



Dear Delegates,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2021 West Texas A&M Model United Nations Conference!

The following pages are designed to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated in our committees for the 2021 session. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates, formal and informal caucuses, and the WTMUNC experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers. We encourage you to learn all you can about your two topics first and then study your country with regard to the selected topics. Please remember that all committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both the listed topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

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Topic Preparation Guide

World Health Organization – Food Assistance and Security for Refugees



**World Health
Organization**

World Health Organization (WHO)

The World Health Organization's Constitution came into force on 7 April 1948 – a date we now celebrate every year as World Health Day.

WHO supports Member States as they coordinate the efforts of multiple sectors of the government and partners – including bi- and multilaterals, funds and foundations, civil society organizations and private sector – to attain their health objectives and support their national health policies and strategies.

The WHO is the directing and coordinating authority on international health within the United Nations' system.

They accomplish this by:

- Providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed;
- Shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge;
- Setting norms and standards and promoting and monitoring their implementation;
- Articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options;
- Providing technical support, catalyzing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity; and
- Monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends.

The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO. It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board. The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed program budget.

Source: <http://www.who.int/about/what-we-do/en/>

Topic Background

When countries engage in war, civil-wars, or any other forms of conflict that have the potential to destroy or relocate a specific group of people, then there is a high probability that this situation will call for the creation of refugee camps. In these refugee camps, aid and assistance will be needed. These refugee camps can hold hundreds of thousands of people and they will need food assistance and security to cover their basic needs. There is a high potential of these refugees being susceptible to food shortages and violence during the duration of time that they spend in these camps. These are all important risks that the United Nations needs to be aware of before assisting these groups. When this information is properly received by United Nation delegates and the international community, then they can continue to provide the proper assistance for these refugees. If these basic needs are not met, there is a high risk of long-term health effects such as stunted growth, birth defects, and malnutrition.

Food assistance and security for refugees is critical for the survival of some of these cultures and ethnic groups. If they do not have proper security, then they are targets for genocide and their cultures could potentially vanish. Some countries that consist of many asylum seekers come from states such as; Syria, Afghanistan, and South Sudan. These states consist of over 50% of the UNHCR asylum seekers. There are around 6.7 million asylum seekers from Syria, 2.7 million asylum seekers from Afghanistan, and 2.3 million asylum seekers from South Sudan. There is also new information from the United Nations that there has been an increase in asylum seeking applications from Venezuela. Over 300,000 have applied for asylum in 2018. These asylum seekers reside in developed or neighboring countries. The top refuge-hosting countries are; Germany, Sudan, Uganda, Pakistan and Turkey. Germany and Sudan host around 1.1 million refugees each while Uganda and Pakistan host around 1.2 - 1.4 million refugees each. The country that hosts the most asylum seekers is Turkey with around 3.7 million refugees.

Some examples that could exacerbate this problem would be issues of conflict, cultural-conflict, civil-wars, corrupt governmental conflicts and genocide. The Syrian Civil War would be an example of this because after the Arab Spring, hope was given to pro-democracy Syrian activists. This eventually caused peaceful protests that led to conflict and rising tensions. After these tensions escalated, war erupted and exacerbated the issues. This on-going war has caused massive destruction in the country and has led to many asylum seekers and refugees. This example stresses the idea that opposing groups could lead to increased refugees that only contribute to this issue of food assistance and security.

Past International Action

The actions of the United Nations that have taken over this issue include the creation of the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO helps with assistance for food, security, hygiene and other forms of aid that assist in upholding and preserving refugee basic needs for survival. The United Nations itself will assist in emergency aid for these refugees. The WHO assists in food supply to decrease the risks of malnutrition of diseases that could be created or spread from the lack of food assistance and hygiene assistance. By assisting in these manners, they decrease public health issues and preserve their basic needs. They will intervene in matters of food, security, housing and health, often providing not just vaccines, but vitamins and nutrition to areas where famine or starvation is particularly acute. To preserve these refugees security, the United Nations has also deployed UN Peacekeepers to these refugee camps so that they can be protected from threats that arise inside or outside of the refugee camps. Other groups that help with food assistance and security for refugees are the UNHCR and USAID. These organizations help with emergency food assistance by purchasing local food and supplies and distributing them in these refugee camps. They also will import certain foods and supplies from other countries or in cases where importing food will disrupt the economy and the market, they will distribute food vouchers to the refugees in these camps so that they can attain food and basic supplies.

Issues of refugees were once focused in larger more developed countries such as Europe during times of war. Now these issues are focused in lower socio-economic countries that are still developing, or they are in areas of war and conflict. These issues used to be solved by outside groups who would volunteer to assist and send in food or supplies. Now these issues are dealt with by the United Nations and the International Community as a whole. These issues and the way that aid is distributed have changed with the help of the international community because there are certain guidelines and rules that the United Nations takes to maintain human rights and public health. The United Nations will work collaboratively with other organizations such as the World Health Organization to preserve their basic needs.

Possible Solutions

Some possible solutions that could help food assistance and security in these refugee camps would be regulations and laws from participants of the United Nations. By having countries donate specific amounts of money to the United Nations so that they can distribute food and security, there can be better health outcomes in these camps. There can also be a decrease in birth defects, malnutrition, and stunted growth. Overall, the distribution of financial aid and resources from each participating country in the UN can lead to better health standards in these camps and more food assistance and security for these refugees.

Other important aspects of the issue revolve around the particular strategies and vulnerable groups facing food insecurity. A particularly vulnerable group includes infants and nursing mothers, both of whom have acute and specific nutritional needs which are hard to meet in conflict zones and refugee camps. This need is similarly present in young children as they develop, as nutrient deficiency can lead to growth problems and disabilities as they age.

Further, there is increasing attention to the need for not just basic caloric needs but also broader nutritional diversity and vitamin supplements. While many refugees may temporarily face food shortages or exile from their home, many others instead are faced with dwindling supplies and insecurity for years on end. Simple foodstuffs may sustain life but lead to later nutritional deficiencies, even in adults, with supplements such as calcium, Vitamins A,C, and D, and others, serving to address these deficiencies both in the short and long term.

Further Research

Guiding Questions

1. Which areas of the world face food insecurity and refugees?
2. What are some possible solutions to food insecurity, and how can it best be implemented?
3. Which groups face the greatest hurdles in food insecurity?
4. What impact does food insecurity have in the future, and in other areas of concern such as disease or conflict?