another major factor contributing to the worldwide food insecurity crisis is the vast amount of food that goes uneaten and wasted, particularly in first-world countries. According to the National Resource Defense Council, if a mere 15% of all the food wasted by Americans was saved, over 25 million people could be fed. That is 60% of the population facing food insecurity in America and 7% of the population facing food insecurity in the entire African continent.

Much of the food that is wasted is destroyed, disposed of, or rendered inedible during the post-harvest phase, which is the period between when the food is harvested or produced and when it arrives on shelves. Across all nations of sub-Saharan Africa, over a third of all harvested fruits, vegetables, and tubers are not put onto the market and thereby "lost" before the packaging or processing process. This occurs for several reasons; firstly, many small-scale farmers, particularly poorer ones, either cannot afford or do not have access to equipment and methods that would increase the shelf-life of their goods. As a result, their once-freshly harvested produce rots quicker and therefore becomes unsuitable for sale or consumption before it can reach the consumer. When this occurs, less food goes on the shelves, and supply dwindles as demand rises due to a growing population and the current lack of food that already exists. When supply is low and demand is high, the price of each individual good goes up, meaning that less people can now afford this limited supply of food. Combined with social stratification that causes the poor class to expand and decreases the likelihood of escaping the poverty cycle, this means that more and more people lack access to

something that should be a promised necessity, furthering the food insecurity crisis.

Additionally, in wealthier areas especially, there is a tendency to only display the goods that look attractive, with as few defects as possible. Perfectly edible produce is thrown out and wasted merely due to its appearance. Approximately 2.9 trillion pounds of food are thrown away each year, more than enough to feed the hungry people of the world, and much of it is perfectly edible but thrown away because it "won't sell". This food is carted away to landfills and other disposal sites, where perfectly good food, particularly produce, is thrown away while people starve nearby.

Issues to Address:

As the population of Africa is slated to rise by nearly 2 billion in the next 30 years, the United Nations can no longer ignore this pressing issue and the people it affects. Although there are many more causes of food insecurity globally, the arguable "main" causes of food insecurity (although delegates are free to propose alternate and/or additional causes to the ones stated) include:

Social stratification that locks people into poverty,

Low supply and high demand of food, raising prices,

Inaccessibility of proper processing infrastructure for small farmers, reducing shelf life,

The needless disposal of viable food,

The under-acknowledgement of the food insecurity epidemic by the greater population,

The undereducation of farmers on the most efficient farming techniques,

A reduction in suitable land for farming,

And many other factors that all combine to make food insecurity the widespread and critical issue that it is.

Possible Solutions:

When considering the enhancement of food security, it is essential to note that each country has unique factors contributing to their current status on food

security. This factors include, but are not limited to, extreme poverty, underperforming agriculture, limited actions of the civil society and private sector, lack of purchasing power, lack of political will to prioritize the improvement of food security, and the management of "nutrition transfer by rebuilding local food systems and the strength of links between small-scale producers and urban consumers." (Food Security in the Democratic Republic of Congo 2013). Delegates should take into consideration their country's current policies regarding the topic at hand. While some countries have both the will and the resources to help countries where this issue is most prevalent, many may want to use their resources towards addressing more pressing issues, and others unable to sustain their own country will probably not be able to assist other countries. Make sure to acknowledge that some countries will want to take less popular stances on the issue, but must phrase these points in a way that does not immediately strike cause for alarm lest they gather suspicion from their neighboring nation-states.

Keeping this in mind, some possible courses of actions for delegates could be to increase food availability, accessibility, and stability. Delegates could plan on increasing food availability by discovering ways to increase agricultural production through increased arabe lands, regulating the proper uses of water, minimizing post-harvest losses, etc. Creating job opportunities and ensuring better infrastructure, transport, and storage facilities would result in higher food availability, making it accessible for numerous people. Implementing appropriate processing techniques to make foods available year round, finding ways to ensure proper storage facilities at households, and having an altogether more regulated pricing for food are all ways to increase food stability in developing nations. Some ways delegates can achieve better food utilization is through nutrition education, better access to health facilities, and access to safe water. Any plan created by delegates must address the fact that food insecurity is caused by an amalgamation of many different factors and situational consequences. The chairs would look favorably upon discussion that analyzes and understands how the different issues that cause food insecurity come together and influence one another. Delegates should come up with solutions that address at least 2 or more different factors so as not

to make a one-pronged solution to a multi-faceted problem. Delegates who do not address multiple factors may find themselves vulnerable to questioning from others on this front, so although it is not required, it is strongly recommended. The chairs would also look favorably upon solutions that are practical considering the social, economic, and political atmosphere of their regions of implementation, and hopes to see delegates providing solutions that could realistically be enacted in their respective nations.

Key Questions to Consider

How is malnutrition propagated differently in developed & undeveloped nation states, and what factors cause this difference to exist?

How can the United Nations provide a solution for the nations of the African Union that addresses all or most of the different factors that cause and increase rates of malnutrition?

What solutions specifically address the cycle of malnutrition and ensures that those locked in such a cycle have the opportunities and resources necessary to break it?

What can be enacted in order to utilize the food that is wasted in African nations rather than throwing it away?

How does your individual country deal with food instability in its nation?

Are there any special ways your country specifically suffers in terms of food instability that must be acknowledged for your country to sign onto a paper?