

World Food Programme

Topic 2: Utilizing Technology and Innovation to Combat Hunger

We live in a world that revolves around technology. It is strapped around our wrists, constantly in our pockets, in our ears, and always on our desks. Technology has eradicated notebooks, boarding passes, wallets, and so many more countless daily life items. If that is the case, why has it not yet eradicated hunger?

Satellites, radar, geomatics, geospatial data, drones, specialized irrigation systems, and many other technologies around the world are not widely used to combat hunger. However, many of such items *can* be used to help. A good way for technology to help combat hunger is through the modernization of farming. Many farmers around the world are stuck using technology for farming that is hundreds of years old. Nowadays, we should be able to implement strategies in starving countries facilitating the growth of food. This can range from reducing the amount of water used to grow certain crops, all the way to speeding up the shipment of said crops to the areas where they are needed. Like they say, give a man a fish, he eats for a day; teach a man how to fish, he eats his whole life. Right now, it is our job to teach all of the starving countries around the world to fish.

In addition to modernizing farming, there are many other ways to fight hunger through technology. These other ways even have the potential to prove more effective than modernizing farming. For example, “ShareTheMeal” is an app that enables users to donate to the WFP and track the progress of the initiative they donated to. It has been highly successful, with over eight hundred and fifty thousand downloads. On a different note, the Algerian desert is not the most attractive place for crop growing. Despite that, WFP Algeria is using low-tech hydroponic containers to grow barley and some other crops among the sand dunes and dry climates. However, it is important to remember the downsides of technology. These include but are not limited to cost issues, as well as a contradiction to cultural traditions traditions of basic farming.¹

When writing your position paper, it is important that you remember your role, as a delegate, is to represent the position of your country and work towards resolutions that your country would realistically agree with, not your personal opinion or the opinion that you think will be most favored by the committee. Please remember to keep your position papers to one double-spaced page. I recommend you take a look at innovation.wfp.org, where all of the WFP’s technology based projects are highlighted.

Some questions to consider:

- Why has the WFP not yet started using technology to combat hunger?
- Will any countries be against using technology to combat hunger?
- How can technology be used to make farming simpler, cheaper, faster, and easier?
- Once farms are modernized, how can they be used to feed the hungry?
- What other initiatives can be taken to combat hunger through the use of technology?
- How can already made initiatives be improved or revolutionized to have an even greater impact than they already have?

I hope you enjoy researching this topic. As always, please reach out to me at iatri@mail.yu.edu with any questions.

Best,
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¹ <http://www1.wfp.org/>