

HMDC Presents... UNICEF: Full Report

HMDC Presents... UNICEF: Childhood Hunger: Food Waste, Food Recovery, and Farmland Restoration (Research Report, December 2026)

Committee: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Harvard Model United Nations Online, December 5-6, 2026

WHAT OUR CHAIRS WILL FOCUS ON

Harvard tells us that this committee is about children who do not get enough safe, healthy food to eat. The October session looked back at the history of the problem and at what UNICEF has already tried. In December, we move on to three new pieces: food that is wasted, food that can be saved and given to people who need it, and farmland that needs to be repaired. Our job as delegates is to build "comprehensive and sustainable solutions" that connect these three pieces to hungry children.

Harvard Model United Nations, HMUN Online Committee Page, Last Accessed: October 2026

<https://www.harvardmun.org/unicef-online>

The parts of this report that match the December focus most closely are Part 1B (cutting food loss), Part 1C (recovering surplus food), Part 1E (restoring farmland), Part 3A (food waste networks) and Part 3C (farmland restoration programs).

How we use this report: This report also spends real space on school meals (Part 1D and Part 3B), emergency therapeutic food for severe wasting (Part 3D), and hunger in war zones (Part 2, entries 2.14 and 2.15). Harvard's December focus does not name any of these, so we treat them as background that explains why children are hungry, not as the centre of our speeches. We put food waste, food recovery and farmland restoration first in our position papers and resolutions. When we do mention school meals or therapeutic food, we tie them back to one of the three December pieces, for example by serving saved food or locally grown food in school meals.

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KEY VOCABULARY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Research Gaps and Notes for the Coach

How to Use This Report

This topic joins three problems that are usually debated separately. Children go hungry, while about one fifth of the food the world produces is thrown away and more food is lost before it ever reaches a shop. At the same time, the soil that grows food is being damaged, which lowers harvests in the places where hunger is worst. UNICEF's job in this committee is to decide which of these levers helps children most, how to pay for it, and how to measure whether it worked.

Every fact below sits inside an evidence entry. Each entry names the publication and the date in its heading so that you can always trace where a fact came from. Read the Tagline first, then the "This means..." line, which tells you how the fact can be used in debate.

A note on scope: UNICEF is a children's agency, not a farming or environment agency. Strong resolutions in this committee usually tie every food waste or farmland idea back to a child outcome, such as fewer stunted children, more children fed at school, or fewer children with wasting.

PART 1, THE TOPIC

1A. The Harms: Who Is Hurt, How Many, How Badly

Hunger harms children in two main ways. Chronic hunger (not enough food over a long time) causes **stunting**, where a child is too short for their age and their brain may not develop fully. Acute hunger (a sudden, severe lack of food) causes **wasting**, where a child is dangerously thin and may die without treatment. A newer harm is the "double burden": many children now eat enough calories but the kind of food that lacks key nutrients, which leads to obesity alongside missing nutrients.

1.1 UNICEF Canada, July 21, 2026

Tagline: Counting the world's hungry people Source: According to... UNICEF Canada, July 21, 2026 Link: <https://www.unicef.ca/en/press-release/un-report-global-hunger-levels-ease-third-consecutive-year-regional-disparities> Fact: It states... the newest UN hunger report (SOFI 2026) found about 645 million people, or 7.8% of the world, were chronically hungry in 2025, down from 8.1% in 2024. Africa now has the largest number of hungry people of any region, about 309 million, or one in five Africans. More than half of Africans (56.6%) faced moderate or severe food insecurity. About 150 million children under five are stunted. The UN projects that 510 to 520 million people may still be hungry in 2030, partly because conflict in the Middle East is pushing up food prices. This means... hunger is falling worldwide, but too slowly to reach "Zero Hunger" by 2030, and the problem is moving toward Africa. Delegates should expect debate about whether to focus resources on sub-Saharan Africa, where both hunger and land degradation are worst.

1.2 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), July 28, 2025

Tagline: Measuring the cost of healthy diets Source: According to... Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), July 28, 2025 Link: <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/sofi-2025--fao-calls-for-urgent--coordinated-and-inclusive-action-to-end-global-hunger> Fact: It states... in 2024, about 2.6 billion people could not afford a healthy diet, and about 2.3 billion faced moderate or severe food insecurity. Food prices have risen faster than general prices since 2020. Child stunting has declined only modestly over the last decade, and child wasting has not improved. This means... the problem is not only too little food but food that families cannot afford. Proposals that lower the cost of nutritious food, such as cutting losses that raise prices, connect directly to child hunger.

1.3 World Health Organization (WHO), July 21, 2025

Tagline: Counting stunted and wasted children Source: According to... World Health Organization (WHO), July 21, 2025 Link: <https://www.who.int/teams/nutrition-and-food-safety/monitoring-nutritional-status-and-food-safety-and-events/joint-child-malnutrition-estimates/latest-estimates> Fact: It states... the joint estimates of UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank found that in 2024, 150.2 million children under five were stunted, 42.8 million were wasted, and 12.2 million were severely wasted. At the same time, 35.5 million children under five were overweight. This means... these are the official numbers UNICEF uses, so they are the safest figures to quote in an opening speech. They show that undernutrition and overweight exist side by side, which affects what kind of food any recovery program should deliver.

1.4 UNICEF, June 5, 2024

Tagline: Defining severe child food poverty Source: According to... UNICEF, June 5, 2024 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/1-4-children-globally-live-severe-child-food-poverty-due-inequity-conflict-and> Fact: It states... about 181 million children under five, one in four worldwide, live in severe child food poverty, meaning they eat from two or fewer of eight basic food groups each day. These children are up to 50% more likely to suffer life-threatening wasting. About 64 million live in South Asia and 59 million in sub-Saharan Africa. More than half of these children (54%) live in households that are not poor, where the cause is poor food environments and feeding practices rather than income. Some countries made fast progress, such as Burkina Faso, which cut the rate from 67% in 2010 to 32% in 2021. This means... recovered or donated food that is mostly starch will not solve child hunger; diet variety matters. Delegates can argue that any food recovery plan should prioritise fruit, vegetables, eggs and other nutrient-dense foods, which are also the foods most often wasted.

1.5 Food Security Information Network (FSIN), May 16, 2025

Tagline: Tracking acute hunger in crises Source: According to... Food Security Information Network (FSIN), Global Report on Food Crises 2025, May 16, 2025 Link: <https://fsinplatform.org/grfc2025> Fact: It states... 295.3 million people faced acute food insecurity in 2024, the sixth increase in a row. Famine was confirmed in Sudan, the first confirmed famine since 2020. 37.7 million children in 26 countries were acutely malnourished. Conflict was the main driver for the largest number of people in the worst crises. Humanitarian funding for food could fall by up to 45% in 2025, putting nutrition services for at least 14 million children at risk. This means... in war zones, food waste and farmland programs cannot work on their own. Delegates must decide how UNICEF's plan applies in conflict countries, where getting food to children is blocked by fighting, not by waste.

1.6 UNICEF, September 9, 2025

Tagline: Revealing the double burden Source: According to... UNICEF, September 9, 2025 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/obesity-exceeds-underweight-first-time-among-school-age-children-and-adolescents> Fact: It states... in 2025, for the first time, more school-age children and teenagers (ages 5-19) were obese (9.4%, about 188 million) than underweight (9.2%). Ultra-processed foods are replacing fruit, vegetables and protein in children's diets. UNICEF recommends banning junk food sales and marketing in schools, and Mexico has already banned such foods in public schools, which affects more than 34 million children. This means... "childhood hunger" now includes children who are full but poorly nourished. School meal and food recovery programs that hand out cheap processed food could make this harm worse, so delegates may want nutrition standards written into any resolution.

1.7 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), March 27, 2024

Tagline: Measuring global food waste Source: According to... United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), March 27, 2024 Link: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/world-squanders-over-1-billion-meals-day-un-report> Fact: It states... the world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food in 2022, almost one fifth of the food available to consumers, or about 132 kg per person. Households caused 60% of this waste, food services 28% and shops 12%. Households wasted more than one billion meals a day while 783 million people were hungry. Food loss and waste cause 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions and cost about US\$1 trillion a year. Only a few places (Australia, Japan, the UK, the USA and the EU) have data reliable enough to track progress, and Japan (31%) and the UK (18%) have shown large cuts are possible. This means... most food waste happens in homes, which is hard for governments to control. Delegates should notice that the countries that cut waste had strong measurement systems, so a resolution might fund data collection first.

1.8 Associated Press (via PBS NewsHour), March 27, 2024

Tagline: Showing waste is global Source: According to... Associated Press (via PBS NewsHour), March 27, 2024 Link: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/around-19-percent-of-food-is-wasted-globally-as-783-million-people-face-chronic-hunger-un-says> Fact: It states... household food waste per person differs surprisingly little between rich and lower-income countries. Kenya alone wastes about 4.45 million tonnes of food a year. An expert from the charity WRAP said food waste "is not a rich world problem. It's a global problem." The report pointed to partnerships between governments and businesses, and to food banks such as Food Banking Kenya, as practical solutions. This means... delegates from developing countries cannot simply blame wealthy nations for food waste. Every country has a role, which opens room for South-South cooperation and shared programs.

1.9 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), November 3, 2025

Tagline: Linking damaged land to stunting Source: According to... Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), November 3, 2025 Link: <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/fao-report--1.7-billion-people-experience-lower-crop-yields-due-to-land-degradation/en> Fact: It states... FAO's State of Food and Agriculture 2025 found that about 1.7 billion people live in areas where crop yields are 10% lower because of land damaged by human activity. The report connects this damaged land to 47 million stunted children under five. Reversing just 10% of human-caused damage on existing cropland could grow enough extra food to feed 154 million more people each year. This means... farmland restoration is not only an environmental issue; it is a child nutrition issue. This is the strongest single fact for linking the "farmland restoration" part of the topic to UNICEF's mandate.

1.10 UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), November 25, 2024

Tagline: Estimating degraded land worldwide Source: According to... UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), November 25, 2024 Link: <https://www.unccd.int/index%20php/news-stories/press-releases/landmark-un-conference-accelerate-global-efforts-land-restoration-and> Fact: It states... up to 40% of the world's land is degraded, and land degradation affects half of humanity. Restoring 1.5 billion hectares of land by 2030 would be necessary to reach a world where land damage is balanced by land recovery. This means... the scale of damaged land is huge, so no single country can fix it. Delegates should be ready to discuss which international body pays for restoration and how UNICEF fits alongside UNCCD and FAO.

1.10a Brookings Institution, October 15, 2025

Tagline: Connecting hunger, obesity and conflict Source: According to... Brookings Institution, October 15, 2025 Link: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/rethinking-responsibility-in-global-food-systems-as-hunger-and-obesity-rise/> Fact: It states... since 2000, the share of school-age children who are underweight fell from 13% to 9%, while the share who are obese rose from 3% to 9.4%. In 2024, 37 million children aged 6 to 59 months suffered acute malnutrition. Nearly 300 million people in 50 countries faced acute food insecurity, and conflict was the main cause in 20 of those countries, affecting nearly 140 million people. The author argues that the early 2025 cuts in US humanitarian aid showed how much the world's food aid depends on a few donors. This means... the world produces more food than ever, yet children still go hungry because of war, prices and weak aid systems. Delegates can use this source to argue that food waste and farmland solutions must be paired with conflict response and a wider group of donors.

1.10b Center for Global Development, June 10, 2025

Tagline: Tracing hunger's lifelong damage Source: According to... Center for Global Development, June 10, 2025 Link: <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/malnutritions-long-shadow-puts-children-risk-today-and-future> Fact: It states... children who suffer famine before birth or in their first years carry the damage into adult life. People exposed to the Dutch Hunger Winter (1944-1945) later had worse heart and metabolic health and faster mental decline, and survivors of famines in Nigeria (1967-1970) and China (1959-1961) had higher rates of diabetes and high blood pressure decades later. UNICEF reported in May 2025 that 71,000 children and more than 17,000 mothers in Gaza would need urgent treatment for acute malnutrition. After USAID withdrew, about US\$98 million in US-funded food and other aid was reported to be sitting undistributed in warehouses in Ethiopia. This means... childhood hunger is not a short-term problem; it raises a country's health costs for the next 40 years or more. Delegates can use this to argue that money spent feeding young children now saves money later, and the Ethiopia warehouses show that food can be wasted inside the aid system itself.

1.10c UNICEF, April 24, 2026

Tagline: Updating the crisis hunger count Source: According to... UNICEF, April 24, 2026 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/acute-food-insecurity-and-malnutrition-remain-alarmingly-high-crises-deepen-un-eu> Fact: It states... the Global Report on Food Crises 2026, released by UN agencies, the European Union and partners, found that 266 million people in 47 countries and territories faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 2025. This is lower than the year before, but the report says the drop reflects missing data, not real improvement, because 18 countries and territories, including Ethiopia and Burkina Faso, had no comparable data. For the first time, famine was confirmed in two separate places in the same year: Gaza Governorate and parts of Sudan. 35.5 million children were acutely malnourished, nearly 10 million of them severely. Acute hunger has doubled over the past decade, and funding to respond has fallen to levels last seen almost ten years ago. This means... this is the newest crisis count, so delegates should quote it instead of the 2025 figure in entry 1.5. The warning about missing data matters: when aid money falls, countries also lose the surveys that count hungry children, so a resolution can ask for funding to keep measuring.

1.10d Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), July 1, 2025

Tagline: Projecting deaths from aid cuts Source: According to... Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), July 1, 2025 Link: <https://www.isglobal.org/en/-/mas-de-14-millones-de-muertes-prevenibles-de-aqui-a-2030-si-continuan-los-recortes-a-la-financiacion-de-usaid> Fact: It states... a study published in the medical journal The Lancet in June 2025 found that programs supported by USAID, the United States aid agency, helped prevent about 91 million deaths in low- and middle-income countries between 2001 and 2021, about 30 million of them children. The study linked these programs to large drops in deaths from poor nutrition. If the 2025 funding cuts continue, it projects more than 14 million extra deaths by 2030, including more than 4.5 million children under five, or roughly 700,000 extra child deaths each year. This means... aid cuts are not only a money problem; they cost children's lives. Delegates from donor countries may answer that these are projections, not counts, while delegates from receiving countries can argue that replacing lost funding for child nutrition must come first in any resolution.

1.10e Associated Press (via The Gazette), October 14, 2025

Tagline: Reporting WFP's shrinking budget Source: According to... Associated Press (via The Gazette), October 14, 2025 Link: <https://gazette.com/2025/10/14/uns-world-food-program-warns-donor-cuts-are-pushing-millions-more-into-hunger/> Fact: It states... the World Food Programme warned that 13.7 million people it feeds could be pushed into emergency levels of hunger because its largest donors cut funding. Six countries faced major disruptions: Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. WFP expected about 40% less funding in 2025, a budget of about US\$6.4 billion compared with about US\$10 billion the year before. By that point it had received about US\$1.5 billion from the United States, down from nearly US\$4.5 billion the year before. In Afghanistan, food aid reached fewer than 10% of the people who were food insecure. WFP's leader said, "We are watching the lifeline for millions of people disintegrate before our eyes." This means... the agency UNICEF works with most closely in food emergencies lost about two fifths of its money in one year. Delegates should expect any plan that depends on WFP delivering food to be questioned, and can argue for lower-cost local solutions, such as cutting post-harvest loss near the places where hungry children live.

1B. Major Solution 1: Cutting Food Loss on Farms and in Cold Chains

The idea: Stop food from being lost between the farm and the shop. Tools include refrigerated storage ("cold chains"), better grain storage bags, rural roads, and farmer training.

Advantages: It keeps more food in the supply, raises small farmers' incomes, and can lower food prices.

Disadvantages: Cold chains use energy and refrigerant gases that warm the planet. Cheaper food can also lead people to buy and eat more, which cancels part of the benefit (the "rebound effect").

1.11 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), November 12, 2022

Tagline: Valuing refrigeration for food Source: According to... United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), November 12, 2022 Link: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/amid-food-and-climate-crises-investing-sustainable-food-cold-chains> Fact: It states... a joint UNEP and FAO report found that 526 million tonnes of food, about 12% of world food production, is lost because of a lack of refrigeration. Developing countries could save 144 million tonnes of food a year if they had the same cold-chain systems as developed countries. Food loss cuts the income of 470 million small farmers by 15%. However, the food cold chain already causes about 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions, so new systems must be energy efficient, run on renewable energy and use low-warming refrigerant gases. This means... cold chains are a powerful solution for keeping fresh, nutritious food (milk, fruit, fish) available for children, but delegates must address the climate cost. A desirable resolution would link cold-chain funding to clean energy rules.

1.12 Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), September 27, 2024

Tagline: Showing loss reduction works Source: According to... Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), September 27, 2024 Link: <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/tackling-food-loss-and-waste-from-the-farm-to-the-table-and-beyond/> Fact: It states... over 13% of food is lost after harvest and before reaching shops. OECD-FAO projections suggest that halving food loss and waste could reduce the number of undernourished people by 153 million by 2030. Simple training in handling, sorting and packaging cut losses by 38% for tomato farmers in the Philippines. FAO's Food Loss App helps farmers in the Dominican Republic find where rice is being lost. This means... loss reduction does not always need expensive technology; low-cost training gave large results. Delegates from lower-income countries can argue for cheap, quick training programs before costly infrastructure.

1.13 University of California, Irvine, July 24, 2023

Tagline: Warning about the rebound effect Source: According to... University of California, Irvine, July 24, 2023 Link: <https://ess.uci.edu/news/1220> Fact: It states... a study in the journal Nature Food by researchers at UC Irvine and the University of Colorado Boulder found that cutting food loss and waste makes food cheaper, which can improve food security in poorer countries. But lower prices also lead people to consume more, and this "rebound effect" could cancel up to 71% of the expected benefits, so the environmental gains are limited. This means... reducing waste can help hungry families by lowering prices, but it is not a simple climate fix. Delegates should argue for waste reduction mainly as a hunger and affordability tool, and should be careful about claiming large climate benefits.

1C. Major Solution 2: Recovering and Redistributing Surplus Food

The idea: Collect safe, unsold food from farms, factories, shops and restaurants and give it to people in need through food banks and charities.

Advantages: It delivers food quickly to people who need it, keeps food out of landfills, and uses food that already exists. **Disadvantages:** Laws in many countries discourage donation. Surplus food may not match children's nutrition needs, and critics argue charity can become a substitute for fixing the causes of poverty.

1.14 Global FoodBanking Network, July 9, 2025

Tagline: Scaling food banks worldwide Source: According to... Global FoodBanking Network, July 9, 2025 Link: <https://www.foodbanking.org/news/new-data-shows-food-banks-are-resilient/> Fact: It states... in 2024, food banks in the network served about 38 million people in 46 countries and distributed 762 million kg of food, up 17% from the year before, or about 2.1 billion meals. Farm-level recovery programs collected 147 million kg of food, double the amount from five years earlier. About 41% of the food distributed was fruits and vegetables. Keeping 512 million kg of food out of landfills avoided about 1.9 million tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions. This means... food recovery already works at scale in many countries, including developing ones, and can deliver fresh, nutritious food. Delegates can propose that UNICEF partner with existing food bank networks instead of building new systems.

1.15 Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, June 10, 2020

Tagline: Identifying legal barriers to donation Source: According to... Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, June 10, 2020 Link: <https://chlp.org/APflp> Fact: It states... the Global Food Donation Policy Atlas, a project of Harvard's Food Law and Policy Clinic and the Global FoodBanking Network covering 15 countries, found six main legal barriers to food donation: unclear food safety rules, confusing date labels, weak liability protection for donors, tax rules that make donating cost more than throwing food away, a lack of government grants, and a lack of penalties for waste. It recommends clear safety guidance, separate "use by" (safety) and "best before" (quality) labels, legal protection for donors who act honestly, and tax incentives. This means... many countries could increase food donation without spending much money, simply by changing laws. A UNICEF resolution could encourage member states to adopt "model" donation laws, while respecting each country's own legal system.

1.16 Ulster University, January 26, 2017

Tagline: Questioning charity as the answer Source: According to... Ulster University, January 26, 2017 Link: <https://pure.ulster.ac.uk/en/publications/is-it-appropriate-to-use-surplus-food-to-feed-people-in-hunger-sh-3/> Fact: It states... a policy briefing by researchers at Ulster University argued that giving surplus food to charities offers short-term relief but that there is no evidence it solves household food insecurity. The authors warn that it can "depoliticise" hunger, letting governments avoid closing the gap between incomes and food prices, and that it can weaken efforts to stop overproduction. They recommend treating food waste and hunger as separate problems, each needing its own long-term solution. This means... delegates who oppose a recovery-only approach have evidence that it may hide the real causes of child hunger. A balanced resolution might pair food recovery with social protection, such as cash transfers to families with children.

1D. Major Solution 3: School Meals

The idea: Provide free or low-cost, nutritious meals at school, ideally using food bought from local farmers ("home-grown school feeding").

Advantages: It feeds children every school day, raises enrolment and attendance, and creates local jobs.

Disadvantages: It is expensive, it reaches only children who attend school (missing the youngest children and those out of school), and funding depends heavily on a few donors.

1.17 World Food Programme (WFP), March 21, 2023

Tagline: Calculating school meal returns Source: According to... World Food Programme (WFP), March 21, 2023 Link: <https://www.wfp.org/news/almost-half-school-children-get-free-meals-report-shows-most-vulnerable-still-miss-out-amid> Fact: It states... about 420 million children, roughly 41% of school-age children, received school meals. Coverage was about 60% in high-income countries but only about 18% in low-income countries, and under 10% in eight African countries. The report estimates that every US\$1 invested returns about US\$9, that programs raise enrolment by about 9% and attendance by about 8%, and that every 100,000 children fed creates almost 1,400 jobs. This means... school meals are one of the best-tested ways to fight childhood hunger, but the children who need them most are least likely to get them. Delegates can use the US\$9 return figure to argue that funding school meals is a desirable investment.

1.18 Brookings Institution, February 3, 2025

Tagline: Exposing the school meal funding gap Source: According to... Brookings Institution, February 3, 2025 Link: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/building-a-global-financing-coordination-mechanism-for-sustainable-school-meals/> Fact: It states... international aid for school meals was only about US\$287 million in 2022, about 0.1% of all aid, and one country, the United States, supplied 69% of it. About 165 million children in low- and lower-middle-income countries lack school meals. Reaching 150 million more children by 2030 would require on average about US\$10.8 billion a year in new money in the most ambitious plan, most of it from the poorer countries themselves, which face debt and budget cuts. The authors propose a "light-touch" global mechanism to coordinate donors rather than a new fund. This means... school meals depend dangerously on a single donor, and recent aid cuts make this a real risk. Delegates should be ready to debate who pays, and whether a new financing mechanism or existing channels is the better route.

1.18a Princeton University, July 2025

Tagline: Testing school meals' effect on diets Source: According to... Princeton University, Food Policy journal, July 2025 Link: <https://collaborate.princeton.edu/en/publications/effects-of-school-meals-on-nutrition-evidence-from-the-start-of-t/> Fact: It states... a study listed by Princeton University's School of Public and International Affairs and published in the journal Food Policy compared what low-income children in the United States ate before and after the school year began. When children gained access to school meals, they ate fewer calories overall. Younger children drank less soda, and older children ate less fat. The authors argue that these changes probably improve diets at a time when childhood obesity is rising, and that governments should count these nutrition benefits when deciding whether to expand free school meals. This means... school meals can fight both sides of the "double burden" described in entry 1.6: they feed hungry children and can replace sugary drinks and fatty snacks. The study comes from a wealthy country, so delegates should use it carefully when speaking about poorer ones, but it supports writing nutrition standards into any school meal clause.

1E. Major Solution 4: Restoring Degraded Farmland

The idea: Repair damaged soil and land through tree planting, agroforestry (trees and crops together), better grazing, and water harvesting, so that land produces more food over time.

Advantages: Higher yields, more resilience to drought, carbon storage, and rural jobs. **Disadvantages:** Benefits arrive slowly (often years), costs are high, and restoration is very difficult in conflict zones, which are often where children are hungriest.

1.19 UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), April 26, 2022

Tagline: Projecting restoration's food benefits Source: According to... UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), April 26, 2022 Link: <https://www.unccd.int/index%20php/news-stories/press-releases/chronic-land-degradation-un-offers-stark-warnings-and-practical> Fact: It states... the Global Land Outlook 2 found that if current trends continue, land productivity will keep declining on 12-14% of farm, pasture and natural land by 2050. In a large-scale restoration scenario, crop yields in most developing countries would be 5-10% higher than otherwise. Countries have pledged to restore 1 billion hectares by 2030, which would cost about US\$1.6 trillion this decade. Restoration returns between US\$7 and US\$30 in benefits for every dollar spent. This means... restoration can raise food production where hunger is highest, and the economic return is strong. However, the US\$1.6 trillion price tag means delegates must propose realistic funding sources.

1.20 Nature Sustainability, November 15, 2021

Tagline: Testing restoration's real returns Source: According to... Nature Sustainability, November 15, 2021 Link: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-021-00801-8> Fact: It states... a peer-reviewed study of Africa's Great Green Wall found that each US\$1 spent on land restoration returns about US\$1.20 on average, with a range of US\$1.10 to US\$4.40 depending on the scenario, and that restoration pays for itself within about ten years. Full restoration would cost about US\$44 billion. Violent conflict cuts the land that can safely be restored roughly in half, from 27.9 million to 14.1 million hectares. This means... careful research shows smaller returns than some UN estimates, and conflict is a major obstacle. Delegates should not overpromise; restoration is a long-term investment, not a fast answer to children who are hungry today.

1F. Lesser Solutions (Brief List)

- These ideas appear in the sources above and may be useful as clauses, but they have less evidence or narrower impact:
- 1. **Consumer awareness campaigns** to reduce household waste, which is 60% of all food waste (UNEP, 1.7). Campaigns are low cost, but changes in behaviour are hard to measure.
 - 2. **Clearer date labels** ("use by" for safety, "best before" for quality) to stop people throwing away safe food (Harvard, 1.15).
 - 3. **Banning junk food in schools** and limiting marketing to children (UNICEF, 1.6).
 - 4. **Cash, food or voucher transfers** to families with young children (UNICEF, 1.4), which address affordability directly.
 - 5. **Ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF)** for treating children with severe wasting (see Part 2, entry 2.3).
 - 6. **Including food loss and waste targets in national climate plans (NDCs)**; only 21 countries had done so as of 2022 (UNEP, 1.7).

PART 2, THE UNITED NATIONS RECORD

The UN has addressed this topic through four tracks: setting goals (the Sustainable Development Goals), declaring decades and international days to focus attention, condemning the use of hunger as a weapon in war, and running programs through its agencies (UNICEF, WFP, FAO, UNEP, UNCCD, IFAD). The record shows real progress on stunting and on hunger since 2022, but weak progress on food loss and waste, and a serious funding crisis since 2025.

2A. Table of UN Resolutions and Major UN Instruments

Every symbol below was confirmed on an official UN website (digitallibrary.un.org, un.org, press.un.org or unep.org) during research for this report.

Symbol	Year	Body	What it does (plain
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			sentence)
A/RES/44/25	1989	General Assembly	Adopts the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes every child's right to health and nutritious food (the treaty UNICEF is built around).
A/RES/70/1	2015	General Assembly	Adopts the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), Target 12.3 (halve food waste and reduce food loss by 2030) and Target 15.3 (restore degraded land).
A/RES/70/259	2016	General Assembly	Declares the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) to push governments to end all forms of malnutrition.
A/RES/72/239	2017	General Assembly	Declares the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019-2028) to support small farmers, who grow much of the world's food.
S/RES/2417	2018	Security Council	Condemns the starvation of civilians as a method of war and asks the Secretary-General to warn the Council when conflict creates a risk of famine.
A/RES/73/284	2019	General Assembly	Declares the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030) to prevent, halt and reverse damage to ecosystems, including farmland.
UNEP/EA.4/Res.2	2019	UN Environment Assembly	Asks countries to measure and reduce food loss and waste at every stage, improve cold chains, and follow a priority order of prevention first, then recovery and redistribution.
A/RES/74/209	2019	General Assembly	Creates the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, held every September 29.
S/RES/2573	2021	Security Council	Demands that warring parties stop attacking objects civilians need to survive, such as food and water systems, and condemns starvation as a war tactic.
A/RES/77/161	2022	General Assembly	Promotes zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda and creates the International Day of Zero

			the International Day of Zero Waste (March 30), which covers food waste among other kinds of waste.
A/RES/77/285	2023	General Assembly	Reviews and pushes forward the implementation of the Decade of Action on Nutrition (adopted without a vote on May 16, 2023).
A/HRC/RES/55/4	2024	Human Rights Council	Reaffirms the human right to food and asks states to protect it (adopted April 3, 2024).
A/RES/79/171	2024	General Assembly	Reaffirms the right to food and calls on states to address hunger and malnutrition, especially among children (adopted December 17, 2024).
A/RES/79/227	2024	General Assembly	The annual resolution on agriculture development, food security and nutrition, which guides UN work on food systems (adopted without a vote on December 19, 2024).

Note on symbols: the food waste resolution of the fourth UN Environment Assembly (March 2019) is confirmed on UNEP's official proceedings page as UNEP/EA.4/Res.2, "Promoting sustainable practices and innovative solutions for curbing food loss and waste." Exact adoption days confirmed on UN pages: A/RES/73/284 on March 1, 2019; S/RES/2573 on April 27, 2021; A/RES/77/161 on December 14, 2022; A/RES/77/285 on May 16, 2023.

2B. Evidence on What Is Working and What Is Not

2.1 United Nations Statistics Division, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026 (Goal 2), July 7, 2026

Tagline: Assessing Zero Hunger progress Source: According to... United Nations Statistics Division, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026, July 7, 2026 Link:

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/goal-02> Fact: It states... hunger fell to 7.8% of the world (645 million people) in 2025, down from 8.6% in 2022. About 2.1 billion people faced moderate or severe food insecurity, 86 million fewer than in 2024 but 527 million more than in 2015. Child stunting fell from 26.4% in 2012 to 23.2% in 2024 (30.2 million fewer children), and wasting fell from 7.4% to 6.6% (8.1 million fewer children). Progress is slower in sub-Saharan Africa, and overall progress is too slow to reach Zero Hunger by 2030. This means... UN efforts on child nutrition are working, but not fast enough. Delegates can praise past progress while arguing that new tools, such as food recovery and restoration, are needed to speed it up.

2.2 United Nations Statistics Division, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026 (Goal 12), July 7, 2026

Tagline: Revealing stalled food loss progress Source: According to... United Nations Statistics Division, Sustainable Development Goals Report 2026, July 7, 2026 Link:

<https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2026/goal-12> Fact: It states... 13.3% of food was lost between harvest and retail in 2023, slightly more than the 13.0% lost in 2015. Food waste was 1.05 billion tonnes in 2022, or 19% of food available. The UN says progress on food loss "has been stagnant" and progress on food waste is "falling short." This means... SDG Target 12.3 (halving food waste by 2030) is failing. This is the clearest evidence that the current UN approach on food waste is not working and that this committee needs new ideas.

2.3 UNICEF, October 14, 2024

Tagline: Warning of therapeutic food shortages Source: According to... UNICEF, October 14, 2024 Link:

<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/nearly-two-million-severely-malnourished-children-risk-death-due-funding-shortages> Fact: It states... nearly two million children with severe wasting in 12 countries risked missing treatment because of funding shortages for ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), a peanut-based paste that treats wasting in six to eight weeks. Mali, Nigeria, Niger and Chad faced or were close to running out. UNICEF appealed for US\$165 million. Since 2022, 5.6 million children received life-saving treatment under UNICEF's "No Time to Waste" plan. This means... UNICEF's own treatment programs work when funded, but supply breaks put children's lives at risk. Delegates may propose that savings from food waste reduction, or new pooled funds, protect RUTF supplies.

2.4 UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, July 28, 2025

Tagline: Reviewing national food system plans Source: According to... UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, July 28, 2025 Link: <https://www.unfoodsystemshub.org/latest-updates/news/detail/launch-of-unfss-4-report--scaled-up-action-needed-to-transform-food-systems-by-2030/en> Fact: It states... at the second UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake in Addis Ababa, the Secretary-General reported that 128 countries had written national plans ("pathways") to change their food systems, 155 had named national coordinators, and 112 had sent progress reports in 2025. Some countries have written the right to food into their laws. However, financing problems remain and the UN called for faster action. Only 20 of the original 31 "Coalitions of Action" are still active. This means... most countries already have food system plans, so a UNICEF resolution can build on them rather than start from zero. Delegates can ask countries to add child nutrition and food waste targets to their existing pathways.

2.5 United Nations Press, May 24, 2018

Tagline: Condemning starvation as warfare Source: According to... United Nations Press, May 24, 2018 Link:

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sc13354.doc.htm> Fact: It states... the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2417, condemning the starvation of civilians as a method of war and the blocking of humanitarian aid. It asks the Secretary-General to report quickly when conflict creates a risk of famine, and it says the Council may consider sanctions against those who block aid. This means... the UN has already declared that starving civilians is unacceptable. UNICEF cannot enforce Security Council resolutions, but delegates can call for stronger reporting on child hunger in conflict zones.

2.6 Council on Foreign Relations, April 13, 2026

Tagline: Exposing weak enforcement on starvation Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, April 13, 2026 Link: <https://www.cfr.org/articles/the-world-agreed-to-stop-using-food-as-a-weapon-it-hasnt> Fact: It states... parties to wars continue to violate Resolution 2417 with almost no punishment, because the resolution has no enforcement system and permanent members of the Security Council use their vetoes to protect allies. Examples include Sudan, where a UN food convoy to El Fasher never arrived in June 2025, and Gaza. Experts propose sanctions, independent monitoring, prosecutions, and possibly a new treaty banning the use of food as a weapon. This means... the UN record on conflict hunger is weak in practice. Delegates should know that UNICEF can document harm to children and raise alarms, but enforcement belongs to other bodies.

2.7 Council on Foreign Relations, December 23, 2025

Tagline: Charting the 2025 aid collapse Source: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, December 23, 2025 Link: <https://www.cfr.org/articles/great-aid-recession-2025s-humanitarian-crash-nine-charts> Fact: It states... government humanitarian funding peaked at about US\$30 billion in 2022 and then fell, returning to roughly 2016 levels. About 25 million fewer people received aid in 2025 even though need stayed about the same. In March 2025, WFP cut monthly food rations for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, from US\$12.50 to US\$6 per person. The United States still provided nearly 40% of all humanitarian funding. This means... the funding crisis is the biggest obstacle facing UN hunger programs today. Any resolution that depends on new donor money must explain where that money will come from.

2.8 World Food Programme (WFP), October 21, 2025

Tagline: Warning of a breaking point Source: According to... World Food Programme (WFP), October 21, 2025 Link: <https://www.wfp.org/publications/lifeline-risk-food-assistance-breaking-point-global-brief> Fact: It states... WFP described "an unprecedented crisis in international funding" and published country briefs on Afghanistan, Haiti, refugees in Uganda, South Sudan and Niger, showing food assistance at a "breaking point." This means... the UN agency responsible for emergency food is warning that it cannot meet need. UNICEF delegates should consider how food recovery and local farming could reduce dependence on emergency aid.

2.9 UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform (LEAP), Last Accessed: October 2026

Tagline: Summarising the food waste resolution Source: According to... UNEP Law and Environment Assistance Platform (LEAP), Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://leap.unep.org/en/content/unea-resolution/promoting-sustainable-practices-and-innovative-solutions-curbing-food-loss> Fact: It states... the 2019 UN Environment Assembly resolution on food loss and waste invites countries to tackle losses at every stage of the supply chain, share best practices on energy-efficient cold chains, set national strategies in line with SDG Target 12.3, and build systems to measure food loss and waste. It says actions should follow a priority order: prevention first, then food recovery and redistribution. It also warns against simply moving waste from one part of the supply chain to another. This means... there is already UN language on food waste that delegates can quote or build on. The "prevention first, then recovery" order is useful for clauses that rank solutions.

2.10 UN Digital Library, December 19, 2019

Tagline: Creating an awareness day Source: According to... UN Digital Library, December 19, 2019 Link: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3848136> Fact: It states... the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/74/209, "International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste," without a vote on December 19, 2019. The day is now marked every September 29 by FAO and UNEP. This means... the UN has agreed by consensus that food waste deserves global attention. Delegates can cite this resolution as proof of broad agreement, and can point out that awareness days alone have not changed the numbers in entry 2.2.

2.11 UNICEF, August 20, 2025

Tagline: Counting children cut off from nutrition Source: According to... UNICEF, August 20, 2025 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/stories/cutting-childrens-lifelines> Fact: It states... UNICEF estimates that funding cuts could disrupt essential nutrition support for at least 14 million children. Since 2000, the number of stunted children under five has fallen by 55 million, but these gains are now at risk. A child with severe acute malnutrition is nine times more likely to die than a well-nourished child. In the five Darfur states of Sudan, the number of children treated for severe acute malnutrition rose by almost 50% from January to May 2025 compared with a year earlier, while 62% of UNICEF's funding needs in Sudan were unmet by the end of June 2025. This means... UNICEF's own record shows that decades of progress can be lost in a single year of aid cuts. Delegates can argue that protecting existing nutrition programs should come before launching new ones.

2.12 World Health Organization (WHO), March 26, 2025

Tagline: Extending the nutrition decade to 2030 Source: According to... World Health Organization (WHO), March 26, 2025 Link: [https://www.who.int/news/item/26-03-2025-united-nations-decade-of-action-on-nutrition-\(2016-2025\)-extended-to-2030](https://www.who.int/news/item/26-03-2025-united-nations-decade-of-action-on-nutrition-(2016-2025)-extended-to-2030) Fact: It states... on March 24, 2025, the General Assembly extended the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition so that it now runs to 2030, the same end date as the Sustainable Development Goals. 158 member states voted in favour, and 139 co-sponsored the resolution. It asks countries to scale up their national nutrition commitments and investment and to act in six areas, including food systems that support healthy diets, social protection and nutrition education, and stronger accountability. FAO and WHO will lead the Decade and report to the General Assembly every two years. A WHO official warned that the world is "off track to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030." This means... the UN's main nutrition framework now lasts until 2030, so a UNICEF resolution can tie its clauses to the extended Decade instead of building a new framework. The fact that a vote was held, rather than the usual agreement without a vote, shows that even nutrition has become politically divided (see section 2C).

2.13 UNICEF, August 22, 2025

Tagline: Confirming famine in Gaza Source: According to... UNICEF, August 22, 2025 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/famine-confirmed-first-time-gaza> Fact: It states... an analysis by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), the system the UN and its partners use to measure hunger, confirmed famine in Gaza Governorate, the first confirmed famine in the Middle East. More than half a million people were trapped in famine. In July 2025 alone, more than 12,000 children were found to be acutely malnourished, the highest monthly number recorded, and nearly one in four had the most severe form. The number of children expected to be at risk of death from malnutrition by June 2026 rose from 14,100 to 43,400. The heads of FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO together called for a ceasefire and full humanitarian access. This means... famine was confirmed seven years after Security Council resolution 2417 condemned starvation as a weapon, which shows the limits described in entry 2.6. Delegates can argue that UNICEF's strongest tool in conflict is fast, public data on child malnutrition, which raises pressure for access.

2.14 Security Council Report, August 3, 2026

Tagline: Previewing the Council's hunger debate Source: According to... Security Council Report, August 3, 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2026-08/conflict-and-food-insecurity-3.php> Fact: It states... Denmark used its August 2026 presidency of the Security Council to hold a high-level open debate on conflict and food insecurity. In 2025, more than 147 million people in 19 countries and territories faced acute hunger caused by conflict. The June 2026 Hunger Hotspots report named six places of highest concern: Nigeria, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Yemen. Sudan's 2026 humanitarian plan was only 40.3% funded. WFP estimates that disruption in the Strait of Hormuz could push up to 45 million more people into hunger if oil prices stay high. Denmark and Bahrain began monthly expert meetings in 2026 on the hunger hotspots that are on the Council's agenda. This means... the Security Council now treats hunger as a peace and security issue, and new risks, such as high oil prices, can raise food prices far from any war. Delegates can propose that UNICEF's child nutrition data be shared directly with these hotspot meetings.

2.15 Government of Iceland (Joint Nordic Statement), August 25, 2026

Tagline: Calling for stronger enforcement of 2417 Source: According to... Government of Iceland, August 25, 2026 Link: <https://www.stjornarradid.is/frettir/grein/joint-nordic-statement-food-under-fire-the-security-councils-role-in-mitigating-global-and-local-food-crises/> Fact: It states... at the Security Council's open debate "Food Under Fire" on August 25, 2026, Iceland spoke for Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. The Nordic countries called resolution 2417 "a solid basis" that needs "stronger operationalization." They proposed that the Council consider restrictive measures, such as sanctions, use early-warning reports with clear deadlines for action, and make sure people who break the rules are held accountable. They also asked for predictable, flexible funding and said that in conflict zones a school meal may be a child's only meal of the day. This means... a group of major donors wants resolution 2417 to carry real consequences. Delegates whose countries worry about sanctions may resist this idea, while supporters can quote the Nordic point about school meals as proof that feeding children belongs in conflict planning.

2C. Where the Major Blocs Stand

Countries and groups of countries do not all see this topic the same way. Some focus on money and fairness between rich and poor countries, some on conflict and enforcement, and some on laws at home. Check your own country's latest speeches and votes, because positions can change quickly.

1. **United States:** The United States was once a leading voice linking war and hunger, but it has become less vocal at the Security Council and has disputed famine findings in Gaza. It also cut its humanitarian aid sharply in 2025 (see entries 1.10e and 2.7). Source: According to... Security Council Report, August 3, 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2026-08/conflict-and-food-insecurity-3.php>
2. **Russia:** Russia questions whether the Security Council is the right place to debate hunger and argues that Western sanctions and aid cuts make hunger worse. Source: According to... Security Council Report, August 3, 2026 Link: <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2026-08/conflict-and-food-insecurity-3.php>
3. **China:** China treats cutting food loss and waste as a matter of national food security; its national plan aims to bring grain losses below international averages and to cut waste in school and government canteens by the end of 2027. At the Security Council it generally prefers that food issues stay with the General Assembly and specialised agencies (see entry 2.14). Source: According to... Government of China (Xinhua), November 25, 2024 Link: https://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202411/25/content_WS6744812dc6d0868f4e8ed6a0.html

4. **European Union:** The EU is one of the largest nutrition donors (entry 3.6) and has passed binding food waste targets at home (entry 3.3a). At the UN it regretted that a vote was forced on a nutrition resolution, saying that "geopolitical concerns are taking precedence over feeding the most vulnerable," and it wanted stronger language on women, girls and the link between conflict and hunger. Source: According to... Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, March 25, 2025 Link: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/un-new-york/eu-explanation-vote-%E2%80%93-un-general-assembly-resolution-agriculture-development-food-security-and_en
5. **African Union:** The African Union treats school meals and African-led farming plans as continental priorities. 44 African countries have joined the School Meals Coalition, more than 65.9 million African children receive daily school meals, and the African Union has asked to become a co-chair of the Coalition. Source: According to... African Union, November 1, 2024 Link: https://au.int/sites/default/files/pressreleases/44325-pr-School_Meals_Coalition_Second_Ministerial_Meeting_press_release-1.pdf
6. **Group of 77 and China:** The largest group of developing countries at the UN says hunger cannot end without more money and fairer trade. It warned that aid fell 7.1% in real terms from 2023, asked donor countries to keep their aid promises, and called for rejecting protectionist trade measures that hurt development. Source: According to... Group of 77 and China, October 15, 2025 Link: <https://www.g77.org/statement/getstatement.php?id=251015>

PART 3, INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

Outside the UN system, many international organizations, partnerships and programs work on the three parts of this topic. Some are networks of governments, some are charities or foundations, and some are coalitions of businesses. Delegates can propose that UNICEF partner with, fund or learn from these efforts.

3A. Food Waste and Food Loss Networks

3.1 Champions 12.3, 2024 Progress Report, Last Accessed: October 2026

Tagline: Tracking the halving target Source: According to... Champions 12.3, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://champions123.org/2024-progress-report> Fact: It states... Champions 12.3, a coalition of leaders from government, business, research and civil society, says in its 2024 progress report that SDG Target 12.3 is "fast becoming out of reach." It calls on every government and company to find at least one food loss and waste "hotspot" and act on it now. It notes that halving food loss and waste could cut global greenhouse gas emissions by up to 5%. This means... the leading international coalition on this target admits the world is failing. Its "find a hotspot and act" approach is a practical model delegates can write into a resolution.

3.2 International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Last Accessed: October 2026

Tagline: Supporting small farmers against loss Source: According to... International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.ifad.org/en/food-loss-reduction> Fact: It states... about 14% of the world's food is lost before it goes on sale, mainly because of poor storage, processing and transport. IFAD invests in cold storage, grain drying and airtight storage bags, rural roads and markets, and works with FAO and WFP on a shared community of experts on food loss. This means... IFAD is the UN-linked fund that pays for farm-level loss reduction. Delegates can propose joint UNICEF-IFAD projects that connect reduced losses on farms to better nutrition for children in the same communities.

3.3 Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, June 19, 2025

Tagline: Expanding the food donation atlas Source: According to... Harvard Law School Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation, June 19, 2025 Link: <https://chlp.org/news-and-events/news-and-commentary/food-law-and-policy/new-reports-highlight-food-donation-policy-opportunities-in-poland-and-ireland/> Fact: It states... the Global Food Donation Policy Atlas, run by Harvard's Food Law and Policy Clinic with the Global FoodBanking Network, now has guides for more than 25 countries and the European Union. New 2025 reports on Poland and Ireland, written with the European Food Banks Federation, were the first on EU countries. In the EU, more than 42 million people cannot afford a quality meal every other day, while nearly 59 million tonnes of food are wasted each year. The reports recommend national waste targets, allowing donation of food past its "best before" date, legal protection for honest donors, and tax incentives. This means... the "model donation law" idea has grown from 15 countries to more than 25 in five years, so delegates can point to a working international tool rather than an untested proposal. A resolution can encourage every member state to request its own Atlas review.

3.3a European Parliament, September 9, 2025

Tagline: Setting binding food waste targets Source: According to... European Parliament, September 9, 2025 Link: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20250905IPR30172/parliament-adopts-new-eu-rules-to-reduce-textile-and-food-waste> Fact: It states... the European Parliament gave final approval to the first binding food waste targets for EU countries. By December 31, 2030, each country must cut food waste by 10% in food processing and manufacturing, and by 30% per person in shops, restaurants, food services and households, compared with the yearly average for 2021-2023. The EU wastes nearly 60 million tonnes of food a year, about 132 kg per person. Countries must also make sure that major food businesses help donate unsold food that is still safe to eat. Countries have 20 months after the law takes effect to write it into their own national law. This means... the EU has moved from voluntary promises to legal targets, the strongest regional action on SDG Target 12.3 so far. Delegates can propose that other regions follow this model, while delegates from poorer countries may argue that they need money and measuring systems before they can accept binding targets.

3.3b Government of China (Xinhua), November 25, 2024

Tagline: Planning China's waste reduction Source: According to... Government of China (Xinhua), November 25, 2024 Link: https://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202411/25/content_WS6744812dc6d0868f4e8ed6a0.html Fact: It states... China's central government issued an action plan to reduce food loss and waste. By the end of 2027, it aims to bring grain and food losses in production, storage, transport and processing below international average levels, and to cut food waste per meal significantly in restaurants and in government, school and company canteens. The plan also improves national statistics, standards and measures for food loss and waste, and raises public awareness of saving food. This means... one of the world's largest food producers treats waste reduction as a food security policy, not only an environmental one. Delegates can point to school canteens as a place where cutting waste and improving child nutrition happen at the same time.

3B. Child Nutrition and School Meals Alliances

3.4 Rockefeller Foundation, November 15, 2024

Tagline: Pledging to double school meals Source: According to... Rockefeller Foundation, November 15, 2024 Link: <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/news/governments-and-partners-pledge-to-double-school-meals-for-children-in-hardest-hit-countries-by-2030> Fact: It states... at the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, governments and partners pledged to reach 150 million more children with school meals by 2030 in low- and lower-middle-income countries, more than doubling current coverage there. The effort is part of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, launched by Brazil's G20 presidency. The School Meals Coalition, which supports the goal, includes more than 100 governments and more than 130 partners. This means... there is already a large international commitment on school meals. Delegates can argue that UNICEF should support this goal, and can link it to food recovery by asking schools to use locally grown or recovered nutritious food.

3.5 World Food Programme (WFP), Last Accessed: October 2026

Tagline: Reporting school meal growth Source: According to... World Food Programme (WFP), State of School Feeding Worldwide 2024, Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://publications.wfp.org/2024/state-of-school-feeding/> Fact: It states... at least 466 million children received school meals in 2024, an increase of almost 80 million over four years. Africa had the largest increase in the last two years, with 20 million more children reached. The School Meals Coalition aims to make healthy school meals available to every child by 2030. This means... school meal programs are growing fast, even in Africa, which shows countries are investing their own money. The challenge for delegates is keeping this growth going as foreign aid falls.

3.6 Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, April 1, 2025

Tagline: Mobilising nutrition funding in Paris Source: According to... Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, April 1, 2025 Link: <https://scalingupnutrition.org/news/nutrition-growth-summit-mobilizes-over-us27-billion-reach-nutrition-related-sustainable> Fact: It states... the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Paris (March 27-28, 2025) gathered 127 delegations, including 106 national governments, and raised about US\$27.55 billion in pledges and more than 400 commitments. Major pledges came from the African Development Bank (US\$9.5 billion), the European Union (€6.5 billion), the World Bank (US\$5 billion) and France (€750 million). This means... large sums have been promised for nutrition, but pledges are not the same as money spent. Delegates can call for transparent tracking of these pledges as part of a UNICEF resolution.

3.7 Center for Global Development, October 7, 2026

Tagline: Pricing school meals in emergencies Source: According to... Center for Global Development, October 7, 2026 Link: <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/school-meals-emergencies-what-they-cost-and-trade-offs-involved> Fact: It states... a study of 65 education grants from Education Cannot Wait and the Global Partnership for Education (2018-2024) found that school meals used about 31% of grant budgets but reached about 7% of the children served. The yearly cost per child ranged from US\$4 to more than US\$200, with a middle value of US\$35. Large programs cost far less per child: a UNICEF program in Zimbabwe fed over one million children for about US\$4 each, while a small program in the Central African Republic cost US\$168 per child. The authors note that government aid fell 23.1% between 2024 and 2025. This means... school meals in crisis zones work best at large scale and through shared buying systems. Delegates can argue that UNICEF should fund fewer, larger programs that buy food together, instead of many small ones, so that each dollar feeds more children.

3C. Farmland and Landscape Restoration Programs

3.8 UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), March 27, 2023

Tagline: Reviewing the Great Green Wall Source: According to... UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), March 27, 2023 Link: <https://www.unccd.int/index%2Ephp/news-stories/stories/progress-accelerated-targeted-action-needed-realize-africas-great-green-wall> Fact: It states... Africa's Great Green Wall aims to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land across the Sahel and create 10 million rural jobs by 2030. At the One Planet Summit in January 2021, donors pledged US\$19 billion, but only US\$2.5 billion had been paid out by early 2023, while about US\$33 billion is needed in total. Weak national agencies and political and security problems in the Sahel slow the work. This means... the biggest international farmland restoration project shows both promise and a large gap between promises and delivery. Delegates should treat restoration as necessary but slow, and should focus on follow-through.

3.9 World Resources Institute (WRI), November 24, 2020

Tagline: Mapping African restoration pledges Source: According to... World Resources Institute (WRI), November 24, 2020 Link: <https://www.wri.org/initiatives/african-forest-landscape-restoration-initiative-afr100> Fact: It states... the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) aims to restore 100 million hectares of deforested and degraded land in Africa by 2030. Thirty-three African countries have joined, and together they have pledged 129 million hectares, more than the original goal. This means... African governments themselves are leading restoration, which matters in debate about national ownership. Delegates can propose linking AFR100 restoration sites with UNICEF child nutrition programs in the same areas.

3.10 UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Last Accessed: October 2026

Tagline: Halving degraded land by 2040 Source: According to... UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Last Accessed: October 2026 Link: <https://www.unccd.int/our-work/flagship-initiatives/G20-Initiative> Fact: It states... the G20 Global Land Initiative, launched by G20 leaders in November 2020, aims to stop and reverse land degradation and to cut the world's degraded land in half by 2040. It is run by a coordination office under the UNCCD, with guidance from interested G20 members, FAO and UNEP. This means... the world's largest economies have made a shared promise on land restoration. Delegates from G20 countries can be asked to show what they have delivered, and delegates from other countries can ask for G20 support.

3.11 UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), July 9, 2026

Tagline: Funding drought resilience after Riyadh Source: According to... UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), July 9, 2026 Link: <https://www.unccd.int/index%2Ephp/news-stories/press-releases/saudi-arabia-and-unccd-accelerate-implementation-cop16-outcomes-ahead> Fact: It states... the Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership, created at the UNCCD's COP16 in Riyadh in December 2024, aims to help countries prepare for drought before it strikes rather than react after crops fail. Pledges include US\$1 billion from the Islamic Development Bank, US\$1 billion from the OPEC Fund, and up to US\$10 billion by 2030 from the Arab Coordination Group. Land degradation and drought cost more than US\$878 billion a year. Countries need about US\$355 billion a year to address them but invest only US\$77 billion, and private money makes up just 6% of current funding. This means... new money for farmland and drought exists, but it is far smaller than the need. Delegates can propose that part of these funds target farming areas with high child stunting, linking restoration money directly to child nutrition.

3.12 United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC), August 31, 2026

Tagline: Restoring rangelands at COP17 Source: According to... United Nations Regional Information Centre (UNRIC), August 31, 2026 Link: <https://unric.org/en/unccd-cop17-advances-new-pathways-for-land-restoration-drought-resilience-and-implementation/> Fact: It states... the UNCCD's COP17, which ended in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, on August 28, 2026, brought together all 197 Parties. Rangelands cover 54% of the Earth's land, support about two billion people, and are managed by roughly 500 million herders. The Rangelands Flagship Initiative, worth US\$1.2 billion across 45 projects, is the largest single funding effort for rangelands in the Convention's history. This means... restoration is not only about cropland; grazing land feeds the families of herders, whose children depend on milk and meat for nutrition. Delegates from herding regions (Central Asia, the Sahel, East Africa) can tie this new fund to child nutrition clauses.

3.12a International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), February 14, 2025

Tagline: Adopting Africa's ten-year food plan Source: According to... International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), February 14, 2025 Link: <https://www.ilri.org/news/au-endorses-10-year-plan-build-resilient-agrifood-systems-africa> Fact: It states... at an extraordinary summit in Kampala, Uganda, on January 9-11, 2025, the African Union approved the Kampala CAADP Declaration and a ten-year plan for 2026-2035. Its goals include raising Africa's food and farm output by 45% by 2035, mobilising US\$100 billion in investment, reaching zero hunger with better nutrition, and giving women and young people a larger role in farming. As of 2023, no African Union member was on track to meet the earlier Malabo Declaration targets, and few were spending 10% of their public budgets on agriculture as promised in Maputo in 2003. About 20% of Africans face hunger. This means... African governments have their own plan for food and farming through 2035, so a UNICEF resolution should support African-led plans instead of replacing them. The record of missed earlier targets gives delegates a reason to ask for clear yearly progress checks.

3D. Emergency Nutrition Supply Partnerships

When funding falls, the first thing children lose is often the therapeutic food that treats severe wasting. Partnerships between UNICEF and individual donors are now filling gaps country by country.

3.13 UNICEF Afghanistan, March 3, 2026

Tagline: Airlifting therapeutic food to Afghanistan Source: According to... UNICEF Afghanistan, March 3, 2026 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/press-releases/european-union-and-unicef-airlift-life-saving-nutrition-supplies-afghanistan-amid> Fact: It states... the European Union and UNICEF began three flights to Kabul carrying 20,000 boxes of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), enough to treat 20,000 children. About 3.7 million children under five in Afghanistan are acutely malnourished. The shortage was caused by few local suppliers, the closure of the border with Pakistan (a main supply route), and funding cuts from former major donors. This means... emergency airlifts can save children's lives, but they are expensive and cover only a small part of the need. Delegates can argue for producing RUTF closer to where it is needed and for keeping reserve stocks in each region, so supplies do not depend on one border or one donor.

3.13a UNICEF Supply Division, December 2025

Tagline: Producing therapeutic food near children Source: According to... UNICEF Supply Division, December 2025 Link: <https://www.unicef.org/supply/media/24596/file/RUTF-Market-and-Supply-Update-2025> Fact: It states... UNICEF now buys ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) from 23 manufacturers, 20 of them in countries with many malnourished children. About 61% of the RUTF UNICEF bought came from countries where it is needed, and locally made RUTF is priced competitively with imports. A carton cost on average about US\$46.70 in 2024. That year UNICEF delivered 86,500 tonnes, enough to treat about 6.2 million children, yet about 12.2 million children have severe wasting at any given time and half to two thirds of them go untreated. About 96% of the money for RUTF is short-term emergency funding, and factories could produce several times more than donors currently pay for. This means... the problem is not a lack of factories but a lack of steady money. Delegates can propose multi-year funding promises for RUTF, which would let local factories plan ahead, lower prices and keep supplies flowing during crises like the one in Afghanistan (entry 3.13).

3.13b NPR, April 25, 2025

Tagline: Explaining the life-saving peanut paste Source: According to... NPR, April 25, 2025 Link: <https://www.npr.org/sections/goats-and-soda/2025/04/25/g-s1-62165/malnutrition-children-plumpynut-lifesaving-u-s-aid> Fact: It states... Plumpy'Nut, the best-known brand of RUTF, is a peanut paste with added vitamins and minerals. Each packet costs roughly 30 cents to make, and a child usually eats two or three packets a day for six to eight weeks. Before these foods existed, only about 25% of severely malnourished children in treatment survived; with them, 80-90% survive. A UNICEF report warned in March 2025 that funding cuts could leave more than 2.4 million severely malnourished children without RUTF for the rest of 2025. In Nigeria, supplies sat in warehouses because there were no staff to hand them out. The US State Department said its support for RUTF continued. This means... RUTF is one of the lowest-cost, best-tested ways to save a child's life, so cutting it has an immediate human cost. Delegates can argue that therapeutic food should be protected first in any budget, and the Nigeria warehouses show that the workers who deliver food matter as much as the food itself.

3E. Proposed and Emerging Efforts (Brief List)

1. **A global financing coordination mechanism for school meals**, proposed by researchers at Brookings, would coordinate donors without creating a new fund (see entry 1.18).
2. **A new treaty banning the use of food as a weapon** has been proposed by some experts, though support from major powers is uncertain (see entry 2.6).
3. **Model food donation laws** based on the Global Food Donation Policy Atlas, which now covers more than 25 countries and the EU (see entries 1.15 and 3.3).
4. **Sustainable cold-chain partnerships** between UNEP, FAO and the private sector, using clean energy and low-warming refrigerants (see entry 1.11).
5. **UNICEF's Child Nutrition Fund**, which UNICEF has asked donors to support as part of its plan to fight child food poverty (see entry 1.4).
6. **Binding regional food waste targets** modelled on the EU's 2030 law, which other regions could adopt once they have measuring systems (see entry 3.3a).
7. **Multi-year funding promises for therapeutic food (RUTF)**, so that factories in high-need countries can plan ahead and keep prices down (see entries 3.13a and 3.13b).

KEY VOCABULARY

1. **Food loss:** Food that is lost after harvest and before it reaches shops, for example because it rots in storage or is damaged in transport.
2. **Food waste:** Food that is thrown away by shops, restaurants, or households even though it could have been eaten.

3. **Food recovery (redistribution):** Collecting safe, unsold food and giving it to people who need it, often through food banks.
4. **Cold chain:** A system of refrigerated storage and transport that keeps food cool from the farm to the buyer.
5. **Stunting:** When a child is too short for their age because of long-term poor nutrition; it can permanently harm brain development.
6. **Wasting:** When a child is dangerously thin for their height because of sudden, severe lack of food or illness; it can be fatal without treatment.
7. **Severe child food poverty:** UNICEF's term for a young child who eats from two or fewer of eight basic food groups each day.
8. **Land degradation:** Damage to land that lowers its ability to grow plants and food, caused by things like erosion, overgrazing or loss of soil nutrients.
9. **Agroforestry:** Growing trees together with crops or animals on the same land to protect soil and improve harvests.
10. **Ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF):** An energy-rich paste, usually made with peanuts, used to treat children with severe wasting.
11. **Rebound effect:** When saving resources makes something cheaper, so people use more of it, cancelling part of the savings.
12. **SDG Target 12.3:** The UN goal to halve food waste per person and reduce food loss by 2030.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. UNICEF is a children's agency. How can it act on food waste and farmland, which are usually handled by FAO, UNEP and UNCCD, without duplicating their work?
 2. Most food waste happens in households (60%). Can international action change behaviour inside homes, or should UNICEF focus on farms, shops and schools?
 3. Should food recovery programs be required to deliver nutritious food (fruit, vegetables, protein) rather than any surplus food? Who would set and check these standards?
 4. Researchers warn that giving surplus food to charities can hide the real causes of hunger. How should a resolution balance food recovery with cash transfers and other social protection?
 5. With humanitarian funding falling since 2022, where should money for school meals, therapeutic food and restoration come from? Should poorer countries pay more themselves, and is that fair?
 6. Farmland restoration takes years to raise harvests, but children are hungry today. How should a resolution divide resources between emergency help and long-term restoration?
 7. In conflict zones such as Sudan and Gaza, food often cannot reach children at all. What can UNICEF realistically do when Security Council resolutions like 2417 are not enforced?
 8. Should countries be encouraged to change their laws (date labels, donor liability, tax rules) to increase food donation, and how can a UN resolution do this while respecting national sovereignty?
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Research Gaps and Notes for the Coach

1. **Resolution table now fully confirmed:** Every symbol in the table, including the UNEA food waste resolution (UNEP/EA.4/Res.2), was confirmed on an official UN or UNEP page. A/RES/77/161 (zero waste) was added in October 2026.
2. **Undated organisation pages:** Five entries (2.9, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.10) still use "Last Accessed: October 2026." Each page was opened again on October 14, 2026, and none shows a day, month and year of publication, so no real date could replace the access date. The two SDG Report 2026 entries (2.1, 2.2) carry the official launch date, July 7, 2026, confirmed by UN DESA. Entries 1.18a (July 2025) and 3.13a (December 2025) give month and year only because the sources show no day.

3. **Older sources kept on purpose:** Entry 1.16 (2017) and entry 1.20 (2021) are older than the 2022 preference. They were kept because they are the clearest academic sources on the limits of food redistribution and on restoration returns.
4. **News coverage improved but still partial:** Round three added a second Associated Press article (entry 1.10e, read through The Gazette's reprint) and NPR (entry 3.13b). No open Reuters, BBC or Guardian article on this exact topic combination could be opened; the Reuters stories found were available only as reprints on regional sites, so they were not used.
5. **COP17 detail:** The UNCCD's own COP17 decisions (August 2026) were not opened; entry 3.12 relies on the UN Regional Information Centre summary.
6. **Round three additions (October 14, 2026):** Thirteen new entries (1.10c, 1.10d, 1.10e, 1.18a, 2.12 to 2.15, 3.3a, 3.3b, 3.12a, 3.13a, 3.13b) and the new section 2C on bloc positions. The newest are the Global Report on Food Crises 2026 (April 2026), the Security Council Report preview (August 3, 2026) and the Nordic statement at the Security Council (August 25, 2026).
7. **Resolution symbol for the nutrition decade extension:** Entry 2.12 describes the March 2025 General Assembly resolution extending the Decade of Action on Nutrition to 2030. WHO's page gives the draft symbol A/79/L.66 and the date March 24, 2025; the final A/RES symbol and the full vote list could not be confirmed on an official UN page, so it was not added to table 2A. Check digitallibrary.un.org before quoting a symbol or naming countries that voted against it.
8. **Bloc positions:** Section 2C uses one source per bloc. The United States, Russia and China positions on Security Council debates come from Security Council Report, an independent research group, not from the governments themselves; delegates assigned those countries should read their own country's most recent speech.