

HMDC Presents... UNICEF: Part 1 (The Topic)

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.

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://chlpi.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%20e.php/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).