Choose your Challenge Worksheet

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Topic Statement/Question | How the Covid-19 pandemic shifted consumer access and availability to food, impacting food security concerns.  How might the US government ensure all consumers have equal access to food that is nutritious and sustainable all year around |
| Brief Summary of the Issue | * America has enough food to feed everyone but not everyone has equal access to food due to disparate socio-economic inequalities within the country * More than 44 million people in the US face hunger, including 1 in 5 children. * In 2022 alone, 49 million people turned to food assistance for extra help. |
| SDG(s) involved | **Goal 2.1**: By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round  **8.4**: Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead  **2.c**: Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility |
| Who is impacted? | Agricultural farmers and supply chain business.  Consumers and society  Supermarkets |
| How are they Impacted? | * Societal choices are the root towards the rising inequality, causing millions to be food insecure * Agricultural farmers and supply chain businesses play a key role in supplying and sustaining the food system. Impacts on farmer’s crops or inconsistencies in the supply chain can disrupt the food system and cause food commodity prices to become volatile, creating less access to food * Supermarkets are the important intermediary between the produce to the consumer. If many people are unable to purchase food, less sales are being made and more food is going to waste. Also more food going to the rich |
| Who can help? | Government  Food Banks & Programs  Communities  Businesses |
| How can they help? | Government can provide economic assistance and investment towards food access as well as price stability in food commodity markets  Food banks & Programs provide citizens who are in extreme food insecurity by offering free produce and food.  Communities can assist in these food banks and donate their own food  Business can provide investment and volunteering for these food banks as well as reduce inequality. |
| Do they have an obligation to help? | Communities, business and food banks can only do so much. As food security continues to climb, governments need to step in and provide that economic support to boost quality access to food. |
| Data Sources | All Food security data & Visualisations (consumer demographics on food security)  <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/interactive-charts-and-highlights/>  Household Pulse Survey (To analyse covid-19 impact data on food security and other socio-economic impacts)  <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/hhp/#/?measures=FOODSCARCE&periodSelector=58&s_metro=>  US Monthly CPI levels for different categories (measuring cost of living)  <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm>  National Economic Data (Unemployment rate, Economic Activity Index, Financial Stress Index)  <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>  Spending data (Consumer Expenditure Data)  <https://www.bls.gov/data/#spending>  FoodAPS National Household Food Acquisition and Purchase Survey  <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/foodaps-national-household-food-acquisition-and-purchase-survey/>  Other Data  Weekly Retail Food Sales  <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/weekly-retail-food-sales/> |

Remember, BE SPECIFIC!

**Topic Statement**

How the Covid-19 pandemic shifted consumer access towards food, impacting food security concerns.

**Impact Statement**

America has enough food to feed everyone, however, not everyone has access to food. Despite being one of the most developed countries, almost 14 million households face food insecurity who do not have enough food to meet their nutritional needs (Pathak, 2022).

Yet, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, food insecurity heightened as economic stability decreased and budgets tightened. As a result, consumer access towards food shifted with more than 49 million people turning to food assistance and 1 in 5 children facing hunger (Feeding America, 2023). Driven by the cost-of-living crisis, socio-economic inequalities, and food market volatility, food security concerns became one of the key global challenges by the UN through SDG target 2.1.

Hence, it is imperative the US government develop a national food security strategy targeting low socio-economic areas by improving economic wellbeing through investments to increase access to food.

**References**

Feeding America, 2023. Hunger in America. Feeding America Non-Profit Organisation. United States of America. <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america>

Pathak, A., et al, 2022. The United States Can End Hunger and Food Insecurity for Millions of People. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-united-states-can-end-hunger-and-food-insecurity-for-millions-of-people/>

USDA, 2022. Food Security in the U.S. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. Available at: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/>

United Nations, 2015. *Food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/topics/food-security-and-nutrition-and-sustainable-agriculture>

Australian International Food Security Research Centre, 2012. *Food security and why it matters.* Australian International Food Security Centre. Available at: <https://aifsc.aciar.gov.au/food-security-and-why-it-matters.html>.

EIT Food, 2023. *4 ways to tackle food insecurity - EIT Food*. Available at: <https://www.eitfood.eu/blog/4-ways-to-tackle-food-insecurity>.

USDA, 2022. Interactive Charts and Highlights. Available at: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/interactive-charts-and-highlights/>

Census Bureau, 2023. Household Pulse Survey: Food Scarcity. Available at: <https://www.census.gov/data-tools/demo/hhp/#/?measures=FOODSCARCE&periodSelector=58&s_metro=>

US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023. Consumer Price Index (CPI) Databases. United States Department of Labor. Available at: <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/data.htm>

FRED, 2023. St. Louis Fed Financial Stress Index. Federal Reserve Bank of St Louis. Available at: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/STLFSI4>