

Cerritos Novice Conference 2020

# The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

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**Topic: Child Malnutrition**

**Director: Teia Poblete**

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October 10th, 2020

To Delegates of CHSMUN Novice 2020

Dear Delegates,  
Welcome to CHSMUN Novice 2020!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our 2020 online novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host our very first virtual novice conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of the committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Although this wasn't what we expected, our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the online conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2020, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. CHSMUN Novice 2020 will provide a quality experience for beginner delegates to develop their speaking and delegating skills.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2020!

Sincerely,

Anjali Mani and Karishma Patel

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Secretary-Generals

## **A Note From The Director**

Delegates,

My name is Teia Malia Poblete and I am beyond excited to your head chair for UNICEF this year. I am currently a senior at Cerritos High School and this is my fourth year in MUN. Being in MUN has definitely been one of the major highlights throughout my high school years. The experience is eye-opening and allows our generation to be aware and involved in our international current events. I am confident that it allowed me to develop crucial traits within my character, which is why I am so excited to see all of you within our committee! Within my school, I do long jump for track and field, as well as am a part of our school's musical plays/productions. Additionally, I am President of American Red Cross, involved in You&Me, as well as, American Cancer Society. Besides school, I have gained passions in both painting and writing. I often write a lot about self-reflection or my opinion on political events. As for painting, although my paintings may often look like an elementary schooler did it, it's definitely been such an amazing creative outlet for me. In my free time, I love blasting Jhene Aiko, hanging out with my friends, and reading up on things such as current events, unsolved cases, etc. I am thrilled to see you all in the committee and am anticipating some amazing solutions/ideas!

Sincerely,

Teia Poblete

Director, UNICEF

## **Committee Introduction**

UNICEF, otherwise known as the United Nations Children's Fund, was created on December 11, 1946, to improve children's health after WWII. The main reason why the General Assembly mandated the United Nations was to ensure the advocate for the protection of children's rights, as well as to meet their basic needs. UNICEF prioritizes that the security, survival, and development of children are universal development imperatives that are crucial towards human progress. Throughout the various issues that affect children, such as those who are victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, and the wide variety of forms of violence, the committee uses their actions to ensure their protection. Additionally, UNICEF has actively promoted equal rights of women and girls to be in support of their equal representation in government as well as their full participation in political, economic, and social issues. In order to achieve these goals, Additionally, UNICEF has their Annual Report, which highlights their main goals and the results of their solutions for helping children with education, basic human necessities, and their livelihood as a whole. Another essential role UNICEF has is its worldwide strategies, which are created to identify the specific problems and potential solutions for children throughout developing countries.

# Topic A: Child Malnutrition

## Background:

Within a definition put out by WHO or the World Health Organization, a malnourished person is defined as someone who is lacking, have excessive, or imbalanced nutrients needed to keep their body alive. Malnutrition is primarily caused by the lack of proper nutrients within your organization, rather than the amount of food intake. Undernutrition, micro-nutrient related malnutrition, overweight or obesity, and diet-related non-communicable diseases are the four types of hunger someone can experience. Within undernutrition, there are sub-categories, with wasting and stunting being examples, that make the body all more vulnerable to such diseases as cancer and diabetes. Currently, more than 155 million children, only under the age of 5, are struggling with malnutrition worldwide. At a young age, children are needed to have extra care due to their developing, growing bodies in which they are more susceptible to undernutrition. With the leading causes of malnutrition stemming from poverty, food insecurity, and illiteracy, children struggle with this issue and experience the prevailing situation of not having any control of overcoming it. Lack of water, inadequate drinking water, and inefficient child care can result in a malnourished child that can result in infectious diseases. Improper hydration and sanitation can result in diarrhea, dysentery, and hepatitis A as well. Along with children, mothers are also more likely to gain undernutrition due to their duty of breastfeeding. Breastfeeding requires accumulating extra vitamins and nutrients to help support your child, and if malnourished, the baby will obtain these conditions too. Mental underdevelopment can be a result of undernutrition in which they will furthermore struggle in the future regarding schooling, jobs, and, ultimately, poverty. When a child struggles with malnutrition, they are more likely to struggle with schooling, economic stance, and survival. This issue allows for children to grow up being weaker, thinner, and smaller than their full potential. Not only does this affect them physically, but it also creates a slower maturity mentally with stunting in brain activity. Undernutrition is the most common type of malnutrition in which they are more susceptible to disease, blindness, and stunted growth. This is detrimental to the economy and workforce as well, especially with the high costs of resources for the incapable citizens, costing 3.5 trillion dollars per year. War and conflict zones heavily impact those within underdeveloped regions because it ultimately results in bankruptcy, displaced peoples, and food crises. This creates a huge dent within a country's economy and allows for thousands of deaths to occur due to starvation.  $\frac{2}{3}$  of those malnourished within rural countries originate from conflict zones, with a total of 112 million children. No access to such resources during a time of crisis can result in the dependency of humanitarian aid, which can also be unattainable as well. With a conflict between countries, many regions refuse or are denied the opportunity to supply food to help those within the region to survive. Along with war zones, natural occurrences of climate change can cause child malnutrition. Directly and indirectly, the climate can harm resources, jobs, and the economy. A drought can slow or even kill crop growth within farms, creating a lack of resource supply for those they support and depend on. Storms and tsunamis are also natural disasters that not only destroy homes, farms, and businesses but the economy by displacing large amounts of people at

a time in which unemployment increases. As food insecurity and shortage increase, so does child malnutrition.

## United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations has fully recognized that there are over 200 million children under the age of 5, which are either undernourished or overweight. Additionally, they have called for addressing the underlying factors such as weak learning, low immunity, premature death, and poor brain development. However, the UN has also acknowledged a key goal, which was to get children the right food to eat instead of prioritizing, giving them enough food to eat. In order to keep track of the regions that have higher numbers of malnourished youth, the UN has created the Joint child malnutrition estimates. This is used to allow for the regular updates for the joint global and region estimates of child malnutrition. This is able to create statistics with over 95% confidence and compared differences throughout regions and countries. With this, the data can introduce and allow for countries to discuss possible solutions towards fixing or improving upon the diet of their people, specifically children. This data has shown to create interactive graphs, which monitor the percent of children stunted, the current wasting prevalence, and different trends. With this, countries can get a global overview and see how the chart moves overtime—for instance, comparing from year to year to determine vulnerable regions and specific solutions. Throughout the years, the United Nations has heavily contributed their efforts in order to decrease the number of children malnourished internationally. The UN General Assembly created the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative in 2006 with the goal of creating strategic actions to help alleviate this issue. Furthermore, regarding breastfeeding, UNICEF established a framework known as Childhood Malnutrition Prevention that helps support women within the first 1,000 days of pregnancy to help ensure full nutrition for their child. Focused primarily on rural areas, they fund 80% of the world's supply of "Ready-to-Use therapeutic miracle treatment" formulated with the proper vitamins needed to cure a child's malnutrition, with already helping 100 million children so far. Regarding action frameworks, WHO has also collaborated with the General Assembly to create the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition in 2016. This 10-year project focuses on set, determined goals that work with FAO, the World Food Programme, along with other organizations, in order to eliminate malnutrition effectively. This framework hopes to achieve its goal through summits, sustainable food systems, and strengthened governmental support. Already working in Italy, US, and Norway, they are making major strides through international efforts to accomplish this.

## Bloc Positions:

**Western:** In the U.S., about 1% of children struggle with malnutrition, which comes to be about 12 million children within the nation. With more than 38 million people in poverty, the U.S. is implementing Federal Food Programs in hopes of closing that gap. No Kid Hungry, SNAP, and

WIC are all programs that help families and children in need. In Europe, 33 million children struggle with malnutrition and working with the UN by contributing more than 5 million dollars to accomplish SDG 2 by 2030. Through collaborating with UN agencies, they aim to promote quality food production, better maternal practices, and reinforce production capacities. The 11th European development Fund was created to invest more than 156 million dollar into improving the efforts of malnutrition.

**Latin America and Caribbean:** Within the region, there are more than 4.8 million children under five currently stunted, with Guatemala struggling the worst out of the 18 countries within the region. They are currently addressing all forms of malnutrition through legislative policies guidelines by WHO's Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition (CIP). This framework is addressed in all 18 LAC countries' Constitutions but Chile's, yet they all support and have adopted ICESCR by the UN's General Assembly. LAC has instituted breast-feeding and micronutrient councils, along with implementing economic incentives for health foods in Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. Conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs have also been installed in order to reduce the prevalent booming of poverty within the area, social protection system surveillance, and nutrient-sensitive interventions within the region. *PROGRESA* in Mexico, *Bolsa Familia* in Brazil, and *Familias en Accion* in Colombia were successfully implemented with high national coverage for 2.6 million families.

**African:** Africa is currently the highest region struggling with malnutrition, being the number one cause of death, with more than 6 million children struggling today. West and Central Africa face issues due to land and crop degradation, periodic droughts, poverty, and rapid population growth, resulting in emergent levels of malnutrition. Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali, and Niger have collaborated with the UN to launch UNITLIFE, an innovative technology that allows industries to help supply resources for those struggling with malnutrition. Extraction of natural resources like oil and gas are helping contribute to the fund of improving nutrition within Africa. Although stunting affects 1 in every three children in Africa, they are heading closer to eliminating the issue with their financial fund supported by the UN.

**Asian-Pacific:** Currently, the Asian-Pacific region owns more than half a billion of the world's undernourished people. 77.2 million children under five are already experiencing stunting and are being burdened with diseases such as diabetes. The UN's FAO, WFP, UNICEF, and WHO are all putting in efforts with the Asian-Pacific region in order to combat malnutrition with legislative frameworks like the Regional Strategic Approach to Nutrition Programming. The UN states that in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030, more than 3 million people need to be lifted out of hunger every single month. Many strides have been made to eliminate this issue, yet Lao, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste still have stunting rates higher than 40% within the region. With more than 6million cases of severe wasting per year, East Asia and the Pacific are striving towards helping these children in work with the UN.

## Basic Solutions:

Crucial area delegates need to focus on is allowing for developing nations to have greater access to high nutrients food. This can be done in several ways, with the most important being research and utilization of innovative food resources. A key example would be RUTFs or Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods. These have been developed and implemented throughout developing countries due to their high amount of availability as well as a cost-efficient way of making them in bulk. RUTFs are able to avoid most problems when it comes to transporting and distributing foods to these communities, such as broader access to treatment and reduction in social costs. RUTF's are additionally able to reach three common goals, which include community outreach, outpatient care, and inpatient care. Delegates should research case studies involving innovative foods, which are able to have a greater amount of impact on decreasing the number of malnourished children. An additional issue that delegates should take into consideration is the issue of stunting on children. Stunting has shown to be a key issue that is apparent when it comes to child malnutrition. Globally, 1 in 4 children under the age of 5 years old is stunted, with 80% of this population coming from just 14 countries. Approaches that delegates should utilize is looking into interventions. These interventions should be focused on improving women's nutrition for both before and after pregnancy. This allows for appropriate micronutrient interventions and has been greatly shown to improve the rate of mortality of children. Additionally, it's important that when looking into nutrition programs, it should be able to benefit the community a whole. These programs should ensure that there is political commitment and that there are national programs that back

## Questions to Consider:

1. What has been your country's past efforts regarding eliminating child malnutrition?
2. Is your country receiving any support from other nations to combat this issue?
3. Has your country been heavily active and involved regarding the UN's actions and resolutions?
4. Is your country undergoing any occurrences or events that put them in danger or higher risk of child malnutrition?
5. Is your nation strictly following the SDGs?

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