

The European International Model United Nations

2018



United Nations General Assembly

Topic B: Prevention of Man-made Famine



Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates, you are tasked with a challenging dilemma that has the capability to affect people worldwide and yet is rarely discussed. Man-made famine is a grave situation that is currently affecting millions of people. It is currently one of the largest humanitarian crisis the world is facing.

With that being said, there is no need to worry. Whether you are a first timer in MUN or a veteran looking for more challenge, this topic is suited for you. The topic involves political, environmental and developmental issues. It is a broad and engaging spectrum that we hope you will have a fun time with. Man-made famine is the result of various circumstances and yet it is rarely talked about. Therefore, we are expecting you talk about the things the world does not want to talk about. Hopefully, it is not all talk and there are actions involved.

We are looking forward to having you in the council. We as chairs only wants what is best for you. We want you to have a fun and engaging debate where you will get something out of it that you can take home with you.

If you have any question regarding the topic, please don't hesitate to ask us.

Yours Truly,

Chairs

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Introduction

“We are facing the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of the United Nations” said former Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O’Brien.¹ 30 million people in North-Eastern Nigeria, South-Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen are on the brink of facing a man-made famine.² The hunger crisis has resulted in severe malnutrition and dire conditions where, currently, 10 million people are facing emergency and famine conditions³. Oxfam defines famine as “an extreme lack of food and other basic needs where starvation, death, and destitution are evident.” In terms of global famine, more than 30% of the world’s population who are acutely malnourished, and two out of every 10,000 people die from starvation globally⁴. The four aforementioned countries are not the only ones facing a hunger crisis. There are a number of contemporary cases where countries are facing a high level of ‘food insecurity’. Food insecurity is where people’s access to basic food is precarious, and the population has trouble meeting basic needs. Food insecurity is prevalent in many developing countries, and has a plethora of causes, ranging from failed crop seasons, poverty, to the disappearance of usable lands to farm. Food insecurity has the potential to evolve into a humanitarian crisis and even a famine if left untreated. These problems are exacerbated by man-made causes.

In 2017, famine was declared in the Northern-Central Region of South Sudan, where violent conflict, climate change and soaring currency inflation have destroyed the country's agriculture-based economy⁵. The current South Sudan civil war has exacerbated their food insecurity. In 2015, the country was in danger of facing a drought due to the disastrous ‘El Niño’ event. El Niño is an almost annual warm period whose implications for the environment pose problem to developing countries along the equator. However, this year the El Niño event was made more disastrous due to the increasingly burdensome civil war. This is also made

¹ *Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O’Brien: Statement to the Security Council on Missions to Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Kenya and an Update on the Oslo Conference on Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region*. 2017. Report from The UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs. <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/under-secretary-general-humanitarian-affairsemergency-relief-coordinator-stephen-o>

² *Hungry In A World Of Plenty: Millions On The Brink Of Famine*. 2018. Oxfam.Org. <https://www.oxfam.org/en/famine-and-hunger-crisis-famine-south-sudan-west-africa-crisis-crisis-yemen/hungry-world-plenty>.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Hufstader, Chris. 2017. *What Is Famine, And How Can We Stop It?* .Oxfamamerica.Org. <https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/stories/what-is-famine-and-how-can-we-stop-it/>.

⁵ Farley, Malcolm G. 2017. "Famine Threatens 2.5 Million Children In Africa And The Middle East". UNICEF USA. <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/famine-threatens-25-million-children-africa-and-middle-east/32005>.

worse by the South Sudan's military's controversial policy, referred to by the UN as the "do what you can and take what you can"⁶ policy that allowed them to confiscate cattle and other possessions, and even to rape and murder civilian women as a form of salary⁷. As of June 2017, the food crisis had subsided, and the UN considered the famine to be over, while still pointing out that 1.7 million people were facing the level of food insecurity just below famine⁸. South Sudan is just one example of how conflict, climate change and political instability creates a perfect recipe for famine.

The 2018 TEIMUN General Assembly is therefore tasked to tackle this problem of famine and food insecurity more broadly. This background paper focuses on the human causes of ongoing famines. Famine is currently a looming threat in the world and it is up to responsibility of the General Assembly to create a sustainable framework to mitigate the already disastrous problems in countries that are at risk of entering famine.

General History

Throughout history there has been a copious amount of recorded famine around the world. For instance; The "Great Irish Famine" that occurred in Ireland throughout 1845-1849,⁹ famine in China in 1959-1962¹⁰, and continuously in Africa since the 1974 drought in Kenya.¹¹ These famines are caused by a myriad of factors including war, inflation, crop failure, population imbalance, and centralized government policies. Food shortages in a population are caused either by a lack of food or by ineffective food distribution; it may be worsened by natural climate fluctuations and by extreme political conditions related to oppressive government or warfare. The oppressive Mao Zedong government, for example, largely caused the calamitous Chinese famine through its 'Great Leap Forward' campaign from 1959-1961. The Great Leap Forward was characterized by drought, crop failure, and government mismanagement which included failure of food distribution and no recognition to the fact that there was even a

⁶ UNMISS Needs to adhere to its mandates: Jieng Council of Elders. 2016. South Sudan Nation. <http://www.southsudannation.com/author/pwankomo/page/49/>

⁷ Women Raped 'As Reward For Fighters. 2016. BBC News. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-35780777>.

⁸ South Sudan: UN Report Contains "Searing" Account Of Killings, Rapes And Destruction. 2016. OHCHR.org. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=17207&LangID=E>.

⁹ Great Famine. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Great-Famine-Irish-history>

¹⁰ Branigan, Tania. *China's Great Famine: The True Story*. 2013. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jan/01/china-great-famine-book-tombstone>

¹¹ A History of Famine in Africa. 1998. BBC. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/86443.stm>

problem¹². The failure of the communist government resulted in the deaths of an estimated 15 million people¹³.

Those political and environmental factors which precipitated the Chinese famine have repeated itself throughout history. Currently, the most prevalent hunger crises in the four countries of South Sudan, Yemen, Somalia and Nigeria are caused by similar factors. These countries are all also in a state of conflict, which exacerbate domestic food distribution. In 2017, conflict and insecurity were the major drivers of acute food insecurity in 18 countries and territories, where almost 74 million food-insecure people were in need of urgent assistance.¹⁴ Eleven of these countries were in Africa and accounted for 37 million acutely food insecure people; the largest numbers of which were in northern Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and South Sudan¹⁵.

Since the start of the 21st century, with the development of more effective early warning systems and the response in humanitarian actions have significantly reduced the number of famine related deaths. Nevertheless, many African countries are not self-sufficient in food production, relying on income from 'cash crops' (a readily bargain crop produced or gathered primarily for market)¹⁶ to import food. Agriculture in Africa is highly dependent on climatic fluctuations, especially water levels. Other agricultural problems include soil infertility, land degradation and erosion, swarms of desert locusts, and livestock diseases. Desertification is also increasingly problematic: the Sahara reportedly spreads up to 48 kilometres per year¹⁷. The most serious famines in Africa have been caused by a combination of drought, misguided economic policies, and protracted conflict. The 1983–85 famine in Ethiopia was the outcome of all these three factors, exacerbated by the Country's former Communist government's censorship of the crisis, similar to that in China during the Great Leap Forward.

One of the early warning system created to address the issue of food emergency and famine is the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). IPC is a set of standardized tools aiming to provide a "common currency" for classifying the severity and magnitude of food

¹² *Ibid.*, *China's Great Famine: The True Story*.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Global Report on Food Crisis 2018*. 2018. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-report-food-crises-2018>

¹⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. *Saving Livelihood, Saving Lives*. 2018. Fao.Org. <http://www.fao.org/3/i8463en/I8463EN.pdf>.

¹⁶ *Definition of Cash Crop*. Merriam Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cash%20crop>

¹⁷ McLaughlin, Abraham. 2005. *Hunger Is Spreading In Africa*. The Christian Science Monitor. <https://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0801/p01s02-woaf.html>.

insecurity¹⁸. It provides a useful framework for the international community to measure and discuss the severity of food insecurity globally. It is currently being used by the World Food Program and the Food and Agriculture Organization, amongst others, to classify the severity of food insecurity within a country. Yemen is currently in ‘Phase 4’, which is an Humanitarian Emergency¹⁹. Large parts of Somalia are in ‘Phase 3’, with some areas being in ‘Phase 4’²⁰. In January 2018, South Sudan in large part, is facing phase 4²¹.

Phase		General Description
1A	Generally Food Secure	Usually adequate and stable food access with moderate to low risk of sliding into Phase 3, 4, or 5.
1B	Generally Food Secure	
2	Moderately / Borderline Food Insecure	Borderline adequate food access with recurrent high risk (due to probable hazard events and high vulnerability) of sliding into Phase 3, 4, or 5.
3	Acute Food and Livelihood Crisis	Highly stressed and critical lack of food access with high and above usual malnutrition and accelerated depletion of livelihood assets that, if continued, will slide the population into Phase 4 or 5 and / or likely result in chronic poverty.
4	Humanitarian Emergency	Severe lack of food access with excess mortality, very high and increasing malnutrition, and irreversible livelihood asset stripping
5	Famine / Humanitarian Catastrophe	Extreme social upheaval with complete lack of food access and / or other basic needs where mass starvation, death, and displacement are evident

Figure 1: Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)²²

Today, famine is most widespread in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is due to the exhaustion of food resources, over-drafting of groundwater, wars, internal struggles, and economic failure. With that being said, however, famine continues to be a worldwide problem and it is not just localised to the African continent.

Cause of Man-made Famines

¹⁸ *Famine In Africa: The Failure Of The World System*. 2018. Poverties.Org. <https://www.poverties.org/blog/famine-in-africa>.

¹⁹ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. *Yemen Humanitarian Update April 2018*. 2018. OCHA. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/201800425_Humanitarian_Update_Final.pdf.

²⁰ *IPC Map Of Somalia - February/June 2018, Most Likely Scenario: FAO In Emergencies*. 2018. Fao.Org. <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/maps/detail/en/c/1100681/>.

²¹ *South Sudan Key IPC Findings: January-July 2018*. 2018. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/south-sudan-key-ipc-findings-january-july-2018>.

²² *Global Report on Food Crises 2018*. 2018. World Food Programme. http://vam.wfp.org/sites/data/GRFC_2018_Full_Report_EN.pdf

One of the main causes of the problem is a protracted civil or domestic conflict. However, other important causes include social and governmental aspects. These various factors helped contribute to the creation of a man-made famine²³. The first factor is the lack of education. A lack of information leads to a poorer decision regarding the crisis. The National Bureau of South Sudan had reported before the conflict began in 2013, 73% of men and 84% of women above 15 years of age were illiterate and three out of five school-age children were not enrolled in primary school.²⁴ Thus, with this fact in mind, nearly 48% of the population continues to experience interruption in learning short and long term consequences. Consequentially, this could lead to the instability of the nation itself. The current conditions are also supported by the report from the Annual Education Census (AEC) 2016 data revealed that 36% of primary school students had no access to latrines and 85% had no school fencing. From 2013 to 2016, the primary school student net enrolment ratio (NER) decreased by 10 per cent.²⁵ Children often lack structured opportunities for healthy cognitive, physical, linguistic, social and emotional development during their critical phase of growth. An additional problem to the issue is the number of child soldiers recruited in the area.²⁶ Similar cases are also shown in Yemen, with more than 2,500 schools out of use, two thirds damaged by attacks, 27% closed and 7% used for military purposes or as shelters for displaced people.²⁷

As one of the urgent agendas in the IMF 2017 Spring Meetings²⁸, the lack of information distribution and the development of infrastructure in famine areas is a seriously neglected issue. Most of the causes of a famine can be directly attributed to the lack of infrastructure. There is a chronic underinvestment in the region's resources. Kenya's Northern regions contain nearly 75% of the country's livestock, however, the country's arid regions employ less than 10 percent

²³UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "South Sudan 2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview". 2018. Reliefweb.Int.

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/South_Sudan_2018_Humanitarian_Needs_Overview.pdf

²⁴ National Bureau of Statistics' 2011 Statistical Yearbook and Ministry of Education's 2013 Education and Management Information System (EMIS).

²⁵"UNICEF South Sudan - Education - The Challenge". 2018. Unicef.Org.

<https://www.unicef.org/southsudan/education.html>.

²⁶ Multi Agency MRM Database

²⁷"Children's Education Latest Victim Of Yemen Conflict – UNICEF". 2018. UN News.

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/03/1006051>.

²⁸ "Famine, Fragility and Infrastructure Development On The Agenda At World Bank-IMF Spring Meetings". 2018. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/famine-fragility-and-infrastructure-development-agenda-world-bank-imf-spring-meetings>.

of the industry's workers. The government allocates 1% of its budget to the industry annually.²⁹ The situation in Kenya was proven to be dangerous, on 10 February 2018, when it was national drought emergency was declared. During this period, the number of food insecure people more than doubled – from 1.3 million to 2.7 million. Some 357,285 children and pregnant and lactating mothers became acutely malnourished.³⁰ Due to the lack of infrastructure in the region, the crisis caused by the drought was exacerbated. When there is little investment in the region, this caused inflexibility in actions.

The lack of infrastructure is, as mentioned, due to the lack of the education and information. In regards on the lack of distribution of information, this happens because of the political turmoil in the area, affecting the distribution both of information and food which aggravate the situation of famine in the area. The information mentioned can be understood as the information regarding food distribution and humanitarian aid. Humanitarian aid workers are exposed to countless security threats while working in some of the world's most dangerous and unstable areas. The Aid Worker Security Database (AWSDB) identified in a 2016 report that kidnapping, fatalities and wounded casualties are the main threats targeting overseas aid workers. The very nature of providing humanitarian aid work involves placing oneself in areas of political instability, armed conflict zones or disaster relief areas. Many may assume working conditions for aid workers to be safe, confined, isolated, bordered and protected within armed security, but often times this is not the case. Instead of avoiding what can be described as danger zones, aid workers and convoys seek them out and are often stationed extremely close to affected areas. Simply traveling to an affected area presents significant safety concerns as many attacks on aid workers occur while travelling to affected areas.³¹

In light of these prevailing causes, there is a need for protection, especially in the more vulnerable regions. The protection of these vulnerable regions is a crucial factor regarding the causes and effects of famine-stricken regions. The lack of protection in the region, affected by the presence of violent conflict and influx of refugees is causing high death tolls. Moreover, the abovementioned political instability is a key factor. With the instability of the governments

²⁹Onyiego, Michael. 2018. "Humanitarian Groups Call For Investment, Infrastructure To Prevent Famine In Kenya". VOA. <https://www.voanews.com/a/humanitarian-groups-call-for-investment-infrastructure-to-prevent-famine-in-kenya-116312829/135140.html>.

³⁰ "Kenya: Drought - 2014-2018". 2018. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/dr-2014-000131-ken>.

³¹ <http://natoassociation.ca/sending-humanitarian-aid-into-conflict-zones/>

in the region, other national institutions such as law enforcement, policy creation and national bodies for public services would not function properly.

Another important factor which can be attributed to the creation of a man-made famine is the prevailing problems of poverty. The overall policy findings by David developed and developing countries shows that: (i) Countries which have experienced sustained growth have had most success with poverty alleviation. These countries have successfully pursued an industrialisation policy based on outward orientation. Such an orientation is encouraged in adjustment programmes, (ii) In poorer countries, especially in rural areas, there is chronic poverty. To contain such poverty various types of safety-net programmes have been found useful; but economic growth is necessary to sustain them. (iii) Safety-nets need to be better targeted and better integrated with national development policies. (iv) Investment in education, health, and nutrition can make a significant contribution to poverty alleviation. However, investment itself, will not alleviate poverty in a sustainable manner. The holistic approach included in the World Development Report may be the best approach to tackling this issue.³² There is a need to address the topic of poverty. When food insecurity occurs in the region, the people living in poverty would be the first to feel the effect and they will also be hit the hardest. This also has the potential to have a domino effect with the problem growing faster in a country where they have a larger rate of poverty.

Effects of a man-made famine

The effects of man-made famine go beyond starvation. The effects of man-made famine are a slippery slope, what starts as food insecurity can lead to full blown famine. Six million people in South Sudan, over half of the population (56%)— were estimated to be severely food insecure in September 2017, out of which 40.000 are victims of a humanitarian catastrophe. The current harvest season, between October to December 2017 is expected to reduce the number of people suffering from food insecurity to 4.8 million.³³ The Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) also noted that the alarming level of food insecurity in South Sudan is directly linked to restrictions on people's freedom of movement, their access to humanitarian

³² Bramall, Chris, *The Benefits of Famine: A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in Southwestern Sudan, 1983-1989* by David Keen, *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 105, No. 431 (Jul., 1995), pp. 1027-1029

³³"With Threat of Famine Looming For 2018, WHO Helps Worst Cases Of Malnutrition In Children In South Sudan". 2017. WHO | Regional Office for Africa. <http://afro.who.int/news/threat-famine-looming-2018-who-helps-worst-cases-malnutrition-children-south-sudan>.

assistance and their ability to plant or harvest.³⁴ It is estimated that by the end of 2018, 1.1 million children under five years of age will be at serious risk of malnourishment.³⁵ The same is the case in Yemen and Somalia. In Yemen, almost 14.5 million people, including two million internally displaced, lack access to clean water, sanitary ablutions, or hygiene services, increasing the risk of infectious diseases such as acute watery diarrhoea, malaria, and scabies.³⁶ Food security can be measured by a variety of different factors. On the international level, organizations use the 'Integrated Food Security Phase Classification' (IPS) to describe the level of food insecurity in a specific region. The IPS system aggregates food prices, harvest yields, average income changes and household food neediness in determining which phase the region falls under.³⁷ The political turmoil in South Sudan, Yemen, and Somalia are a major factor to the problem, due to the fact that these areas are identified at the level of civil war, in which is a huge obstacles to the growth of economy and food distribution in the country.

The lack of food and increasing food insecurity has negatively affected the health of the people in the affected countries. In the short term, effects include *inter alia*; severe malnutrition, which is most lethal during a child's critical 'first 1000 days' (i.e. from birth to the age of two years), and mortality rates during famines are highest for infants and young children.³⁸ These effects are also prevalent for women in the area. A woman who suffers severe food shortages before or during pregnancy, and so is undernourished, has an increased risk of experiencing miscarriage and stillbirth. Her babies are also at risk of being born with a low birthweight (LBW) (<2500g) due to poor foetal growth or premature birth. LBW babies have low stores of some nutrients (e.g. fat, vitamin A and iron) and are at risk of infection, feeding difficulties, hypothermia, and increased mortality rates. In addition, an undernourished pregnant woman is herself at increased risk of death, and, during delivery, of blood loss leading to anaemia. A severely undernourished mother may not produce enough breast milk and her milk may be low

³⁴"South Sudan: "Massive and Debilitating Needs Do Not Stop With Hunger" – UN Humanitarian Chief | OCHA". 2017. Unocha.Org. [Http://www.unocha.org/story/south-sudan-%E2%80%9Cmassive-and-debilitating-needs-do-not-stop-hunger%E2%80%9D-%E2%80%93-un-humanitarian-chief](http://www.unocha.org/story/south-sudan-%E2%80%9Cmassive-and-debilitating-needs-do-not-stop-hunger%E2%80%9D-%E2%80%93-un-humanitarian-chief)

³⁵ Ibid, no.14

³⁶ "WHO Yemen Conflict Donor Update April 2017". 2017. Who.Int. <http://www.who.int/hac/crises/yem/appeals/who-donorupdate-april2017.pdf?ua=1>.

³⁷ Curtis, Kimberly. 2017. "The "Four Famines," Explained | UN Dispatch". UN Dispatch. <https://www.undispatch.com/four-famines-explained/>.

³⁸ Kidane A. Mortality estimates of the 1984-85. Ethiopian famine. *Scand J Soc Med*. December 1990;18(4):281-6.

in fat, and micronutrients such as iodine or vitamin A.³⁹ Adolescents and the elderly are also at risk of malnutrition.⁴⁰

Another effect of a famine are the lack of water, sanitation, and hygiene. The importance of these natural resources makes it one of the most significant aspects of famine. The water scarcity has a significant impact on sanitation and hygiene. Water scarcity can occur for two reasons; 1) lack of access to water and 2) environments that do not support the availability of clean water. Due to the ongoing violence in some of the countries, water shortages have occurred because of strategic blockage. In Yemen, for example, eight million people lack running water as fuel runs out due to the Saudi-led coalition blockade of the country's northern ports. In total, almost 16 million people in Yemen do not have access to clean water due to the conflict and the blockade⁴¹. Moreover, civilians living in rural areas can only access clean water in areas close to the capital of Sana'a. If the humanitarian assistance isn't able to reach rural areas, the dire circumstances will only get worse. Additionally, the environment often does not support the availability of clean water, as famine areas often experience drought. For example, Eastern Mali and Northern Cameroon have been badly affected by failed rains, according to the UN World Food Programme, which describes the situation as 'critical'⁴². Drought is not new to Africa. Contemporary responses are reminiscent of past emergency aid operations that provided short-term relief but halted before effectively addressing systemic change.

Case Study

1. Yemen

Yemen is the single largest food insecurity emergency in the world. Almost 19 million people are in need of immediate humanitarian assistance. As a result of conflict, food imports, food production, and functioning markets have been seriously affected, resulting in reduced food availability and increased prices. A recent cholera outbreak and the

³⁹ Savage King F, Burgess A, Quinn VJ, Osei AK. Nutrition for developing countries. 3rd ed. 2015. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

⁴⁰ HelpAge International. Rapid assessment of the nutrition needs of older people in UN House POC camps in Juba in April 2015, South Sudan <http://nutritioncluster.net/rapid-assessment-nutrition-needs-older-people-un-house-poc-camps-juba-april-2015-south-sudan/>

⁴¹ "Millions Of Yemenis Days Away From Losing Clean Running Water". 2018. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/millions-yemenis-days-away-losing-clean-running-water>.

⁴²Rice, Xan. 2017. "Severe Drought Causes Hunger For 10 Million In West Africa". The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/jun/03/drought-hunger-west-africa>.

intensification of fighting are further compounding an already fragile situation.⁴³ The conflict in the country has led to the internal displacement of more than 2 million people, and has undermined access to ports and airports, obstructing essential humanitarian and commercial deliveries. Sixteen million people lack access to safe water; more than 1.8 million children and 1 million pregnant and lactating women suffer from acute malnutrition, and an estimated 385,000 children with severe malnutrition⁴⁴. The country is on the verge of famine, and almost the entire population requiring humanitarian assistance. The lack of livelihood opportunities have led to desperate coping mechanisms, including increased household borrowing and rising rates of child marriage and recruitment of children into armed groups and forces⁴⁵.

2. South Sudan

As the youngest and one of the least developed countries in the world, South Sudan has suffered from decades of conflict and neglect, corruption and mismanagement. South Sudan is by very definition a "man-made crisis": three years of conflict have led to catastrophic consequences for the population of a country where humanitarian access remains challenging. The UN declared a localized famine (a particular area where famine occurred) in February 2017, which is now being contained. Overall, 6 million people (about 50% of the entire population) are in food crisis with just over a 45 000 people facing famine.⁴⁶ Although the famine that was declared in early 2017 had officially subsided by mid-year, hunger and malnutrition continued at historic levels, with 4.8 million people in IPC Phase 4, Emergency, in December 2017⁴⁷. The children are especially affected, there is an estimated 1.1 million children under five that were estimated to be acutely malnourished by the end of the year.

⁴³"Famine Prevention - European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations - European Commission". 2018. European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what-we-do/humanitarian-aid/famine-prevention_en.

⁴⁴"UNICEF Yemen Humanitarian Situation Report December 2017". 2017. UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Yemen_Humanitarian_Situation_Report_Year_End_2017.pdf.

⁴⁵"Famine Prevention - European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations - European Commission". 2018. European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what-we-do/humanitarian-aid/famine-prevention_en.

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷"Global Report On Food Crises 2017 : FAO In Emergencies". 2017. Fao.Org. <http://www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/documents/resources-detail/en/c/876564/>.

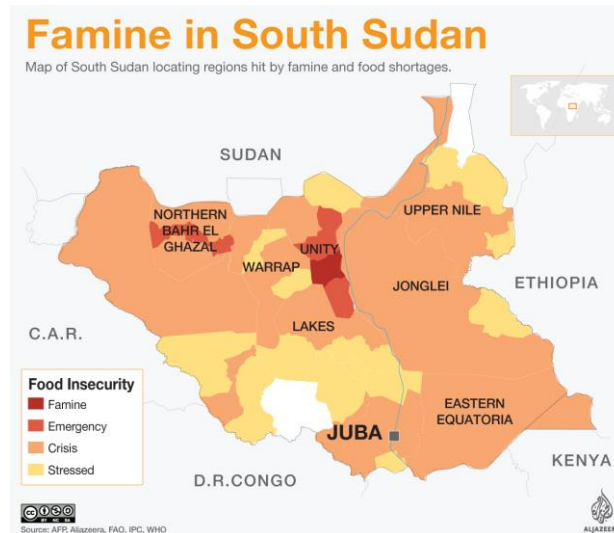


Figure: The famine map of South Sudan 2017⁴⁸

3. Somalia

Changing climatic conditions and successive failed rains during the past three years are triggering a humanitarian crisis of huge proportions in the Horn of Africa. The negative effects of the droughts have further intensified in 2017. The situation is particularly desperate in Somalia, where food security needs remain at emergency levels with 3.2 million people facing food shortages.⁴⁹ Due to the ongoing impacts of drought and conflict, despite the provision of large-scale assistance in 2017, the risk of famine persists. The number of people in IPC phase 4, Emergency, have increased tenfold from 83,000 in January to 866,000 people in November 2017⁵⁰. An estimated 1.2 million children are or will be acutely malnourished over the course of 2018, including more than 232,000 children who are at risk of life-threatening severe acute malnutrition⁵¹. Over 5.7 million people require basic health services, including critical needs in maternal and child health, as one in seven Somali children die before the age of five⁵².

⁴⁸ "South Sudan Areas Affected By Famine". 2017. Aljazeera.Com. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2017/02/south-sudan-areas-affected-famine-170221132716119.html>.

⁴⁹ "Famine Prevention - European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations - European Commission". 2018. European Civil Protection And Humanitarian Aid Operations. https://ec.europa.eu/echo/what-we-do/humanitarian-aid/famine-prevention_en.

⁵⁰ "Humanitarian Bulletin Somalia, December 2017". 2017. Reliefweb. <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/humanitarian-bulletin-somalia-december-2017>.

⁵¹ "UNICEF Somalia Humanitarian Situation Report 2017". 2017. UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Somalia_Humanitarian_Situation_Report_31_Dec_2017.pdf.

⁵² *ibid*

Past and current international efforts

Millions of people in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen are faced with the threat of starvation. The international community has responded by mobilizing more than 2 billion USD for the four countries on the brink, containing famine in South Sudan and averting a famine declaration in the other three⁵³. The main UN organizations that are responsible for tackling the problem of famine and food insecurity are the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), and the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF). WFP has implemented emergency response mechanisms that include food airdrops in remote areas in South Sudan and trucking in supplies to areas where people have fled from Boko Haram in Nigeria⁵⁴. In June, the agency assisted 11.8 million people in the four famine-facing countries, underscoring that “almost half of them are in Yemen, where lack of funding has meant that WFP has been forced to make the difficult decision to reduce the amount of food each person in order to stretch resources further.” WFP is funded entirely by voluntary contributions, and with this campaign, it urges “the private sector and individuals to take action to help prevent a looming humanitarian disaster⁵⁵.” The WFP depends heavily on funding from donor governments, supporters and partners to quickly deliver food to affected people in these four countries, it urgently needs \$900 million to meet immediate needs and avoid the spread of famine for the period of August 2017 to January 2018⁵⁶.

Investing in food production as soon as a crisis hits provides people with the means to feed their families, earn an income and return to a sense of normalcy. The FAO have at times invested into the agriculture and food production of a country in need. Investing in food production would be a long term solution, this is coupled with the need for short term funding as well. Humanitarian funding needs in the four previously mentioned countries have more than doubled, from US\$2.9 billion in 2013 to more than US\$6.5 billion in 2017. Humanitarian operations have increased substantially in 2017, when the international community provided US\$1.7 billion to support humanitarian aid in Yemen, US\$1.2 billion in South Sudan, US\$1 billion in Somalia and more than US\$0.7 billion in Nigeria covering 66 to 74 percent of their

⁵³ “Global Report on Food Crises 2018”. 2018. World Food Programme.
http://vam.wfp.org/sites/data/GRFC_2018_Full_Report_EN.pdf

⁵⁴ "Fighting Famine: 'Unprecedented Crisis' Putting 20 Million People At Risk, Warns UN Agency". 2017. UN News. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/08/563262-fighting-famine-unprecedented-crisis-putting-20-million-people-risk-warns-un>.

⁵⁵ “Global Report on Food Crises 2018”. 2018. World Food Programme.
http://vam.wfp.org/sites/data/GRFC_2018_Full_Report_EN.pdf

⁵⁶ Ibid

humanitarian assistance needs⁵⁷. However, 29 percent of humanitarian requirements remained unmet and long-term investments were well below the projected need⁵⁸.

UNICEF has also been an active international organization in handling the famine crisis. In South Sudan, where the food crisis was at its worst, UNICEF admitted 206,993 children into various outpatient therapeutic programmes and stabilization services for treating severe malnutrition across the country in 2017⁵⁹. However, there is an estimated 1.1 million children under five in South Sudan were estimated to be acutely malnourished by the end 2017. The highest admissions of malnourished children were recorded in the area of Northern Bahr El Ghazal. In Yemen, the situation is more complicated. Throughout 2017, ongoing challenges in Yemen included navigating political divisions and the existence of two authorities. The de facto government in Sana'a and the internationally recognized government in Aden. Organisations such as UNICEF lack access to some areas in need, resulting in interventions such as community-led total sanitation being suspended. In terms of covering nutritional needs, UNICEF took the lead on the case that includes tackling severe acute malnutrition, whilst WFP took the lead on moderate acute malnutrition case in the country⁶⁰. Through the cluster response, UNICEF aimed to scale up training of community health workers through the joint WHO-WFP-UNICEF Community Management of Acute Malnutrition⁶¹.

The United Nations Security Council have also passed a resolution to tackle the problem of the famine. With the adoption of Resolution 2346, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) until 16 June 2017. Although the mandate is finished, The Famine Prevention Operational Plan that was established in the resolution sought \$825 million to reach 5.5 million people by June⁶².

There is still a need for more funding toward these organisations and similar NGO's. The funding of the operation to eradicate famine is one of the essential steps in a humanitarian intervention. One of the General Assembly's tasks is managing the budget of the United

⁵⁷ "Global Report on Food Crises 2018". 2018. World Food Programme.
http://vam.wfp.org/sites/data/GRFC_2018_Full_Report_EN.pdf

⁵⁸ *ibid*

⁵⁹ "UNICEF South Sudan Humanitarian Situation Report December 2017". 2017. UNICEF.
https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_South_Sudan_Humanitarian_Situation_Report_31_Dec_2017.pdf

⁶⁰ "UNICEF Yemen Humanitarian Situation Report December 2017". 2017. UNICEF.
https://www.unicef.org/appeals/files/UNICEF_Yemen_Humanitarian_Situation_Report_Year_End_2017.pdf

⁶¹ *ibid*

⁶² "Security Council Adopts Resolution 2346 (2017), Authorizing Mandate Extension For United Nations Assistance Mission In Somalia". 2017. Un.Org. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sc12760.doc.htm>.

Nations. It is imperative that member states contribute more toward collective humanitarian actions of the United Nations and beyond.

Conclusion

As we have seen, there is still more that needs to be done in terms of preventing man-made famine around the world. One particularly important aspect is the funding of the appropriate organisations. The four currently most affected countries, Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan and Nigeria, are the most at-risk areas facing a potential famine. Famine, as we have seen, can be attributed to natural and man-made causes. The four countries' food insecurity is a result of war, political instability and the changing climate. These resulted in a large-scale humanitarian crisis that continues to affect millions of lives. We have also highlighted the important factors involved in the prevention of man-made famine such as the need for education, access to clean water and better existing infrastructure to handle food crises. In order to prevent a famine from happening, all of these issues need to be fully addressed.

The council debate should be focused primarily on raising awareness towards man-made food insecurity and the possible famine. There is also a need to address the long term effects of food insecurity, such as the outbreak of disease and the possible collapse of the agriculture sector in certain countries. The council should not only focus on short term solutions but also how to get the country to produce sufficient level of food and nutrition for its people again.

In conclusion, even with all the current international efforts to eradicate food insecurity and famine, there is still more work that needs to be done. The man-made aspect of this crisis if not handled properly will have dire consequences for millions of people around the world.

Questions A Resolution Must Answer (QARMAs)

1. In what way can the UN further tackle the current, and possible future, food insecurity problems, particularly in Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan and Nigeria?
2. How can the UN discourage parties from direct/indirect creation of Man-made famine?
3. What can the UN do in order to secure effective and sustainable protection mechanisms for the food redistribution and revival of food production, especially in areas with ongoing conflicts?
4. What should the UN do to further support existing international organisations, especially regarding the fair and sustainable funding of these organisations?

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