

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CSJ) | FACULTY OF LAW
6TH ANNUAL SOCIAL JUSTICE SUMMIT
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL ON
ZERO HUNGER (SDG 2)

The 6th Annual Social Justice Summit

**Summit Theme: Social Justice and the Sustainable
Development Goal on Zero Hunger (SDG 2)**

Introduction

In October 2023, the International Conference and Summit on Social Justice resolved that "Hunger" would be the focus of the activities at the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and the Musa Plan for Social Justice (Musa Plan)¹ in 2024.

Hunger (SDG2) is one of the world's biggest challenges. Despite remarkable technological advances globally, hunger remains a worldwide crisis, impacting millions of people every day. Hunger is not just about the absence of food — it is about a lack of access to adequate nutrition, health services, and clean water, chronic disparities in wealth and gender, and displacement due to conflict and climate change.²

Because hunger is a part of the greater inequality issue that plagues South Africa and does not exist in silo, the prevention and eradication of hunger can only be

¹ See below.

² United Nations *United Nations Sustainable Development* (2023), available at <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/hunger/>, (accessed 18 April 2024)

achieved if we approach the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as interconnected.

A big overarching theme to be addressed at the 2024 Social Justice Summit is the relationship between climate change and hunger. The increase in global temperatures and climate-related disasters points to an increase in climate-related financial and produce crises, which will ultimately lead to a shortage of food globally, exacerbating the already disastrous global hunger crisis.³

Food is a basic necessity, which supposes that access to food should be easy. The right to food (RTF) is enshrined in section 27 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Constitution).⁴ In addition, the international community recognises the imperative to safeguard the RTF. This right is enshrined in various international human rights instruments, including article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),⁵ article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),⁶ indirectly in articles 4, 16 and 22 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR),⁷ and directly in article 15 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol).⁸

Nelson Mandela argued that merely granting the right to vote, without ensuring access to *food*, shelter, and healthcare, masks the deeper systemic injustices that strip individuals of their humanity. This approach perpetuates the illusion of

³ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change *Special Report on Climate Change and Land* (2019), available at <https://www.ipcc.ch/srccl/chapter/chapter-5/>, (accessed 4 May 2024).

⁴ B Nkrumah 'Opening Pandora's box: a legal analysis of the right to food in South Africa' (2019) 52 *De Jure Law Journal* 47-64.

⁵ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted 10 December 1948) UNGA Res 217 (III).

⁶ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (adopted 16 December 1966, entered into force 23 March 1976) 993 UNTS 3.

⁷ African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (adopted 27 June 1981 entered into force 21 October 1986) 1520 UNTS 217.

⁸ Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (adopted 13 September, entered into force 25 November 2005) CAB/LEG/66.6.

equality and justice while reinforcing socioeconomic disparities. Mandela emphasised the importance of addressing both freedom and basic necessities, advocating for a comprehensive framework encompassing all fundamental rights and freedoms inherent in a democratic society.

"... We do not want freedom without bread, nor do we want bread without freedom. We must provide for all the fundamental rights and freedoms associated with a democratic society."⁹

Given that access to food is directly linked to one's right to dignity and life, no one should face discrimination when seeking food. However, the impacts of climate change disproportionately affect impoverished areas and people more than others, exacerbating existing disadvantages, particularly in terms of access to healthy, high-quality food.¹⁰

Food is not only a means to physical and physiological sustenance, but it is also a tool for medication. When people have access to an abundance of healthy, nutritious food, they can exist as healthy beings.¹¹ When individuals have a shortage of food and are victims of hunger, they are not able to live sustainable, healthy lives.¹²

In 2024, there are many barriers to nutritious food, many of which have been exacerbated by the ongoing conflicts across several continents. Most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has placed significant strain on already problematic food systems. Lockdown restrictions, imposed globally, significantly undermined food systems. With individuals staying at home under government orders, food production that is heavily reliant on agriculture has been halted, putting pressure on the backbone of many economies, especially in Africa.¹³

⁹ N Mandela "Address: On the Occasion of the ANC's Bill of Rights Conference" in A Bill of Rights for a Democratic South Africa: Papers and Report of a Conference Convened by the ANC Constitutional Committee (May 1991) 12.

¹⁰ Section 27(1) of the Constitution.

¹¹ L Chiwona-Karltun & F Amuakwa-Mensah et al "COVID-19: From health crisis to food security anxiety and policy implications" (2019) 4 *AMBIO* 50 794-811.

¹² *Supra*.

¹³ *Supra*.

The ripple effects of a slowed food production on everyday life are insurmountable. Arndt states that “[r]egulatory responses such as lockdowns have negatively undermined economic outcomes and stability while highlighting existing gross disparities, social injustices, availability and access to food and food security.”¹⁴ Factors affecting food security expose the uncomfortable truth that there are individuals who will not be affected by it and who will not only have access to food but also nutritious food. Then, there will be those who might never be able to recover from the impact of food insecurity.

Therefore, with the 2024 Summit focusing on SDG 2, it is imperative to observe food chains in their entirety on a local, national, and international level. We argue for the need to prioritise viewing food chains from the moment food is harvested to the manufacturing process. We must ensure that farmers, especially smaller commercial farmers, are supported to be able to withstand the impact of disrupted food chains with minimal consequence to their supply chains and the individuals they supply to. Furthermore, trade and agricultural policies need to be considered when creating implementable solutions to ensure minimal disruption to food chains globally. By forecasting the worst possible outcomes of potentially disrupted food chains, we can maximize our mitigation efforts and ensure the swift supply of quality and nutritious food for everyone globally.

Global statistics: While the world produces more than enough food to feed everyone on the planet, as many as 828 million people go hungry daily, with over 40% facing acute hunger.¹⁵ Additionally, 2.3 billion individuals - 29.6% of the global population - do not have adequate access to food, and 9 million die annually from hunger-related causes, including many children under 5. In 2022, acute hunger rose by 25% in three months due to the Ukraine conflict. The United Nations (UN)

¹⁴ C Arndt et al “COVID-19 lockdowns, income distribution, and food security: An analysis for South Africa” (2020) 26 *Global Food Security* 410.

¹⁵ World Health Organisation *UN Report: Global hunger numbers rose to as many as 828 million in 2021* (2022), available at <https://www.who.int/news/item/06-07-2022-un-report--global-hunger-numbers-rose-to-as-many-as-828-million-in-2021>, (accessed 18 April 2024).

warns that even post-pandemic recovery, we may fall short of Zero Hunger by 2030, with an estimated 670 million still facing hunger by the end of the decade.¹⁶

National statistics: While South Africa is striving to meet the SDGs, hunger remains pervasive, with millions of people in the country facing the reality of food insecurity, especially vulnerable groups. In 2020, hunger in South Africa was at 6.90%, a 0.6% increase from 2019. In 2021, about 2.1 million (11,6%) of South African households reported experiencing hunger.¹⁷

World hunger facts¹⁸

1. 3.1 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet.
2. 828 million people around the world suffer from hunger.
3. 1 in 10 people suffer from hunger.
4. 80 million more women than men were hungry in 2022.
5. 85% of people facing hunger crises live in conflict-affected countries.
6. 13.6 million children suffer from severe acute malnutrition.
7. 2 million children die every year from malnutrition.
8. 45% of all child deaths worldwide are due to hunger and related causes.
9. 1 in 3 children in low- and middle-income countries suffers from chronic malnutrition.

Definition of hunger:

According to the UN, hunger is defined as those periods when people experience severe food insecurity— this means they go without eating for entire days due to lack of money, access to food, or other resources.¹⁹

Definitions of key terms:

¹⁶ *Supra*

¹⁷ Department: Statistics South Africa *Focus on food inadequacy and hunger in South Africa in 2021* (2023), available at <https://www.statssa.gov.za/?p=16235#:~:text=In%202021%2C%20about%20%2C1,and%20rising%20costs%20of%20living>, (accessed 18 April 2024).

¹⁸ *Supra*.

¹⁹ *Supra*.

- **Hunger** is the distress associated with a lack of food. The threshold for food deprivation, or undernourishment, is fewer than 1,800 calories per day.
- **Undernutrition** goes beyond calories to signify deficiencies in energy, protein, and/or essential vitamins and minerals.
- **Malnutrition** refers more broadly to both undernutrition and overnutrition.
- **Food security** relates to food availability, access, and utilisation. When people have consistent and adequate access to enough safe and nutritious food to maintain an active and healthy life, they are considered food secure.²⁰ **RTF** is defined as every individual, whether alone or in a community with others, having both physical and economic access to adequate and nutritious food or means for its procurement.²¹

Background

The CSJ and the Law Faculty Trust Chair for Social Justice at Stellenbosch University have committed themselves to conduct research, innovation, training and advocacy that interjectionally operate as a catalyst for accelerating the transformation to advance social justice in line with South Africa's transformative constitutional blueprint, the National Development Plan (NDP) and the SDGs taken with the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The flagship programme is the Musa Plan, whose aim is to serve as a social justice accelerator primarily in the country. The Musa Plan was adopted without reservations by government represented by the Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, Business and Civil Society on August 29, 2019. Since then, work under the Musa Plan has sought to explore ways in which South Africa's social justice progress could be accelerated and the role of civil society, including the academic community, business and ordinary persons.

²⁰ Overseas Development Institute "Global hunger and food security after the World Food Summit" in *ODI Briefing Paper* (1997).

²¹ Nkrumah op cit.

The Musa Plan is in recognition of the fact that despite South Africa's Constitution's bold commitment that laid the basis to heal the divisions of the past and establish a society that is based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights, the country has become the most unequal society in the world. Research also shows that despite employment equity and black economic empowerment legislative interventions, inequality along the contours of past legislated racial and gender injustice remains structural and systemic in all areas of life. It also shows that the project of healing the divisions of the past is floundering. At the same time, economic growth remains hamstrung by the structural inefficiencies of having the bulk of the population left behind. It is further recognised that as long as there is injustice somewhere, there cannot be sustainable peace anywhere.

In response, the Musa Plan aims to end poverty and address structural inequality by 2030, aligning with the National Development Plan, Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Musa Plan is a social justice accelerator programme similar to the Marshall Plan, which aims to promote inclusive development, national unity, and constitutionally safeguarded democracy.

Purpose of the Social Justice Summit

The Summit, which is in its sixth iteration, is a decision-making structure that moves the needle one inch at a time on the Musa Plan. While the Summit primarily focuses on South Africa, it also looks at the rest of the world as a benchmark. In its sixth iteration, the Summit seeks to provide a platform to locate "Hunger" within the broader social context of structural social injustice that plunges some into hunger and related multi-dimensional aspects of poverty. The Indian economist and philosopher, Amartya Sen, said: "Human lives are battered and diminished in all kinds of different ways, and the first task... is to acknowledge that deprivations of very different kinds have to be accommodated within a general overarching framework."²² Recognising that interconnected issues of poverty, inequality,

²² A Sen "A Decade of Human Development" *Journal of Human Development* (Vol 1, No. 1) (2000) 19.

conflict, climate change, gender discrimination, and weak government and health systems all play a role in driving hunger, the Summit also seeks to integrate social justice thinking into policy-making, with a view to accelerating the progress on the SDGs, particularly SDG 10 (reducing inequality), taken with SDGs 1 (zero poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 5 (gender equality), 13 (climate reclamation) and 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

South Africa celebrates 30 years of democracy in 2024. While significant strides have been made to improve the quality of life for citizens and free the potential of all persons - “[w]e, the people”²³ - South Africa remains an unequal society with the majority languishing in poverty and hunger. With the Summit following shortly after the country’s 7th National and Provincial elections, 30 years into constitutional democracy, the summit resolutions will place the country in pole position to integrate upfront an anti-hunger strategy in all policies, laws and programmes, in addition to a broader social justice lens as enjoined by the Preamble to the Constitution. Such a strategy should include a level of disaggregation of those already experiencing hunger and those who are vulnerable to ensure those policies meet everyone where they are and prioritise accordingly.

Date: Social Justice Summit – Thursday, 17 -18 October 2024

Venue: Bertha Retreat, Franschhoek, South Africa

Stakeholders

The Social Justice Summit will bring together policymakers, legislators, political parties, judicial officers, the diplomatic community, business, lawyers, the faith community, traditional leaders, civic society activists, and others interested in or working on food security, human rights and social justice matters, with a view to strengthening synergies and a game-changing way regarding the advancement of social justice and achieving SDGs focusing on hunger, food security, nutrition security and the RTF.

²³ Preamble of the Constitution.

Estimated Registration Cost for Delegates (*subject to change* and *excludes keynote speakers and presenters*)

- Attendance of Summit – R1000.00.
- Group discount (10 or more) – R800 each or R8000 in total.
- Sponsorship for students and appropriate NGOs will be available upon request.
- Attending **both** the International Conference **and** Summit – R1500 per person.

Objectives

The key objectives of the Summit are to:

1. Highlight the importance of ending hunger as a constitutional and SDG imperative while pointing out the threats posed to social well-being, economic development and political stability based on functional democracy and the rule of law.
2. Reflect on the state of hunger in the country against SDG 2 of ending hunger by 2030.
3. Share research findings, including those from the preceding international conference on impending risks regarding hunger and food security, as well as good practices and opportunities for turning the situation around.
4. Enhance awareness of and commitment to the Musa Plan by reflecting on previous resolutions, prioritising the issue of hunger and related food security tied to climate resilience and other SDGs and accelerating progress on SDGs while intentionally drawing attention to the commitment to create a world free of hunger by 2030 and the interrelated nature of all SDGs, human rights and social justice.
5. Concretise the appreciation of the relationship between poverty, inequality, conflict, climate change, gender discrimination, and weak government and health systems.
6. Agree on strategies to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs to be reflected in a summit resolution.

Summit Themes and Sub-Themes

Main theme: **Social Justice and Hunger**

Thematic areas that will be deep-dived into during plenary sessions and break-away sessions are as follows:

1. Hunger, the RTF and the intersection of other human rights.
2. Hunger and the right to equality.
3. Homelessness and hunger.
4. Hunger and the right to education.
5. Hunger, nutrition and the right to health.
6. Linkages between hunger and food security, with a focus on the disruptions of food supply chains and its exacerbation of hunger on a national and global scale due to climate change, conflict (mindful of the aftermath of wars on hunger and food security), forced migration and energy insecurity.
7. Hunger, policy design and foresight opportunities presented by data science (including scenario tools, gender mainstreaming and the Social Justice Impact Assessment Matrix developed by the CSJ).
8. The extent of strides made to eradicate hunger and the realisation of the RTF in 30 years of democracy - towards sustainable, inclusive economies.

Benefits for Attendance

The Summit will be a space for expressing critical views on the thematic issues, sharing ideas, and building networks for the advancement of social justice.

1. The government of the Republic of South Africa may benefit from engaging with business, civil society, and the faith community on thematic issues and creating opportunities for a collaborative effort in the advancement of social justice.
2. Learn from good practices demonstrated across various sectors, seeking to advance a world free of hunger.
3. Meet diverse stakeholders engaged in social justice-oriented endeavours to end hunger, share what works and what does not and identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration.

4. Participate in key social justice policy development that feeds into concrete recommendations for action on various dimensions of hunger that require redress to ensure substantive equality while promoting social cohesion, the rule of law and peace.
5. Tap into a broader reservoir of literature and information on social justice scholarship and policy directions flowing from the findings of the fifth iteration of the International Conference on Social Justice and create opportunities.
6. Participate in a programme of activities that allows open dialogue, constructive critique, self-reflection, and connection to an emerging global social justice movement.

Outputs

The outputs of this Summit will include:

- Resolution signed by stakeholders.
- A published report detailing sustainable and accessible ways of addressing hunger in line with the SDGs.

Outcomes

As with the historic UN conferences and summits held in the 1990s and 2000s, we wish to mobilise research, academic, governmental and diplomatic, interfaith and civil society communities around the Musa Plan Think Tank through the establishment of four permanent thematic committees:

- o Government Policy and Planning Capacitation.
- o Community and Corporate Resource Mobilisation.
- o Social Accountability, Empowerment and Social Cohesion, Reinforcement and Cultivation.
- o Global Support, Civil Society and Civic Mobilisation.

These committees will be responsible for the development of a Comprehensive National Poverty and Inequality Report, identifying causes and influencing factors and covering and giving specifics of every municipal ward.

Processes

Members of various research, academic, governmental and diplomatic, interfaith and civil society communities will come together in October 2024 to find sustainable and accessible ways of addressing poverty in line with the SDGs.

Phase 1: Identify potential keynote and panel speakers and convene consultation meetings with proposed speakers.

Phase 2: Reach out to potential sponsorships for the Summit.

Phase 3: Material development with partners for the Summit.

Phase 4: Organise the logistics of the Summit (venue and project management).

Phase 5: Implement marketing plan for Summit.

Phase 6: Open registration for the Summit.

Phase 7: Manage the web design for the Summit.