The Perth Agreement

A Framework for Global Food Security: White Paper

Summary

Every person, and every child yet to be born, should be assured at least one nutritious meal every day. That is the whole idea.

- It builds on promises the world has already made: the right to food and UN Goal 2, Zero Hunger.
- It invites you, and students, faith and belief communities and governments, to work out how to make it real.
- How to deliver and pay for it is still open. One bold proposal is the Meal Standard: a new, fairer system of value, measured in meals.

1. Hunger today

- About 645 million people (a range of 608 to 696 million), or 7.8% of the world's population, faced hunger in 2025. This is about 14 million fewer than in 2024, the third year of improvement in a row.[1]
- For the first time, Africa has the largest number of people facing hunger: 309 million in 2025, one person in five.[1]
- About 2.1 billion people faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2025.[1]
- About 150 million children under five were stunted in 2024.[2]
- On current trends, between 510 and 520 million people may still face hunger in 2030, so the 2030 Zero Hunger target will be missed.[1]

2. A promise already made

The principle already exists. The Perth Agreement simply states it plainly: one meal, every person, every day.

- Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognises everyone's right to adequate food and to be free from hunger.[3]
- General Comment 12 (1999) explains what this means for governments.[4]
- The FAO's *Right to Food Guidelines* (2004) give countries a practical guide.[4]

3. Existing efforts to learn from and support

- **The School Meals Coalition**, launched in 2021, has 113 member countries, 6 regional bodies and over 150 partners, working towards a healthy school meal for every child by 2030.[5]
- **The Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty** was launched at the G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro on 18 November 2024 with 148 founding members, including 82 countries; Australia is a founding member.[6]

- **Ceres2030** (Cornell University, IFPRI and IISD) estimated that ending hunger by 2030 would need about US$33 billion a year in additional public spending: US$14 billion from donor countries and US$19 billion from low- and middle-income countries.[7]

The Perth Agreement hopes to add a moral voice, and the voice of a new generation, to these efforts rather than compete with them.

4. The framework

4.1 The principle and the declaration

A short declaration, to be signed in Perth by representatives of faith and belief communities, including people of no religious faith, affirming that every person should know they will have at least one meal every day. It is hoped that Aboriginal Elders may one day host an initial signing.

4.2 A student-led conversation

Student bodies at universities across the world are invited to examine the proposal, share ideas and, in time, take on its leadership. Invitations, selection rules and all ideas shared are published at circle.theperthagreement.com. A suggested timetable works towards a proposed signing in August 2027.

4.3 A long horizon

The original proposal imagines a 21-year framework, long enough to plan, pilot, learn and expand. Large public programmes of this kind take many years to build.

4.4 Transparency

Every structural decision and major communication should be open and auditable. Nothing should be done in the shadows.

5. Delivery and funding: open questions

A meal guarantee has to be paid for. This is the biggest open question.

A simple example: a A$4 meal for everyone, every day, would mean about A$12 trillion of food a year once it reached everyone. That is not paid on day one: any programme would start small, with a local pilot, and grow step by step. The Meal Standard proposal adds another path: a system that runs on shared agreement, where those who grow and cook the food are fairly rewarded within it. Helping only those who are hungry costs far less. That is why the Ceres2030 estimate is much smaller.

Approaches you could compare:

- expanding school meal programmes;
- cash transfers and social protection;
- food assistance redeemed through local vendors;
- the Meal Standard, a new system of value measured in meals, as set out in the companion paper *The Meal Standard: a new, fairer system of value*.

6. Governance ideas

One possible starting point is a coalition of academic, humanitarian and community institutions, with young people given a direct voice. These are suggestions for discussion; those who inherit the framework should shape its structure.

7. Precedents to learn from

- **WFP Building Blocks.** The World Food Programme uses a private, permissioned blockchain to coordinate assistance, for example for refugees in Jordan. WFP states that it does not use cryptocurrency.[8] It shows how shared records can reduce duplication, but it is not a precedent for a tradable token.
- **Cash transfer programmes** such as Brazil's Bolsa Família, cited by the Global Alliance as a model of well-designed public policy.[6]
- **School meals**, through national programmes and the School Meals Coalition.[5]

8. Challenges and risks

Challenge	Why it matters
Funding	Without a credible way to pay, no guarantee can last.
Logistics and local markets	Supply chains must reach remote areas without undercutting local farmers and vendors.
Privacy and identity	Universal ID and biometric systems raise serious privacy concerns; courts in Kenya ruled the Worldcoin project's iris data collection unlawful.[9]
Regulation	Any Meal Standard unit that was issued or traded would be subject to financial regulation (in Australia, ASIC rules and new digital asset laws).[10]
Trust	Participation must be voluntary, transparent and free from surveillance or control.
Culture and diet	Meals must respect local staples, faith-based diets and preferences.

9. Research opportunities for universities

- **Economics:** cost and funding options for a meal guarantee; universal versus targeted approaches; effects on local food markets and farmers.
- **Policy and law:** how the right to food is recognised in national law; treaty and declaration models; links with existing coalitions.
- **Technology:** privacy-protecting, offline-capable delivery systems; the risks and benefits of a Meal Standard.
- **Public health:** nutrition outcomes of a daily meal; effects on child stunting.
- **Sociology and ethics:** dignity, trust and cultural adaptation; the role of faith and belief communities.

10. Call to action

This is not a finished blueprint. It is an invitation to test, challenge and build.

An easy next step

Pick one question above. Share what you find, even if it is unfinished, at circle.theperthagreement.com or contact@theperthagreement.com.

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