

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LAW MANAGEMENT & HUMANITIES

[ISSN 2581-5369]

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Volume 7 | Issue 2

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2024

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# Food Sustainability and Human Rights in India: A Critical Study

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## ABSTRACT

*This abstract summarizes a critical investigation into the complex connections between human rights and food sustainability in India. In a nation with a growing population and complicated socio-economic dynamics, the pursuit of food security and sustainable agriculture methods is of the utmost importance India has a legal duty to see to it that its citizens' right to enough nourishment is safeguarded as a signatory to international human rights agreements. This study examines the degree to which India complies with its human rights obligations with regard to its food laws and practices, particularly in light of the country's growing environmental problems, shifting dietary habits, and widening economic inequities.*

*The study takes an interdisciplinary approach, incorporating ideas from sociology, economics, law, and agriculture. It evaluates how sustainable food production is. This study examines the accessibility, availability, and affordability of nutritious food for vulnerable populations, such as marginalized communities and rural farmers, and assesses the sustainability of food production and distribution systems, scrutinizing their impact on environmental resources, land use, and climate change.*

**Keywords:** *Human Rights, Food Security, Hunger, Poverty, Sustainable development, Basic amenities.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is extremely difficult to think that a living being could survive without food. Food is essential for living, even though every food plant receives a supplement from the ground. The amount that an organism consumes may vary. As a result, a chain is being weaved constantly. Before carnivores, there were individuals known as herbivores who offered themselves as a food source. A chain of herbivores, insectivores, and carnivores can be visualized as the world's food supply. Even though humans are omnivores, it can be difficult to keep them in such a state without sufficient food for herbivores and aquatic creatures. The definition of sustainable development is "development that satisfies the needs of the present generation without compromising the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own needs." With respect to

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this definition of development. This definition expands on the idea of development to include such things as environmental protection, equitable resource distribution, and economic progress, all with the intention of boosting everyone's standards of living. In the globalization era, which was characterized by intense market competition, it frequently seemed that unsustainable development techniques were being adopted all over the world. Our Common Future, a 1987 paper that elaborates on the idea, and outlines the criteria for "sustainable development." Some of the crucial criteria for "sustainable development" might be emphasized to help with understanding. In order to achieve sustainable development, everyone's basic needs must be met, and they must all have the chance to realize their aspirations for a better life. The promotion of values that support consumption standards that are within the confines of the ecologically.

## **II. FOOD SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIA**

The idea of food security has a long history as a foundational idea for policy in the 20th century. There are two main points of view on food security. One that prioritizes improving products as the primary solution to hunger and under consumption. The other is a new perspective on social and ecological issues that acknowledges the necessity of addressing a wide range of intricate issues in production. The former focuses mainly on agriculture, while the latter takes a food systems approach. Since the start of the post-World War II international reconstruction effort, the UN and governments have made hunger a major priority by implementing a variety of policy changes. In a short period of time, the production-oriented paradigm or approach was being called into question by the emerging paradigm with its more nuanced, multi-focused understanding of the problems that lay ahead. When agricultural and oil commodity prices during the 2007–2008 commodity price boom, a renewed emphasis on primary production and the needs of low-income nations side-lined the complex agenda. In opposition to this, the study examines the range of viewpoints regarding what constitutes food and concludes that the primary task of the twenty-first century is the development of a sustainable food system.<sup>2</sup> A more cohesive policy framework is needed for this than what is in place now, a goal impeded by competing solutions for policy attention and the policy's past inability to incorporate the diverse range of evidence from economic and environmental sources into an integrated political. The world food system is currently experiencing a severe crisis. Despite abundant harvests and skyrocketing profits for the transnational corporations that control the majority of the world's

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<sup>2</sup> LANG, T., & BARLING, D. (2012). Food security and food sustainability: reformulating the debate. *The Geographical Journal*, 178(4), 313–326. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23360870>

food supply, decades of misguided aid, trade, and production policies have resulted in record levels of world hunger. A catastrophic loss of plant genetic diversity has resulted from the industrial agriculture sector's explosive growth, leaving the world's food supply extremely susceptible to widespread crop failure similar to the Irish potato famine. Climate change also poses a threat to food production because it will increase the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, lower agricultural yields, lower the productivity of the world's fisheries, and put more strain on already limited water resources.

The article looks at the root causes of the world food crisis and offers concrete solutions to the three separate but connected issues of food insecurity, genetic resource depletion, and climate change. In Part I, the rarely discussed agro biodiversity crisis is introduced, along with the dangers genetic uniformity poses to global food supplies. In Part II, the causes of widespread food insecurity are examined, both historically and currently, and the connections between food insecurity and the decline of agro biodiversity are examined. The threat that climate change poses to the world's agricultural output is examined in Part III, along with the role that agriculture plays in both mitigating and adapting to climate change. Part IV makes the case that small-scale sustainable agriculture can help address the interconnected crises of food, agro biodiversity, and climate change, and it offers concrete solutions.<sup>3</sup>

Like food, a foodscape is not a place where one can just move or something that is eaten. Instead, foodscapes are the result of intricate relationships between culture, economics, and politics that influence how food, procedures, and locations are related to food distribution, production, and consumption, as well as consumers. It is necessary to consider one's orientation within the context of sustainable foodscapes when considering how to advance toward them. Foodscapes in ways that either permit or prohibit the emergence of new living and relating in the global community. I examine the pathways formed by popular conceptions of sustainability and sustainable foodscapes, paying special attention to Sara Ahmed's (2006) queer phenomenology to their ease of access. How much do these comprehensions of sustainability and environmentally friendly foodscapes continue to be vital and sensitive to those whose lives are judged unworthy of being lived or without a future in ways that support the development of a resilient imagination that makes it possible to exist and be not otherwise?

Climate change literature from environmentalists serves as a reminder that combating climate

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<sup>3</sup> Kloppenburg, J., Lekberg, S., De Master, K., Stevenson, G. W., & Hendrickson, J. (2000). Tasting Food, Tasting Sustainability: Defining the Attributes of an Alternative Food System with Competent, Ordinary People. *Human Organization*, 59(2), 177–186. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44126934>

change is more than just consulting specialists in science, technology, or economics.<sup>4</sup>

It can be challenging to define "sustainable" because its meaning varies depending on the context. Still, the idea is far more than a catchphrase of the moment. The Brundtland Commission on Sustainable Development of the United Nations proposed the most widely cited definition of sustainable development in 1987, stating that it "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

### III. ZERO HUNGER

Globally, the twenty-first century has been afflicted by several concerns including climate change, refugee rehabilitation, terrorism, WMDs, particularly nuclear ones, and the rising. Natural disasters do occur nevertheless, one matter that is impacted by all of the aforementioned ones but has not received the appropriate attention from food security is an issue for many countries worldwide. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization for Agriculture (FAO) during the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome, world Food Summit in 1996, stated that food security exists when "all people, at all times possess the means to affordably and physically obtain an adequate supply of wholesome food that satisfies their dietary requirements and tastes in order to lead an active and healthy life.

Thus, food security considers both the physical and financial accessibility to food as well as its availability. Food security is now more concerned with diet quality, particularly the food's nutritional value than it was previously with just the amount of food available.<sup>5</sup>

The United Nations declared 2013 to be the International Year of Quinoa (*Chenopodium quinoa*). Quinoa, which is high in protein, has contributed significantly to the Andean people's food and nutrition security. The 'Quinoa Year' has increased interest in underutilized crops and nutrition-related dying knowledge. Additionally, the Quinoa Year has sparked interest in using agriculture to treat nutritional diseases in various farming systems. The need to diversify dietary components has arisen due to reports indicating that crops such as wheat and rice may become less nutritious due to climate change, specifically with regard to iron and zinc.

Thankfully, the Indian Food Security Act allows for the Public Distribution System to expand the food basket. The Public Distribution System (PDS) food basket can be expanded by the Indian Food Security Act to include a greater variety of millets, such as ragi, in addition to

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<sup>4</sup> Hall, K. Q., & Alaimo, S. (2017). Crippling Sustainability, Realizing Food Justice. In S. J. Ray & J. Sibara (Eds.), *Disability Studies and the Environmental Humanities: Toward an Eco-Crip Theory* (pp. 422–446). University of Nebraska Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1p6jht5>.19

<sup>5</sup> HINDWAN, M. (2018). Food Security: A DRIVE TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY AND ZERO HUNGER. *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, 22(4), 122–135. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48520100>

maize, sorghum, pearl millet (bajra), and other staples. Agriculture can be the means to both food and nutrition security if such a provision is backed by a nutrition literacy program.

The International Year of Family Farming is taking place in 2014. We can contribute to increasing small farm productivity and profitability as well as nutrition-sensitive agriculture if the year is spent revitalizing family farming traditions, with a focus on the empowerment of women and young people.<sup>6</sup>

Family farming as a means of subsistence and a way of life livelihood, supports the preservation of biodiversity and job-led economic growth, safeguarding the financial and ecological underpinnings of sustainable agriculture. An estimated 500 million family farms are essential to the fight against hunger and the preservation of our agricultural legacy. Family farms, especially those run by women, have the ability to incorporate nutritional factors into their crop selection, which can help facilitate the transition from food to nutrition security. Conversely, corporate farming typically relies on monoculture.

SDG Goal 2 (zero hunger): Extreme poverty still occurs within the Orang Asal community even though the government has implemented many programmes to eradicate it. The main cause of extreme poverty is due to land grabs and the destruction of the forest and its resources. Extreme poverty has resulted in some communities experiencing hunger and malnutrition. Climate change also plays a role, resulting in poor or failed harvests due to drought or floods. Some Orang Asal communities have also had problems accessing food supplies during the lockdown and restrictions caused by COVID-19.

Achieving sustainability in agriculture necessitates industry stakeholders working toward interconnected economic, environmental, and social justice goals, much like in sustainable development more generally. The international community's responses to that set of issues are reflected in the SDGs and VSSs. By 2030, the United Nations (UN) member states aim to achieve global peace, prosperity, and sustainability through the implementation of the SDGs. This plan places a strong emphasis on the needs and objectives of the agriculture sector, particularly in SDGs 2: Zero Hunger, 12: Responsible Consumption and Production, and 15: Life on Land.

In agriculture, voluntary sustainability standards (VSSs) are private endeavors that support sustainability's social, environmental, and economic facets. Typically, they involve a certification procedure for large farms employing hired laborers by an organization or

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<sup>6</sup> Swaminathan, M. S. (2014). Role of International Years in meeting the Zero Hunger Challenge. *Current Science*, 107(1), 7–8. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24103388>

smallholder farmers. With labour hired from outside a party. The SDGs and VSSs have a lot in common, especially when it comes to the sustainability challenges that the agriculture industry faces.

Meanwhile, systematic gender disparities and women's disempowerment continue to plague agricultural production in the Global South. Women and girls have unequal access to available calories, and there are major concerns about food security for rural households. Due to discrimination in access to land and productive agricultural resources, women's agricultural work is still undervalued and under-resourced.

Fair access for women and girls to opportunities to increase their agricultural productivity is hampered by gender disparities in access to education beyond primary school. Women are limited by the burden of unpaid domestic labor restricts women's access to opportunities for empowerment outside of the home. Women's empowerment and participation in decision-making in worker and producer organizations are restricted by formal regulations and cultural gender norms. Lastly, women are an especially vulnerable labor force in the agriculture industry due to unstable and precarious working conditions demonstrates how these particular issues are heavily represented in both the SDGs and the VSSs for agriculture. It shows how VSSs can be used as a tool to advance the SDGs' focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in agriculture, and it offers development organizations advice on how to do so.<sup>7</sup>

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of achieving Zero Hunger is closely linked to the goal of food sustainability. It covers major issues and takes a comprehensive approach to food production, distribution, and consumption. In addition to increasing food availability, sustainable agriculture methods like crop diversification, organic farming, and effective resource management also highlight the nutritional value of food, promoting healthier diets and lowering malnutrition. Furthermore, through reducing the use of dangerous chemicals, protecting biodiversity, and lessening the effects of climate change on food systems, these practices prioritize environmental conservation. Food sustainability makes sure that more food reaches those in need by encouraging resilience to changing climatic conditions and minimizing food waste through improved transportation, storage, and consumption practices. Furthermore, local communities benefit from sustainable agriculture by creating jobs, aiding small-scale farmers, and promoting financial stability. This multifaceted strategy not only alleviates hunger

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<sup>7</sup> Sexsmith, K. (2019). Introduction. In *Leveraging Voluntary Sustainability Standards for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Agriculture: A guide for development organizations based on the Sustainable Development Goals* (pp. 1–3). International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). [Http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep22007.3](http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep22007.3)

in the short term but also lays the groundwork for long-term food security, creating a world where everyone has equitable and sustainable access to wholesome food.

#### **IV. HUNGER VERSUS FOOD SECURITY**

The issue of hunger is getting worse. Despite the fact that increasing economic prosperity is lessening poverty and making the issue of how much food the world's population needs more intense (FAO, 2009b,c, 2010), there is still a significant amount of hunger in the modern world. The issue that determines who receives what is structural. Simply put, financial gain. The distribution and availability of - as well as global food supply chains are influenced by smallholder farmers, despite the fact that corporations, whose main goal is to sell relatively expensive and relatively cheap, low-profit produce to poor food supply chains, markets, corporations, and governments subsidizing agriculture regimes and commodity speculators, not to mention technical capacity gaps (e.g., lack of institutional arrangements).

There are several issues with this. This definition is absolute, to start. When 'all people at all times' have access to enough food, FO is attained. This is undoubtedly the ultimate goal, but it is challenging to use this definition to offer a framework for assessing the state of affairs, evaluate plans of action, or gauge the effectiveness of initiatives, particularly those that aim to address the issue of hunger as a result of cooperative arrangements. Secondly, there are no actors and the framing is passive. There are no calls to action or actors who could be in charge of ensuring food security. No people who may be experiencing or at risk of experiencing hunger are the beneficiaries of food-security analysis, strategies, policies, or actions (apart from the illusive "all people").<sup>8</sup>

A more significant flaw in the definition is the way it presents the three main issues of food security as being supply (enough nutritious food), demand (enough food to meet population needs always), and making supply meet demand (through physical, social, and electronic access). It is predicated on food availability and primarily addresses the problem of allocating limited resources to the global populace. This tends to curtail approaches that are relevant to the discussion of food security, particularly those that challenge economic discourse. For instance, alternative models and protectionism in its various forms are mostly left out of protectionism and alternative models are largely excluded.

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<sup>8</sup> Shepherd, B. (2012). Thinking critically about food security. *Security Dialogue*, 43(3), 195–212. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26301936>



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## **V. INDIA PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

The Public Distribution System (PDS) in India is among the biggest food security initiatives globally, with the goal of supplying basic food grains to the nation's economically disadvantaged populations. The PDS was first created in the 1940s, but it has since undergone major changes, most notably in the form of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) of 2013, which altered its scope and organization. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food, and Public Distribution is in charge of this system. Through a network of Fair Price Shops (FPS), it primarily targets Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and the most impoverished households under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), ensuring they receive subsidized food grains, primarily wheat, rice, and coarse grains. NFSA requires a monthly allotment of five kilograms of food grains at heavily subsidized rates per person. The PDS faces difficulties that impair its efficacy, despite its extensive reach and goal of guaranteeing food security, including poor targeting, leaks, storage problems, and traffic jams. In response, efforts have been made to improve transparency and reduce leaks by tying beneficiary identification to biometric data (Aadhaar) and digitizing records. In addition, the PDS was essential in helping to distribute extra pulses and food grains during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to lessen the impact on vulnerable populations hit hard by the recession. To ensure that the system operates effectively, ongoing reform and improvement initiatives are necessary to support the system's outreach,

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<sup>9</sup> Elver, H. (2016). THE CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: REFLECTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD. *UCLA Journal of International Law and Foreign Affairs*, 20(1), 1–43. [Http://www.jstor.org/stable/45302410](http://www.jstor.org/stable/45302410)

transparency, and efficiency.

India's Public Distribution System (PDS) faces numerous obstacles that make it more difficult for it to effectively give vulnerable populations access to food security. The system is rife with identification errors, which result in inclusion and exclusion errors when figuring out who is eligible for benefits. Food intended for the underprivileged ends up being diverted for commercial gain or ending up on the black market due to leaks and diversion at different points in the supply chain. Food grains are wasted due to spoiling, insufficient storage facilities, and logistical bottlenecks in the distribution process. The PDS's effectiveness is further hampered by systemic corruption, technological constraints in places with inadequate connectivity, and difficulties controlling the impact of inflation on subsidized rates. Furthermore, there are still gaps in coverage and reach, which underserve some worthy groups. Resolving these concerns requires extensive changes that include better-targeting procedures, improved infrastructure, increased transparency, technological innovation, and strict anti-corruption measures. To improve the PDS's ability to guarantee food security for India's most marginalized communities, ongoing monitoring, and flexible policy are essential.

When food grains were the main food that people consumed, the current food grain policy was started. It aims to guarantee sufficient domestic production by giving farmers a minimum support price (MSP), subsidizing fertilizers and irrigation water, and providing electricity for pumping.

Simultaneously, it aims to offer food grains to customers at a reduced cost via the public distribution system (pds), wherein holders of ration cards receive subsidized food grains (as well as certain other items) up to their ration entitlements. Customers are allowed to buy more in bulk on the open market. The difference between the ration price and the cost of supply is borne by the government. PDS initially served all citizens and was limited to urban areas.

It was extended to rural areas and underwent numerous revisions throughout time. Households are currently categorized as being below the poverty line (BPL) and above the poverty line (apl) under the targeted PDs (tpds).<sup>10</sup> Compared to all households, the BPL households obtain food grains at a significantly lower cost. Operating under the PDS, the FCI purchases food from organized grain markets, stores it, and then distributes it to the states for additional distribution via ration shops under the PDS. The management of buffer stock is another purpose of the FCI operations.

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<sup>10</sup> PARIKH, K. S. (2013). Right to Food and Foodgrain Policy. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(11), 23–27. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23391413>

## VI. STARVATION IN INDIA

Even though India has made progress in agricultural production and has implemented several government initiatives to guarantee food security, starvation remains a serious problem in the country. This problem is complex because of many interrelated factors. Widespread poverty is a major factor, with a sizable fraction of the population struggling to afford regular access to enough food and living below the poverty line. Moreover, entrenched disparities in the allocation of wealth, social standing, and availability of resources intensify food insecurity, primarily impacting marginalized groups and rural regions. The Public Distribution System (PDS), designed to distribute subsidized food grains, encounters difficulties such as misidentification, leaks, and insufficient coverage, which causes vulnerable people or areas to be deprived of vital food supplies.

Natural catastrophes and armed conflicts exacerbate the problem by uprooting populations and causing food shortages, leaving them susceptible to starvation and malnourishment. Moreover, certain groups—children and pregnant women in particular—are more susceptible to the devastating effects of hunger due to inadequate health conditions and poor nutrition. Despite the implementation of various initiatives by the government and non-governmental organizations, such as the National Food Security Act (NFSA), mid-day meal programs, and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), obstacles remain in their effective execution due to administrative delays, corruption, and limited infrastructure. A comprehensive strategy is needed to address starvation, one that includes disaster management plans, enhanced food distribution networks, strong healthcare and nutrition programs, poverty reduction, and coordinated efforts to address social injustices. To effectively combat these issues, persistent and coordinated efforts toward these goals are essential.

Globally, hunger results in 13–18 million deaths annually, or more than 35,000 deaths every day. Sixty percent of under-four deaths in developing nations are related to famine. The problems with food security in Africa and the recurrence of famine continue to be the center of the future of the continent's discussion. They are frequently discussed in regard to the reasons behind hunger, its effects, and the long-term repercussions of persistent malnutrition's effects on human growth. Researchers have discovered another of famine's cruelest ironies—that the people who grow food are the ones who perish from malnutrition first. Further, In particular, data appears to support the notion that the poor, the elderly, women, agriculturalists, and pastoralists—the most vulnerable groups—are the first to chafe.<sup>11</sup> As a result, it is now known

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<sup>11</sup> Bush, R. (1996). The Politics of Food and Starvation. *Review of African Political Economy*, 23(68), 169–195.

that food insecurity and hunger are related to poverty and susceptibility, to unequal access to and availability of food, and to the type of food distribution and production. The aforementioned publications have examined the phenomenon of hunger among Indians, which is undoubtedly the most reliable indicator of food insecurity. A number of indicators suggest that approximately half of the population is physically undernourished due to a simple lack of food, including anemia in women and children, low weight and height in children, and chronic energy deficiencies in adults. The number of people living in extreme income poverty rose by 122 million worldwide during the 1990s, with the exception of China.<sup>12</sup> The state of affairs was so dire that James T. Morris, executive director of the World Food Programme, which is one of the sponsors of this series, had to declare in late 2002 that the stark reality is that 38 million human beings are threatened by starvation. Warning that the scope and depth of this crisis are unprecedented, he said that millions of innocent men, women, and children "run the very real risk of death by starvation".

## VII. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Public distribution systems, or PDS, are essential in many nations, particularly in developing nations where hunger and poverty are still major issues. These systems are intended to give economically disadvantaged populations access to basic commodities such as food grains, pulses, and occasionally even non-food items at discounted prices. However, due to a variety of factors, PDS's effectiveness varies greatly between different regions.

PDS frequently encounter difficulties during implementation. Leverages frequently result from corruption in the distribution chain, taking intended benefits away from the intended recipients. Logistical obstacles and administrative complexity are examples of bureaucratic inefficiencies that can impede the prompt and efficient distribution of necessities to individuals in need. Furthermore, poor infrastructure can occur, particularly in isolated or marginalized areas.

As a consequence, poverty persists in various parts of the world, leaving a substantial number of individuals and families without reliable access to nutritious food. The repercussions of this scarcity often result in severe malnutrition and, in extreme cases, starvation. The cycle of poverty and hunger becomes deeply entrenched, impacting not only the physical health but also the socio-economic well-being of affected communities. On a global scale, numerous organizations, governmental bodies, and non-profits are actively engaged in addressing these

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<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4006247>

<sup>12</sup> Sen, I. (2004). Hunger in Urban India [Review of *Food Insecurity Atlas of Urban India*, by M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and World Food Programme]. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(41), 4528–4532. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4415645>

challenges. They advocate for policy reforms aimed at improving the efficiency and transparency of PDS, ensuring that these systems reach the intended beneficiaries. Initiatives promoting sustainable agricultural practices, enhancing food security, and advocating for social welfare programs are also instrumental in tackling the root causes of poverty and starvation.<sup>13</sup>

Recognizing the complex nature of these issues, international efforts emphasize the need for holistic approaches. These include not only improving the distribution systems but also empowering communities through education, skills training, and socio-economic development initiatives. Collaborative endeavors among nations, supported by global cooperation and aid, aim to create comprehensive solutions that go beyond the mere distribution of resources, striving to address the underlying systemic issues contributing to poverty and food insecurity.<sup>14</sup>In essence, combatting poverty, and starvation, and improving the effectiveness of PDS requires multifaceted strategies that involve not only the provision of immediate relief but also sustainable, long-term solutions that empower communities, enhance access to resources, and foster socio-economic development on a global scale.

Let's place this in the larger framework of earlier international responses to hunger famine before delving into the specifics of the story in India. In doing so, I will focus on two cases: the fa that was allegedly widespread during the Great Leap in 1958–1961 and that was reportedly globally unrecognized in Russia during the first part of the 1990s. Upon examining these cases, it becomes evident that the discourse surrounding hunger and family is primarily ideological in nature, frequently disregarding the most basic academic standards concerning estimation and evidence.

Firstly, let us examine the claim that between 27 and 30 million individuals perished in China during the 'Great Leap' era. Such a charge The US demographers Judith Banister (1987) and Ansley J. Coale (1984) both make this claim in their books. Nonetheless, few people in the developing world would have taken the time to read the technical language-heavy discussion of these demographers. Amartya K. Sen has been the primary proponent and ardent supporter of the conclusions drawn by these US demographers. Sen's writings, first published in the New York Review of Books and then in numerous lectures and books, such as *Development as Freedom* (1999), have informed readers in this country and around the world that "China has experienced what is almost certainly the largest recorded famine in history (when thirty years

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<sup>13</sup>Devereux, S., Vaitla, B., Swan, S. H., & Chambers, R. (2008). From Policy to Rights. In *Seasons of Hunger: Fighting Cycles of Starvation Among the World's Rural Poor* (pp. 77–113). Pluto Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt183q3rs.12>

<sup>14</sup>Bhasin, A. (2014). Room for Manoeuvr: Re-reading India's National Food Security Bill 2011. *Indian Anthropologist*, 44(1), 21–36. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43899761>

ago)".<sup>15</sup>

### VIII. PROS & CONS OF INTERNATIONAL FOOD SUSTAINABILITY, POVERTY, PDS

Pros of PDS fulfills the basic nutritional needs of economically disadvantaged populations by offering subsidized or free essential commodities. Poverty Alleviation: PDS strives to lessen poverty, particularly for low-income households, by lowering the cost of necessities. Social Safety Net: PDS protects vulnerable communities from food insecurity by acting as a social safety net, especially during economic downturns or crises. Governmental Support: It demonstrates the government's dedication to combating hunger and poverty by showcasing initiatives to guarantee underprivileged groups have access to food. Health Improvement: Having access to PDS-subsidized food can help improve health outcomes by lowering the number of diseases linked to malnutrition.

Cons are corruption and leakages when there is corruption in the distribution chain, resources are diverted from the intended recipients, which lowers the effectiveness of the system. Bureaucracy and Inefficiencies Complex administrative procedures and inefficient bureaucracy can cause delays in the delivery of necessities, which can restrict timely access for individuals who require it. Inadequate Infrastructure makes PDS less accessible and effective, especially in rural or underserved areas, leaving certain populations without enough support. Sustainability and Dependency are Long-term socioeconomic growth that may be impeded by an over-reliance on PDS if sustainable development efforts are not concurrently pursued. This could lead to dependency on subsidized goods. Difficulties with Resource Allocation occasionally, incorrect identification or targeting criteria may cause the distribution system to misidentify or fail to effectively target the most vulnerable members of society, preventing resources from reaching them.

### IX. SUGGESTIONS

Indeed, a comparative study on Public Distribution Systems (PDS), hunger, poverty, and the Zero Hunger perspective in India can cover a number of interesting topics. These include:

- **Efficient PDS:** Evaluate and contrast the effectiveness and consequences of the Indian PDS system with analogous endeavors in foreign nations. Analyze the main obstacles, triumphs, and mistakes that various nations have encountered when putting these initiatives into action.
- **Zero Hunger Initiatives:** Examine and evaluate how well India's zero hunger initiatives

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<sup>15</sup> Patnaik, U. (2004). The Republic of Hunger. *Social Scientist*, 32(9/10), 9–35. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3518206>

address malnutrition and food insecurity. Examine these programs in relation to international efforts to achieve Zero Hunger in order to find lessons and best practices that can be disseminated globally.

- Examine the different approaches to poverty alleviation that have been used in India and other countries. Examine the effectiveness of various strategies, including social welfare programs, employment schemes, and economic reforms, in reducing poverty rates and ensuring food security.
- **Impact of Governmental Policies:** Analyse how government actions and policies affect the distribution of food, poverty, and starvation. Examine policy frameworks, how they are implemented, and how this affects vulnerable populations in various nations.
- Examine the socio-economic variables that, in relation to other countries, contribute to food insecurity and poverty in India. Examine the effects of various factors on hunger and poverty levels, such as income inequality, access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities.
- **Empowerment of Communities and Sustainable Solutions:** Assess community-based programs and sustainable models that have successfully decreased poverty and hunger in India and other countries. Examine how agriculture, creative thinking, and local empowerment can help end food insecurity.
- **Role of Innovation and Technology:** Examine how innovations and technological advancements can help combat poverty and hunger. Contrast how technology-based solutions have been utilized in different countries to improve food distribution, agricultural productivity, and access to resources.
- **Opportunities and Challenges:** Talk about the shared difficulties that different nations have in achieving their goals of eradicating poverty and hunger. Emphasize the chance to work together and gain knowledge from successful worldwide strategies.
- By examining these areas of comparison and analysis, your research paper—which draws from the Indian perspective and compares it with global efforts—may offer insightful information about practical tactics, obstacles, and future directions for attaining Zero Hunger and reducing poverty.

## **X. CONCLUSION**

A critical analysis of India's complex journey toward food sustainability and human rights reveals a landscape characterized by both progress and obstacles. In the midst of its rich

diversity, the country faces the twin challenges of protecting its citizens' fundamental rights and guaranteeing food security. Due to structural, social, and economic barriers, disparities in food access continue even with admirable efforts. A key component of this effort is the Public Distribution System (PDS), but corruption and inefficiencies prevent it from reaching its full potential. When food sustainability is viewed through the lens of human rights, it becomes clear that the state must actively ensure that its citizens have access to enough food. Putting policy intentions into practice still presents a difficulty, requiring strong implementation plans and stakeholder involvement. However, there is hope found in neighbourhood-based projects, environmentally friendly farming methods, and creative fixes that offer bright prospects for advancement. The necessity for holistic approaches is highlighted by the relationship between food sustainability and socioeconomic factors. Respecting the right to food is a commitment to social justice, human dignity, and economic well-being. It goes beyond simple policy. In India, the path to sustainable food coupled with human rights requires not only quick fixes but also long-term commitment, teamwork, and an all-encompassing, inclusive strategy to promote long-lasting change.

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