GA2: Social and Humanitarian Committee

Student Officer: Birce Özdemir

Issue: Addressing hunger and malnutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean







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I. Introduction

Hunger and Malnutrition have always been an omnipresent problem in Latin America and the Caribbean. However, the fight against hunger and malnutrition has started to coexist with the pressing need to restructure conventional sectors within the region. Hunger and malnutrition are caused by a variety of factors including economic instability, unequal access to food and resources, and climate change. Due to the region's colossal potential for food, this problem becomes even more significant. Though the Latin American and Caribbean countries have made great strides in alleviating poverty in recent years, additional external factors such as political unrest, some environmental problems, and the development of advanced technology have made the issue of hunger and malnutrition in the region more noticeable. As digital technology continues to alter the agriculture and manufacturing industries, LEDCs confront new obstacles in accessing nutritious food. According to a report presented by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), malnutrition has a negative effect on millions of people especially children and more vulnerable age groups, whereas hunger forces approximately 47 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean overall to suffer. As climate change disrupts agricultural products along with the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and some other global economic pressures, the need for sustainable solutions becomes more urgent. Through emphasizing the significance of upgrading established sectors to protect workers and ensure a solid economic foundation in the face of technological developments, especially within the Latin American and Caribbean region, this chair report aims to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition in this area and feasible solutions to resolve the problem at hand in resonance with the TIMUN '24's theme, "The Uncertain Future of Traditional Industries: Labor in the Digital Economy".

II. Involved Countries and Organizations

Brazil

With its social welfare initiatives like Bolsa Família, giving cash transfers to low-income families, and the Fome Zero program, aiming to end hunger, Brazil has been an important country in combating hunger and malnutrition. It also has prioritized enhancing food security for its sizable rural population and the country encourages sustainable farming by supporting agricultural policies within the nation.





Venezuela

Plays an important role in tackling the issue at hand when its past attempts are considered. In order to give low-income households subsidized food packages, the Venezuelan government has put in place food programs like CLAP (Local Committees for Supply and Production). However, these initiatives have been criticized for being ineffective and manipulative of politics. Despite that, the government has continued its efforts to enact economic changes in response to the crisis, such as the redenomination of the currency and measures to combat hyperinflation. Nevertheless, neither economic stabilization nor the aggravation of food insecurity have been achieved so far within the region. However, Venezuela can easily tackle the issue and help ameliorate hunger and malnutrition in the region with a couple of changes in its both economic and political strategies.

Mexico

Mexico is one of the key players in the fight against malnutrition and food insecurity in Latin America and the Caribbean region. The country is popular for its efforts to advance food sovereignty and its school lunch programs implemented nationwide. Moreover, Mexico is in tight collaboration with various international organizations aiming to increase agricultural output. Additionally, Mexico focuses on addressing obesity and undernutrition and puts on efforts to improve agricultural productivity.

Argentina

Both on the domestic and global scale, Argentina is in collaboration with organizations, and has taken an active position in such initiatives to ensure food security. In addition to its programs that are aimed at reducing poverty and providing food aid, the nation has some policies supporting sustainable agriculture and food production which are significant steps in tackling the issue at hand.

Colombia

Colombia is one of the countries that suffers from extreme hunger and malnutrition, particularly in its rural areas. The nation has initiated some steps to combat food insecurity, including agricultural growth and rural independence. Additional efforts of the Colombian government include enhancing access to healthy food, providing emergency food aid, and enhancing food systems for reaching sustainable development over time.

Chile

The nation has a strong food aid system nationwide and it supports teaching efforts about healthy diet and nutrition. In addition to raising awareness of the issue through the problem's integration into





education, Chile is working on policy measures to minimize food inequality and increase the quality of its citizens' nutrition and diet.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The FAO plays an important role and is one of the most active organizations in tackling the issue. It has various purposes in both global and regional initiatives to promote food security and nutrition worldwide. The FAO also helps Latin American and Caribbean nations in boosting their agricultural output, promoting food security, and aggravating hunger by providing technical assistance, research opportunities, and strategic advice.

World Food Programme (WFP)

The WFP is a significant organization with worldwide efforts such as providing food aid and strengthening food systems against poverty and malnutrition. The WFP runs numerous projects especially to enhance long-term food security throughout Latin America and the Caribbean by offering emergency food relief, promoting education about nutrition and its importance, and building food systems for the region.

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO):

PAHO acts as the World Health Organization's (WHO) regional office for the Americas, aiming to put emphasis on public health concerns such as nutrition and food security. It also aims to enhance the nutritional status of people in Latin America and the Caribbean via public health campaigns, implementing nutrition programs, and integrating health education in the affected countries.

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The IDB offers both financial and technical assistance for development initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly those aimed at bolstering food security and nutrition. The IDB also sponsors activities that promote rural development, enhance agricultural techniques, and reduce poverty all of which contribute to the region's food security.





The most important role of the World Bank is to provide financial assistance to Latin American and Caribbean nations for their agricultural development and to reduce poverty within the region as well as promote the ongoing food security projects in these countries. The World Bank also encourages sustainable agriculture methods, strengthens rural infrastructure, and supports social protection programs to promote long-term food security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

III. Focused Overview of the Issue

As mentioned earlier, hunger and malnutrition are major challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean, impacting millions as a result of a complicated web of socioeconomic, environmental, and political factors. Despite attempts to minimize food insecurity and end famine, the region continues to suffer from widespread hunger and malnutrition. This section will break down the primary elements impacting the hunger problem and examine the underlying concerns of the issue at hand.

1. Economic Instability and Poverty

Economic insecurity, substantial amounts of poverty, and inequality all contribute significantly to hunger and malnutrition in the region. Many nations in Latin America and the Caribbean depend largely on agricultural, tourism, and oil exports, rendering them sensitive to global economic fluctuations. Moreover, high unemployment and low salaries make it difficult for families to purchase adequate food. Around thirty percent of the region's population lives in poverty, and there are large income and wealth gaps. Today, a sizable fraction of Latin Americans live on less than \$6.85 per day, and high levels of inequality exacerbate the situation. Poverty remains especially prevalent in rural regions and among vulnerable people. Efforts such as Brazil's Bolsa Familia have shown that social transfers may alleviate poverty, but more comprehensive interventions are required for long-term success.

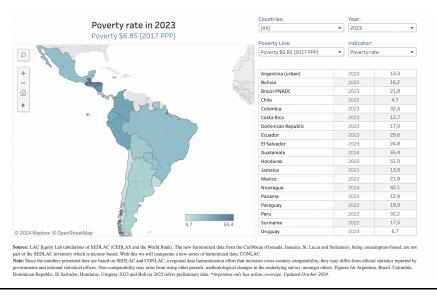


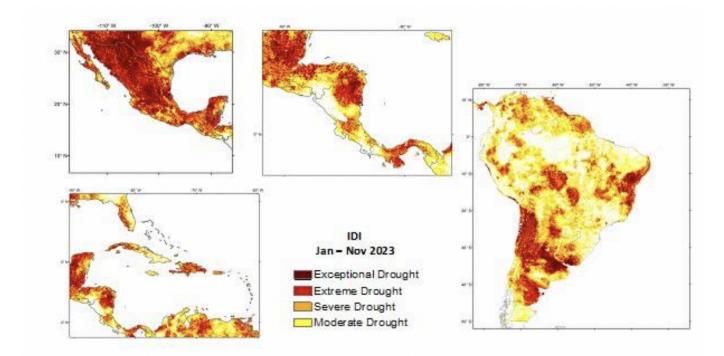




Image 1: Poverty Rate in 2023 in Latin America and the Caribbean region

2. Climate Change and Environmental Aspect

Climate change plays an important role in worsening food insecurity by reducing agricultural production. Natural catastrophes such as hurricanes, droughts, and floods are becoming more frequent in Latin American and Caribbean countries, affecting both food availability and accessibility. Droughts caused by climate change, especially in the "Dry Corridor" of Central America, cause agricultural losses and livestock mortality. Furthermore, soil deterioration, desertification, and deforestation increase the vulnerability of food systems. To mitigate these consequences, regional climate investment and collaboration in resilient agriculture methods are required.



Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI), calculated from Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station data (CHIRPS) and Vegetation Health Index data from the Center for Satellite Applications and Research (STAR/NOAA).

Image 2: The Climate Vulnerability Maps of Latin America and the Caribbean-2023





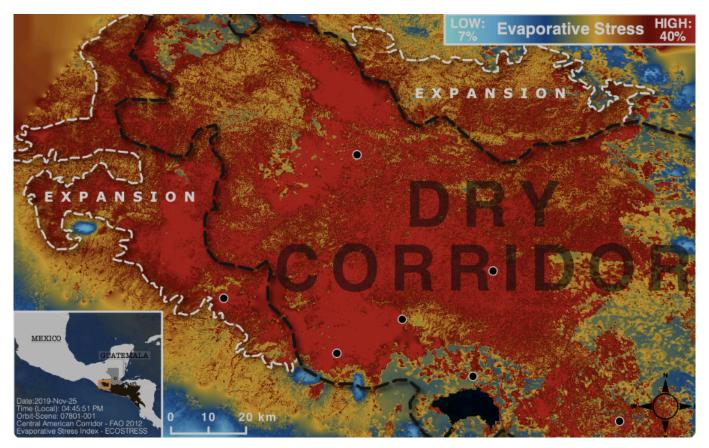


Image 3: The expansion of the Central American Dry Corridor captured by Ecostress

3. Inefficient distribution of food

Despite the region's large food production, inefficient food distribution results in waste and limited access, particularly for low-income households. Food frequently fails to reach those in need due to a lack of transportation infrastructure, insufficient storage facilities, and fragmented supply networks. According to the FAO, Latin America and the Caribbean misuse more than one-third of their food production, which normally could feed millions. Limited cold storage, inadequate transportation routes, and inefficiencies in rural-urban supply systems all contribute to this food loss. Therefore, it is crucial to improve supply chains, storage facilities, and transportation networks is crucial for addressing such inefficiencies.





TABLE 3

revalence of food insecurity (percent)												
	Moderate food insecurity				Severe food insecurity				Moderate or severe food insecurity			
	2014	2019	2020	2021	2014	2019	2020	2021	2014	2019	2020	2021
World	13.5	16.1	18.6	17.6	7.7	9.3	10.9	11.7	21.2	25.4	29.5	29.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	17.1	21.8	26.7	26.4	7.5	9.9	12.8	14.2	24.6	31.7	39.5	40.6
Caribbean			31.8	33.5			36.6	30.5			68.4	64.0
Mesoamerica	23.7	20.9	26.8	26.1	6.5	7.3	7.3	8.0	30.2	28.2	34.1	34.1
South America	13.0	21.5	26.1	25.8	5.4	8.5	12.7	15.1	18.4	30.0	38.8	40.9

Prevalence of food insecurity (percent)

SOURCE: FAO. 2022. FAOSTAT: Suite of Food Security Indicators. In: FAO. Rome. Cited 7 November 2022. https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS

Image 4: The prevalence of food insecurity table of Latin America and the Caribbean by percentages

4. Nutritional insufficiency and healthcare implementations

Restrictions in economics and logistics prevent many individuals from accessing a healthy diet. At the same time, the proliferation of low-cost, processed meals has resulted in an increase in obesity and noncontagious illnesses, particularly in more metropolitan areas. Specifically, high rates of malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies have a negative impact on child health, with long-term ramifications for both their cognitive and physical development. Moreover, health institutions in the region frequently fail to offer proper nutrition assistance, particularly in rural and low-income areas. Public health efforts aiming at eliminating malnutrition are either underfunded or poorly administered.

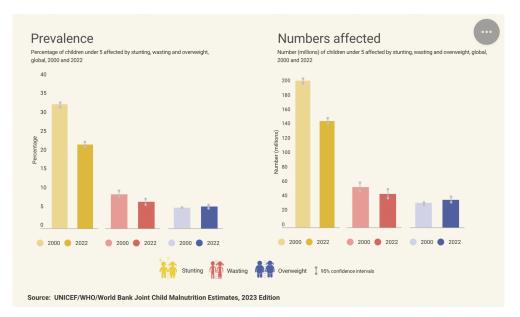


Image 5: The prevalence of the ramifications of children malnutrition on a global scale between the years 2000-2022





5. Legal loopholes

Legal and regulatory deficiencies limit successful food security and nutrition strategies. Many nations have food aid, agricultural support, and nutrition education programs in place, but their efficacy is lowered by inadequate performance, insufficient financing, and ineffective coordination between sectors. Additionally, inequitable subsidies and trade policies can worsen hunger by favoring large-scale growers over small farmers. This might result in a cycle in which small farmers struggle to compete while also experiencing food insecurity. In certain areas, government-run food distribution programs have been criticized for inefficiency and corruption. Legal flaws also make it harder to hold authorities accountable for failed food security measures. Therefore, strengthening food security legislation, fostering equitable market access, and implementing regulations that benefit small-scale farmers are critical steps toward enhancing regional food security.

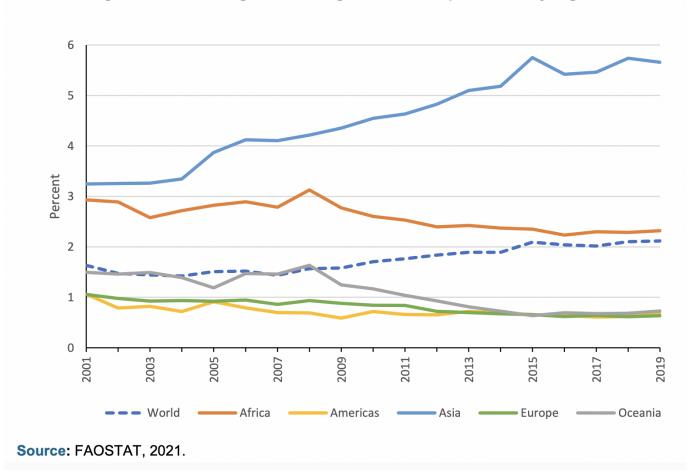


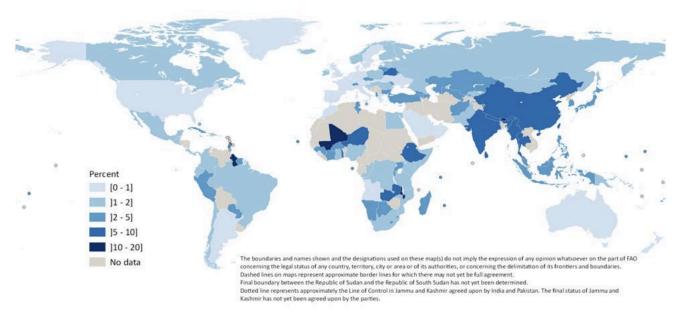
Figure 1: Share of agriculture in government expenditure, by region

Image 6: The government expenditure in agriculture by regions from 2001 to 2019





Figure 2: Share of agriculture in government expenditure, 2015–2019 average





IV. Key Vocabulary

Hunger: According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, hunger is "an uncomfortable or painful physical sensation caused by insufficient consumption of dietary energy".

Malnutrition: A condition induced by a lack of calories or essential nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals. It can also be caused by needing more to eat, not consuming enough appropriate food and nutrients, or being unable to make use of the food that is eaten. Malnutrition has two forms: undernutrition and overnutrition.

Undernutrition: It refers to a lack of nutrition. One may be undernourished in the face of not consuming a sufficient diet or having difficulty collecting enough nutrients from meals.

Overnutrition: It refers to excessive food intake and happens when the body's utilization of energy or nutrients exceeds the amount it needs.

Micronutrients: The vitamins and minerals required by the body in small amounts.





The Caribbean: The Caribbean region is primarily made up of The Caribbean Sea, its islands like the West Indies, and the shores around it. Geographically, this region is mostly a sequence of islands around the Caribbean Sea.

Food Security: Having both physical and economic access to safe and nutritious food that is enough for everyone which also fits the food habits and dietary requirements of people for them to live a healthy and active life.

Sustainable Food Systems: A food system that ensures food security and nourishment possibly for everyone. These systems include a variety of aspects including food processing, packaging, and transportation to customers. At present, these systems are highly inefficient and unsustainable as the UN has reported in 2022 that approximately 9.2 percent of the population has suffered from acute hunger which was equal to around 735 million people globally, which is 122 million people more than in the year 2019. Additionally, these unsustainable food systems cause climate change, accounting for one-third of greenhouse gas emissions and 70% of global freshwater use.

Zero Hunger: It is one of the 17 UN SDGs that aims at guaranteeing everyone access to adequate, nutritious, and secure food to meet their eating habits and ensuring them to be able to obtain the food they require without jeopardizing their socioeconomic well-being.

Poverty alleviation: A collection of economic and humanitarian actions aimed at permanently lifting people out of poverty. Any effort, and strategy aimed at reducing or fully eliminating poverty is an act of poverty alleviation.

Rural Development: It refers to the technique of aiming to enhance the economic and social conditions of the rural poor. It entails spreading the benefits of growth to the poorest among people seeking a living in rural regions. This category comprises small-scale farmers, tenants, and landless people.

The Dry Corridor: The Dry Corridor is a stretch of terrain spanning El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua that is prone to catastrophic climatic events such as prolonged drought, putting lives in danger.

LEDC: It stands for the "least economically developed countries" and according to the UN, these countries are Africa, the Asian region excluding Japan, Latin America, and the Caribbean, and lastly, Oceania excluding Australia and New Zealand.





V. Important Events & Chronology

Date (Day/Month/Year)	Event						
	The "Zero Hunger" Program was launched in Brazil by						
October 30, 2003	President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.						
	The Dry Corridor in Central America has seen catastrophic						
March 14, 2005	droughts that affected agriculture and caused food						
	insecurity, particularly in rural regions.						
	The UN formally launched the Decade of Action on Nutrition						
April 1, 2016	to tackle hunger globally, putting more emphasis on						
	high-risk areas such as Latin America and the Caribbean.						
	The UN General Assembly adopted the SDGs, with Goal 2:						
September 25, 2015	Zero Hunger specifically focusing on the themes of hunger,						
	food security, and sustainable agriculture.						
	Caribbean countries implemented the "Caribbean Zero						
	Hunger Initiative" program in partnership with the FAO with						
November 14, 2017	the aim of reducing hunger and promoting sustainable food						
	systems.						
	The FAO released a report revealing an increase in hunger						
September 11, 2019	across Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting a shi						
September 11, 2018	between the current situation and the previous progress du						
	to economic and environmental factors.						
	Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó attempted to						
February 23, 2019	bring and heighten humanitarian aid in Venezuela,						
1 ebiuary 23, 2019	emphasizing the significant food shortages affecting millions						
	in the region.						
	The WHO declared COVID-19 a global epidemic that has						
March 11, 2020	triggered economic shutdowns and disruptions that						
Walter 11, 2020	exacerbate food insecurity throughout Latin America and the						
	Caribbean.						
	This Category 5 hurricane hit Central America, corrupting the						
November 16, 2020	agriculture in the Dry Corridor region and worsening food						
	security for millions of people who have already been						
	affected by the COVID-19 crisis.						





April 6, 2022

The FAO released a warning, highlighting external factors like climate change, the aftermath of the pandemic, and inflation as major constituents of a major food crisis across the region, which required urgent action.

VI. Past Resolutions and Treaties

- The UN Resolution 74/244: This resolution was adopted in December 2019, aiming to support the use of agricultural technology in improving food security, promoting sustainable agriculture, and addressing the effects of climate change on food production in the affected regions. It also aims to help nations, notably those in Latin America, implement new agricultural methods especially to increase their food availability.
- 2nd SGD- Zero Hunger: The 2nd SDG was also adopted in September 2015, when all of the UN Sustainable Development Goals were embraced. Goal 2 which is "Zero hunger" seeks to end hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by the year 2030. The 2nd goal has served as a core guideline for most of the Latin American and Caribbean countries working to combat hunger and malnutrition via a variety of national and regional programs along with relevant UN bodies.
- Rome Declaration on World Food Security: This declaration was approved during the World Food Summit held between 13-17 November 1996 in Rome Italy. Since then, the declaration has established a worldwide commitment to eradicate hunger and emphasize the need for food security as a priority for sustainable development. The Rome Declaration has influenced Latin American and Caribbean governments as it develops policies targeted at ensuring food security and eliminating hunger totally.
- Escazú Agreement: Although this convention is primarily concerned with environmental rights, it highlights the link between environmental conservation and sustainable development, including food security and agriculture. This agreement indirectly addresses regional food security issues by promoting sustainable agriculture methods and conserving environmental resources. The Escazú Agreement, also known as the regional agreement on access to information, public participation,





and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean was adopted on March 4, 2018, in Escazú, Costa Rica.

Mesoamerica Hunger Free AMEXCID-FAO: The "Mesoamerica Hunger Free AMEXCID-FAO" initiative consists of 10 country components and a Mesoamerican component in charge of overall management. At the regional level, the Programme promotes conversation and knowledge sharing to help Mesoamerican nations discover answers to common concerns. In this framework, "Mesoamerica Hunger Free AMEXCID-FAO" focuses on allowing articulation and feedback processes between the academic community and individuals responsible for developing and carrying out public policies; providing verified methodological tools to relevant individuals and favoring partnerships identification and resource mobilization; as well as increasing the importance of fighting hunger and rural poverty in mainstream media and political platforms.

VII. Failed Solution Attempts

- Food Assistance Programs in Venezuela: Venezuela has implemented a number of government-led food distribution programs, including the CLAP (Local Committees for Supply and Production) program, to battle increasing hunger in the middle of an economic crisis. Its efforts started in 2016 and have ongoing projects, however, extensive corruption, poor administration, and its dependency on imported food have reduced the efficiency of these initiatives. The country often receives damaged food in general. In times when the country obtains non-spoiled food, it frequently comes in insufficient amounts, and the politicization of aid in the country has resulted in the distribution of food based on allegiance rather than necessity. As a result, food insecurity has grown in the region, leaving millions hungry.
- The Dry Corridor Initiative in Central America: During the years 2015 to 2020, the FAO and WFP backed the Dry Corridor Initiative, aiming to strengthen climate resilience and stabilize food supply in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Nicaragua to address recurring droughts that undermined food production. Despite some early success, the region's lack of sustainable finance, poor policy execution, and political instability hindered long-term progress. As climate change intensified, the initiative's development has surpassed, leaving many communities in the region exposed to food shortages and rising poverty.





- The National Program for Food Security and Nutrition of Honduras: Honduras has developed this national effort to combat hunger via increased agricultural output and food access between 2011 and 2014. However, due to low finance, poor infrastructure, and insufficient coordination, the program's influence happened to be insignificant. The government struggled to reach rural and indigenous areas, which experienced the most acute food crisis. Furthermore, turmoils in politics, notably following the 2009 coup, caused program interruptions, and long-term food shortages continued in Honduras.
- The Bolsa Familia Program in Brazil: The Bolsa Familia Program also known as the reduction in coverage program is still an applicable ongoing project that was first established in 2015. Initially, a highly effective program that considerably decreased hunger, the Bolsa Familia social security program has seen budget cuts and political hurdles in recent years, reducing its effects. Food insecurity has returned to Brazil as low-income households receive less assistance. The program's inability to react to economic recessions and the consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic hampered its capacity to continue lowering hunger and malnutrition.
- Regional agricultural development plans of CARICOM (Caribbean Community): Caribbean countries
 have historically relied on imported food for a long time due to a scarcity of agricultural land. Some
 programs have started to aim at promoting local agriculture and reducing import reliance. One of the
 most important programs amongst these agricultural development projects is CARICOM's regional
 agricultural development plans. These plans have not only encountered significant problems,
 including inadequate finance but they also helped tackle natural catastrophes and climate change in
 the region. Hurricanes, for instance, have harmed local food production and impeded agricultural
 endeavors, resulting in high costs and food insecurity throughout the region. Therefore, the failure to
 build a sustainable regional agricultural system has left the region very vulnerable to food
 emergencies.
- The "Right to Food" Law in Guatemala: Approved in 2005, this law aimed at combating food insecurity and ensuring that all citizens have access to food. However, a lack of enforcement measures, insufficient government dedication, and corruption have left the law mostly unsuccessful.





The country continues to have one of the greatest malnutrition rates in the area, particularly among indigenous and rural communities which demonstrates the law's inability to effect significant change.

VIII. Possible Solutions

- Enhancing the agricultural practices: Supporting local farmers by implementing sustainable
 agricultural practices such as soil health, crop rotation, and agroecology, and training in these
 methods can increase productivity while decreasing environmental deterioration. Moreover,
 encouraging the use of drought-tolerant and heat-resistant agricultural methods to assist farmers
 sustain production in changing climates would be another approach to the problem. In order to
 achieve this, the farmers should be given access to contemporary agricultural equipment and
 advanced technology, such as precision farming equipment including drones and sensors that
 would both increase efficiency and decrease waste.
- Improving the food distribution systems: Investing in infrastructure such as storage facilities, transportation networks, and refrigeration could help decrease post-harvest losses and guarantee that food is accessible to almost everyone. Encouraging urban agricultural activities and creating local food centers can also provide affordable healthy food while minimizing reliance on distant supply lines. Furthermore, developing educational efforts and laws to decrease food waste might help improve food distribution systems.
- Providing economic support and improving social safety nets: Expanding social safety nets, such as Brazil's Bolsa Família, can help families afford healthy food. These initiatives are particularly vital during times of economic insecurity, especially in rural communities. In addition to this, governments can provide targeted nutrition help to vulnerable groups through school lunch programs, subsidies for food, or direct food deliveries to low-income households.
- Developing education on nutrition and diet: Nationwide campaigns and education programs to
 promote awareness about good eating habits, the value of balanced meals, and the dangers of
 malnutrition could be implemented. These should be culturally acceptable and available to all
 socioeconomic classes to be more efficient. Furthermore, the incorporation of nutrition and dietary
 education into school curricula would be another effective solution. This education might be focused





on the advantages of eating locally grown fruits and vegetables while also instructing teachers and students on how to cook economical, healthy meals. Through this, the local traditions would be sustained and it can enhance food sovereignty, preventing the region from relying on imported goods.

Integrating the private sector and strengthening international collaboration: Public-Private
Partnerships (PPPs) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives could be empowered. To
do so, governments may work with the private sector to increase food access by investing in
agriculture and nutrition. Private enterprises can also contribute to minimizing food insecurity by
supporting programs like food reinforcement or food waste reduction. Likewise, international
institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank may further help with regional food
security initiatives by providing finance, knowledge transfer, and technical assistance. Multilateral
collaboration on food security concerns can contribute to poverty reduction and food system
stability.

IX. Useful Links

- <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ds-Vky0zX8g&ab_channel=FoodandAgricultureOrganiz</u> <u>ationoftheUnitedNations</u>
- <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyAhj6ezl3g&ab_channel=Inter-AmericanDevelopment</u>
 <u>Bank</u>
- <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKhx2MuvVwo&t=2s&ab_channel=WorldBank</u>
- <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=umlnib_04Fc&t=2s&ab_channel=WorldBank</u>
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnR5H7YSk1k&ab_channel=TED
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93ogS9CQMkM&ab_channel=TEDxTalks
- https://www.fao.org/americas/en
- https://caricom.org/
- <u>https://www.wfp.org/support-us/stories/donate?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=16875293684&utm_content=154872220951&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQi
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 <u>wDv0aAIVMEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds</u>
 </u>
- <u>https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/topics/malnutrition?page=1%2C%2C%2C%2C%2C0#:~:text=Thei</u> <u>r%20numbers%20are%20worryingly%20high,affect%20tens%20of%20million...</u>





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 <u>IsAEcZtwRAWA3e8A5XFwQwlkzjvyUCmWQ-Zhm-ZWWl2ghYwj1mTYhiAbusSHAaApQIEAL</u>
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