

The background of the journal cover features a top-down view of a desk. On the left, a pair of black leather brogue shoes is partially visible. In the center, an open notebook with lined pages and a silver pen lies on a light-colored wooden surface. To the right, a black leather bag with a zipper is partially shown. A black leather watch with a silver dial is also visible on the desk. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular area is centered over the image, containing the journal's title and ISSN information.

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**FOOD WASTE GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: A LEGAL AND  
INSTITUTIONAL STUDY OF CONSTITUTIONAL  
FRAMEWORKS, STATUTORY MECHANISMS,  
COMPARATIVE MODELS AND EMERGING POLICY  
INNOVATIONS**

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**ABSTRACT**

One bite at a time, rotting grain piles up while bellies stay empty. Across Indian fields, harvests swell yet vanish - spoiled by broken cold chains, choked roads, weak rails. What grows in plenty fades before reaching hands that need it most.

Looking at laws around wasted food, this paper checks how parts of the constitution fit into the picture - like Article 21, tied to the right to live with dignity. Instead of just listing rules, it explores what Article 47 means when it tells the government to lift public health and eating habits. Through another lens, attention turns to actual laws passed by Parliament, one being the Food Safety and Standards Act from 2006. Alongside that law sits the 2016 rules about handling garbage, especially solid waste, shaping how surplus food might be managed. Together these pieces form part of an effort to slow down loss while pushing extra supplies toward those who need them.

Looking at laws in France, the U.S., and the EU helps shape the study's method - each region uses clear systems like required food giving, shields for those who donate, alongside rules that support reuse and recycling.<sup>4</sup>

Food waste has no specific law in India, the research shows. Instead, current rules work apart from one another, missing teamwork. A unified system could link the constitution's ideals with real-world enforcement methods. This mix might handle leftovers better by connecting policy, laws, and action on the ground.

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Staying alive takes food, true, yet it does more - shapes respect, wellness, body strength, community ties. What people eat shows what a culture values, how it handles land, labour, time. Even though India grows plenty of crops, tonnes vanish before reaching plates, sparking questions about whether systems really work.<sup>1</sup>

Starting at farms, food begins a long journey. Then it sits in warehouses, waiting. After that comes trucks, trains, sometimes ships - carrying it farther. Along the way, things go wrong. A fridge fails. Containers get left too long on docks. Deliveries miss timing. These small hiccups pile up. What seems minor adds weight over time. Eventually, plenty vanishes before anyone eats it.

This research sees food waste less about broken systems, more about who makes the rules. Laws shape how leftovers move, what happens to surplus, why some choices get pushed over others.

### **1.1 Study Background**

Most wasted food isn't just about people buying too much or tossing leftovers. It actually points to hidden flaws built into how we grow and deliver meals. Across India, what you eat travels a tangled path - from farms to storage units, then trucks, finally reaching shops. Each step holds risks that can spoil or delay delivery.

Every step along the way risks losing food when storage fails, transport drags on, or people involved fail to sync up. That mismatch - between what's available and what gets eaten - grows because systems stumble.<sup>1</sup>

Food keeps going to waste even as people go without enough to eat. With supplies dwindling, hunger persists in many communities across the region

Waste on our plates pulls at nature's threads, draining water plus energy supplies while swelling landfills. Suddenly, tossing leftovers ties into bigger pictures - how we manage crops, who watches the system, and whether bellies stay full.

### **1.2 Literature Review**

One reason folks look into wasted grub? It messes up both nature and cash flow. Way back, the FAO started tracking where eats go missing - from farm to fork

Nowhere near enough teeth sit behind recent findings, even solid ones like the UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2024. While sharper tracking and wider attention mark progress, most of

it floats outside binding rules

One country's method might differ sharply from another's. France requires businesses to donate surplus food, whereas American policy leans on shielding donors from legal risk. Across Europe, wasted food fits into broader recycling goals. In India, most studies zero in on broken supply chains - think rotting crops or poor cold storage. Laws there rarely target waste prevention directly, instead clustering around health rules and disposal. Even when judges cite rights like life or public welfare, they seldom tie those ideas to throwing less away

### 1.3 Research Gap

Still getting more notice, yet food waste mostly shows up as a problem for nature or money talks. When it comes to rules that actually stick, the law part lags behind.

Most studies in India look at broken systems, yet skip how laws might stop food waste. Little attention goes to rules that could make a difference

Out here, the law says one thing while actions do another. Though courts often stretch Articles 21 and 47 to cover food rights, almost never does anyone link them to wasted food that could've been saved. Yet what happens on paper hardly touches real responsibility

Missing pieces fail to link core laws, written rules, plus real-world systems - governance sags under the weight. A single working design does not exist.

### 1.4 Study Goals

This work looks into food waste through the lens of law and how things are managed across India. Its main goal is to explore:

Analyse the role of constitutional provisions, particularly Articles 21 and 47

- Evaluate food safety and waste management regulations
- Examine comparative international legal models
- India's legal system has missing parts
- Propose an integrated approach to food waste governance

### 1.5 Research Methodology

Starting with legal writings, court decisions, official papers, and scholarly works forms the base here. Moving through these materials helps shape the thinking behind the study. Instead of gathering new data, it builds understanding by examining what others have already produced. Looking closely at existing rules and interpretations guides how ideas are explored throughout. The method relies on careful review rather than fieldwork or surveys to reach its conclusions.

Looking at constitutional rules helps measure how well they connect to cutting down on wasted food and what governments must do. Laws get reviewed through a lens of whether they truly stop surplus food from being tossed plus ensure it reaches those who need it.

Looking at how other countries do things helps spot useful ideas for India. Still missing are clear rules, teamwork across agencies, better oversight - things the research points out.

## 1.6 Scope and Limitations

Though centered on India, the work looks at how rules shape food waste handling. Starting from basic rights, it moves through laws made by government bodies. Instead of broad trends, attention stays on structures meant to guide action. From court rulings down to agency roles, each layer gets examined. Not every angle appears - only those tied to law and official design. When it matters for understanding the law, details about how food is made or moved come into play.

Most of what's known comes from existing materials, not firsthand observation. Because of that, the findings lean more toward interpretation than proof.

### Footnote

1. Food & Agric. Org. of the United Nations, Global Food Losses and Food Waste (2011), <https://www.fao.org>.
2. Deep within India's constitutional fabric sits Article 21, alongside Article 47, both shaping rights tied to life and health. A landmark moment emerged through the People's Union for Civil Liberties case against the Union of India in 2001, documented in Volume 5 of the Supreme Court Cases at page 294. That ruling quietly redefined how justice views access to essential care under these provisions.
3. Food Safety and Standards Act 2006 India. Solid Waste Management Rules 2016 G S R 1357 E
4. Some laws protect food donations in France, like one passed on February 11, 2016. In the United States, a specific act shields donors from liability when giving surplus food. Europe handles it through a rule made in 2008 about waste and reuse.
5. United Nations Environment Programme, Food Waste Index Report 2024 (2024), <https://www.unep.org>.
6. Justice demands fair access to legal help under India's Constitution, article thirty nine A.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### Conceptual Framework and Causes

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Most people think tossing leftovers is where food waste begins. Not quite true though. Long before scraps hit the bin, money moves, rules get set, prices shift, stores stock shelves - each step nudges edibles toward trash bins. So what we call waste actually grows out of design - not accident. It reflects who decides, what sells, which crops thrive, who buys, and why rot piles up despite hunger nearby

This part moves away from outlining the supply chain toward exploring how laws and policies define food waste. Instead it considers who gets held accountable when edible food goes unused, while also questioning why regulations tend to lack cohesion.

What stands out most is how people label what gets thrown away. Words like lost food, wasted food, or extra food aren't just labels - they shape who takes blame and shapes rules. Without clear meaning behind them, efforts to manage the problem pull in different directions.<sup>2</sup>

Waste of food shows up everywhere - rules about what we eat, laws that protect nature, support for people in need, how towns run day to day. One office alone doesn't own the fix, so efforts often stumble without sync. Slowly, that drift turned a logistics problem into something deeper: who answers for it, who uses resources well, whether government stands by its role.<sup>3</sup>

#### **2.1 Food Loss and Food Waste**

Most people mix up food loss and waste, yet they happen at separate points along the way food travels. What sets them apart shapes how laws and rules should handle each one.

Most wasted food vanishes before it gets far - think fields, harvests, storage spots, or while moving between places. This waste tends to happen by accident, tied to deeper issues like weak transport networks, missing cold storage options, clumsy handling methods, or slow deliveries. So much edible produce simply fails to arrive where people buy it Later on, food gets tossed out mostly by stores, restaurants, and homes - though it's still good to eat. Because of how things look or simply having too much, shops sometimes refuse fresh items. People buy more than needed, forget what they have, or store groceries wrong. That kind of loss comes down to habits and what the market pushes.

What stands out here matters. Loss often ties to broken systems, yet waste? That comes down to choices people make every day when using up meals.<sup>4</sup>

## 2.2 The Idea of Extra Food

Leftover meals sit untouched even when perfectly fine to eat. Often, stores make too much, restaurants cook extra, or shops don't sell what they stock. Food piles up where it wasn't needed. Sometimes, more gets baked than people buy. Kitchens prepare beyond demand, so plates go full into bins.

Surplus food sits apart because it stays fresh and untouched. This kind of extra can travel to people who need it, moving through networks like aid groups or local pantries instead of rotting away. Food waste sits oddly within Indian law. Rules about sharing extra meals lack clarity, especially around health checks or blame if something goes wrong. Because of that, shops and eateries pause before giving away leftovers. Trouble might follow even when trying to help. Uncertainty blocks action.

Because of this, tons of good food get thrown away rather than sent to people who could use it. That leftover food? It's a chance the system fails to take.

## 2.3 Lifecycle of Food Waste

Starting down on farms, scraps begin piling up long before stores ever see them. From harvest through delivery, losses creep in at each turn - slipping away during transport just as much as they vanish later on shelves.

Out in the fields, crops vanish when harvests drag on too long, bugs get to them first, or workers toss them around carelessly. When it comes time to move and keep produce safe, rot sets in fast if trucks break down, warehouses lack chill, or roads turn to mud. Food gets lost while moving through factories and stores because too much is made, predictions about how much people will buy are wrong, then perfectly good items get tossed just for looking odd. Shops throw away stock when shelves overflow, sometimes simply because labels show dates drawing near.

Leftovers often end up wasted because homes and restaurants prepare too much. Storage mistakes play a big role, making food spoil faster than expected. Throwing away meals happens more than it should, mainly due to careless habits.

Looking at the whole process reveals how wasted food doesn't come from one person alone - each step adds its share through small failures piling up over time.

## 2.4 Causes of Food Waste

What gets tossed out often ties back to several linked reasons, not just one. Out there in the

fields, old methods slow things down while missing storage options make it worse. When crops move into factories, guesses about how much people will buy often go too high - leaving extra behind.

Out in the fields, produce often rots before it reaches stores - cold storage fails, trucks stall. When shelves finally get filled, odd-shaped items get tossed aside even if they're good to eat. Mistakes in counting stock pile up, leaving tons to expire unseen.

Most waste happens right inside homes. What people do daily shapes how much they throw away. Buying too much comes down to habits, not hunger. Without a meal plan, extra groceries pile up untouched. Food gets tossed - still good, but forgotten in the back of fridges.

Most wasted food ends up from homes - about six out of ten tons, according to UNEP numbers. Eating places toss away close to a quarter, while stores make up just under one sixth. So what people do at home plays a big role in how much food gets thrown worldwide.

## 2.5 Food Waste Effects

Waste on our plates travels far beyond the kitchen. Each rotten apple taints more than just soil. Money slips away quietly when meals go uneaten. Lives feel the ripple even if miles from landfills. Broken systems show up in empty fridges and overflowing dumps.

When food goes uneaten, it rots in dumps, spewing climate-warming methane into the air. That discarded meal also means squandered rivers, fields, and fuel spent growing something no one ate. Money slips away from farms, stores, and public budgets when edible food goes unused.

Wasted meals mean wasted effort - water, labor, fuel - all spent for nothing. Out in the open, tossing out meals while others go without shows a deep tilt in how things work. Huge amounts get thrown away even as stomachs stay empty day after day. That gap - right there - pokes at fairness and who gets what.

## 2.6 Institutional and Governance Challenges

Food waste needs clear teamwork across government groups. Across India, different offices play a role - health inspectors watch what's safe, city councils manage disposal, farm divisions handle crop flow, while pollution teams track ecological impact.

Still, each group tends to work on its own, which splits up control. Nobody holds full responsibility for handling wasted food from start to finish.<sup>10</sup>

Fewer officers patrol country roads compared to city streets, so rules often bend where help is far away.

A big problem? Not having solid numbers. When details about how much food gets wasted -

and where - it stays fuzzy, so efforts by leaders often miss the mark. What happens then? Actions feel scattered, ineffective.

These challenges highlight the need for a more integrated and coordinated governance framework.

## 2.7 Socio-Economic Dimensions

Where people live shapes how much food they throw away. Spending habits often mirror access to resources. Choices at the table tie back to income and education levels.

It's often the wealthier families who toss out more groceries, simply because they buy too much. On the flip side, those with tighter budgets lose food not from buying extra, but because their homes lack proper fridges or ways to keep items fresh.

Festivals or weddings often see huge amounts of food made, though little gets shared beyond the event. Tradition plays a role here, shaping how much people cook even when most goes uneaten. What ends up wasted could feed many, yet habits keep things unchanged. Leftovers pile up because planning rarely includes ways to pass them out later.

Out of step - plenty gets tossed even as plenty go without. Behind that gap? Who gets what, and who misses out.

## 2.8 Conclusion

This part looked at how we think about wasted food, drawing lines between lost food, tossed food, leftover food. It walked through where it happens, why it builds up, what it does along the way.

Food waste comes from deep flaws in how systems work, not just one cause. Starting on farms, ending on plates, losses pop up everywhere along the way. Habits people form over time make it worse. Rules meant to manage supply often miss key points. When agencies fail to sync efforts, problems grow unchecked. Gaps in oversight let avoidable loss slip through.

Food waste isn't just about pollution - it ties into who gets to eat, how supplies are shared, yet also highlights unfair access across communities. Without clear laws in place, few face consequences when systems fail.

Fixing food waste means better systems, shifts in habits, tighter teamwork among agencies, also updated laws. That groundwork leads into the legal breakdown ahead.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Food & Agric. Org. of the United Nations, Global Food Losses and Food Waste

- (2011), <https://www.fao.org>.
2. United Nations Environment Programme, Food Waste Index Report 2024 (2024), <https://www.unep.org>.
  3. United Nations General Assembly Resolution 70/1, titled "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," adopted on October 21, 2015.
  4. Farming and eating depend on more than just growing crops. One effort tackling waste comes from a group working worldwide to cut down losses after harvest. Their mission focuses on keeping food usable longer, reaching people who need it most. This work links experts across nations studying where supplies shrink unexpectedly. Progress shows up in storage fixes, smarter transport methods, plus better awareness among shoppers. Details sit online under an effort named Save Food led by a United Nations team focused on agriculture matters.
  5. Report on food waste by UNEP, 2024 edition, cited earlier as footnote two.
  6. Food & Agric. Org. of the United Nations, Food Loss Analysis: Causes and Solutions, <https://www.fao.org>.
  7. Report on food waste by UNEP, 2024 edition, cited earlier as note 2.
  8. That report came out in 2013. From the food and farming group at the UN. It looked into how tossing out food harms nature. Pages deep into soil, water, air effects. Found that wasted meals drain forests, fields, rivers. Much of what is grown never gets eaten. The link leads to their main site. Details pile up about lost energy, squandered effort. Numbers show strain on Earth's systems. Work began years before release. You can find it online through the web address listed.
  9. World Resources Institute, Reducing Food Loss and Waste, <https://www.wri.org>.
  10. Published by the UN's food and agriculture branch, this report details global farming conditions. Find it at fao dot org. Its full title: The State of Food and Agriculture.

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### Legal and Institutional Framework of Food Waste Governance in India

##### **3.0 Introduction**

Food waste rules in India come from various sources like constitution ideas, laws, eco guidelines, also social support plans. Still missing one clear law just about tossing food. What exists spreads across different rule systems, each touching just parts of the problem

This part looks at laws and groups working on food waste, together shaping responses. Starting

from constitutional rules - Article 21, then 39(a), followed by 47 - they form a base linked to access, nourishment, plus fair spread of food.<sup>2</sup>

Later comes a look at major laws - like the rules on solid waste from 2016 and the food safety standards set in 2006 - besides how cities are run. Examined too is the 2013 food security law, showing tension between wasted food and people going without.

Looking back, the chapter makes clear how many tools are in place - yet each works on its own, never quite forming a steady system for handling food waste. Though efforts appear across different levels, they stumble when it comes to acting together with purpose. Instead of flow, there's patchwork; instead of direction, scattered effort rules. What emerges is less strategy, more improvisation without thread.

### 3.1 Constitutional Framework

Food waste isn't directly mentioned in the Constitution. Still, deeper values within it shape how we might view such issues. Though silent on specifics, the framework hints at responsibility through implied duties. Ideas about justice and care for resources run beneath the surface. These notions aren't spelled out yet they echo in the structure. What matters is found between lines, not just written ones.

What counts as a life worth living? Courts say it means having enough to eat. When meals go uneaten on one table while others sit empty, questions follow. Is that guarantee real or just words?

One way to look at Article 47 is how it pushes the State toward better eating habits and healthier communities. Not something courts can enforce, yet still sets an expectation for what leaders should do. When tons of food get thrown away, it shows promises are not matching real life outcomes.

When food gets thrown away, it clashes with fair sharing, a key idea behind Article 39(a). Resources should reach everyone, especially since eating matters for survival - so losing edible food ignores that balance. Not using what we have wisely goes against the spirit of equal access written into law.

Food gets used well because the rules push for smart choices, although nothing directly stops throwing it away. Efficiency quietly shapes how things work behind the scenes. Expectations form without clear laws saying so. The system leans toward saving rather than wasting. What people do follows unspoken guidance built into policy gaps. Even absent direct control, habits bend toward care.

### 3.2 Food Safety and Standards Act 2006

Food safety rules in India mostly come from a law passed in 2006. This act puts its main effort into keeping food safe, not cutting down on wasted food

Created by the law, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India sets rules while checking that they are followed. Under sections 16, 18, and 26, tasks around safe food practices fall on those running food businesses. Responsibility lands firmly with operators when it comes to avoiding risks. Rules tie together protection, oversight, plus clear roles for everyone involved. One change worth noting: the 2019 rules on surplus food recovery and sharing. With proper tracking and cleanliness, extra food can now move safely into donations

Still, the law skips over why food gets wasted in the first place - things like making too much or how people choose to buy. It helps, but only at a distance, guiding surplus to others instead of stopping extra from being made.

### 3.3 Solid Waste Management Rules 2016

Out of sight, waste isn't gone - rules made in 2016 set how it must be handled, thanks to a law from 1986. Because trash starts somewhere, sorting it right where it's created became required, shifting control closer to communities.

Most food scraps break down naturally, so they should go toward compost instead of trash piles. Households carry duties under Rule 4, while large producers fall under Rule 15. Local governments answer to Rule 21. Processing leftovers properly keeps them out of dumps.

Even with these guidelines, results still fall short. Some areas sort trash properly - others do not. Much leftover food winds up buried instead of being reused.

Most of the time, cleanup happens only once trash already exists. Because of that, tackling food loss through rules feels like chasing smoke. What gets measured usually comes too late to fix the real problem.

### 3.4 Municipal Governance

Waste rules get put into action by city councils. Thanks to the 74th Constitutional Amendment, town-level groups take care of gathering trash, moving it around, also getting rid of it.<sup>7</sup>

Most city setups respond only after problems arise. Handling trash comes once it already exists, while stopping it at the source gets little attention.

Most neighborhoods don't keep regular records on discarded food. When numbers are missing, planning smart solutions gets tricky.

So cities end up just hauling trash instead of finding ways to stop extra food from being tossed.

### 3.5 National Food Security Act 2013

Backed by law since 2013, getting enough food is now a right for many. Through programs like Antyodaya Anna Yojana and support for low-income families, people in need receive grain at lower prices. Instead of waiting on aid, they can claim it.

Yet here's the twist: fighting hunger sits beside massive waste. The law aims to feed people, but

tons of edible food vanish at the same time through leaks in distribution.

Still, even if the law skips talking about thrown-out food, shaky delivery systems weaken what it tries to do. When meals get tossed, that quietly breaks how well hunger plans work.

### 3.6 Food Sharing Rules by FSSAI

Most of the time, food sharing across India follows government plans instead of strict laws.

FSSAI's Eat Right India and Food Recovery Guidelines help move extra food to those in need. Food businesses work alongside nonprofits and food banks under these systems. Safety comes first, then cleanliness matters just as much. Distribution happens quickly because timing plays a key role.

Still, such steps aren't required by law. Without real consequences for noncompliance, they can only go so far.

### 3.7 Global Goals For Reducing Food Waste

Halfway through this decade, global targets quietly shape how India handles surplus food. A promise made elsewhere nudges local habits forward. By 2030, wasted meals should shrink by half - this number guides policy without shouting about it. Still, the SDGs carry no legal weight. Across India, these goals shape policies instead of creating duties that must be followed.

What these rules achieve hinges on whether countries actually turn them into local actions - something still weak when it comes to wasting food. Not every nation follows through with strong measures once global ideas land at home. Progress stalls where laws fail to reflect broader goals clearly. Real change shows only when daily practices shift beyond paper promises.

Without firm steps, good intentions gather dust like uneaten meals left too long.

### 3.8 Judicial Interpretation

Food rights grew through court decisions tied to Article 21. Judges shaped access by reading it into basic liberties. Over time, rulings made meals a matter of legal protection. Court actions

turned survival needs into enforceable claims. Legal thinking shifted as hunger cases reached higher benches. What began as vague ideas became concrete duties on states. Through judgments, eating gained status beside other fundamental freedoms.

Failing to deliver meals despite promises, the top court saw hunger programs not as gifts but entitlements in *People's Union for Civil Liberties against the government*.<sup>11</sup>

Just like before, the ruling in *Swaraj Abhiyan v. Union of India* stressed quick rollout of food programs because delays often mean people go without while supplies spoil. Though unseen at first, poor management shows its cost later when both hunger and waste grow.

It turns out the problem isn't running out of food. Instead, how it moves through systems often fails. Courts stepped in to back up people's claim to eat. Yet, tossing edible meals aside hasn't landed on their legal radar much.

### 3.9 Conclusion

Food waste slips through India's current laws, touched only by wider rules. Dignity, fair access to meals, and proper nourishment show up in constitutional ideals instead. Safety checks on what we eat mix with disposal systems under written statutes. Rules about rotting leftovers live apart from those guarding plates.

Still, each system works alone. Instead of stopping trash before it happens, nearly every method handles it afterward.

Without clear laws, efforts split apart. One agency acts while another waits. Responsibility fades when no one owns the outcome.

What works best? Moving past vague rules toward laws that hit the right spots with clear focus. Instead of stepping around the problem, sharper tools make a difference. Clearer rules, built on purpose, change how things flow. Hitting waste means aiming straight, not hoping side effects fix it. Precision beats broad strokes every time.

#### FOOTNOTES (BLUEBOOK STYLE)

1. Life and health matter, so does fair access to food. Wellbeing stands protected under India's highest legal rules. Basic needs link directly to how care gets delivered by government.
2. One case named *People's Union for Civil Liberties against the government of India* ended up in court records back in 2001. Volume five of the *Supreme Court Cases* holds its details on page two hundred ninety four. This happened within Indian legal boundaries where civil rights met state authority. The judgment remains part of public

law discussions even now. Courts referred to it when balancing free speech with national concerns.

3. Life means more than mere animal existence under Indian Constitution Article 21.
4. Food Safety and Standards Act, No. 34 of 2006 (India).
5. Food Safety and Standards (Recovery and Distribution of Surplus Food) Regulations, 2019.
6. Waste rules made official in 2016 under government order number 1357-E.
7. Act of 1992 changes India's Constitution under number seventy-four. This update brings shifts tied to city governance rules.
8. National Food Security Act, No. 20 of 2013 (India).
9. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Eat Right India Initiative, <https://eatrightindia.gov.in>.
10. G.A. Res. 70/1, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015).
11. As seen in the People's Union for Civil Liberties case against the Union of India, referenced earlier in footnote 2.

## **CHAPTER 4**

Technology institutions and corporate roles in food redistribution

### **4.0 Introduction**

Redistribution of food across India began with casual giving, shaped by neighborhoods and rituals. From temple offerings to wedding leftovers, people passed along surplus without central oversight. These acts mattered deeply, yet reached only so far. Organization was thin, growth slow. Today, systems guide much of what moves from excess to need - more gears, less guesswork.

City growth keeps pushing new setups into motion. Hunger still lingers even as meals get tossed out daily. Groups like nonprofits now step in where gaps remain. Online tools help track extras before they spoil. Some companies join via responsibility plans, quietly moving stock others can use. Food depots stretch further by teaming up across different roles.

From bakeries tossing leftovers to wedding halls with extra meals, helpers step in to redirect what would become waste. Meanwhile, rules set by FSSAI quietly shape how safely that rescued food reaches those in need.

Still, pieces stay split apart, even though tools now move faster and link better. What drives

things - machines, groups, companies - gets looked at here, along with where it falls short. A single nationwide setup never really took shape.

#### **4.1 How food sharing systems have changed over time**

Now food sharing across India moves more through structured networks than loose ones. Still, small shifts happened over time without loud announcements. Some efforts began quietly, then grew behind routine tasks. What once relied on chance now follows clearer paths. Not every place changed at once, yet patterns emerged slowly. Organisation replaced spontaneity in many areas. Old ways faded where new methods took root.

Back then, people shared meals through rituals like serving at temples, cooking together, or gathering during festivals. Trust held it all together - neighbor helping neighbor - yet nothing ever grew beyond small circles, limited by design.

Out of nowhere, more city living meant extra meals piling up, especially from restaurants and hotels. When makeshift fixes stopped working, something shifted. Groups stepped in, quietly setting up systems using helpers who followed set paths. Routes got mapped. People showed up on time. Food moved differently.

Now things move quicker because online tools let teams share updates instantly, linking helpers with those in need without delay. Behind the scenes, corporate programs chip in with money and transport help to keep it running.

Still, things haven't evened out - patchy links between areas and players linger. Though changes happened, gaps stay wide where connections should be strong.

#### **4.2 Digital Platforms Help Track Unused Food**

Faster connections pop up where meals find new paths. Organised routes now twist through screens, guiding what once piled high.

Now reporting extra food takes seconds using phone apps, so aid groups show up faster. When help arrives sooner, meals move swiftly instead of going bad.

Out here, tools swap loose chats for clear steps. Nearby links boost speed - donors meet takers just around the corner.

Still, they mostly handle day-to-day tasks, aiming to move faster instead of fixing deeper problems tied to wasted food.

#### **4.3 Institutional Ecosystem**

Most of the work moving extra food around India happens through groups outside government

control.

Surprising how much gets done when people just show up. Sometimes an NGO steps in, gathers extra meals others would toss, then finds ways to move them around. Storage sheds fill fast thanks to food banks showing up at odd hours. Community stoves fire up later, feeding crowds who never asked for help but need it anyway. Volunteers appear - no uniforms, just bikes and backpacks - carrying plates down narrow alleys where trucks won't go.

Still, tech helps teams work together better across this network - yet how well it fits together depends on where you are. Some places see smooth links; others lag behind.

Most of these places struggle because money runs short, buildings stay unfinished, yet official approval never shows up. Because of that mess, everything hangs apart - relying only on what each town can manage by itself.

#### **4.4 Food Sharing and Corporate Responsibility**

Firms now lean on CSR more than before. It holds things together behind the scenes. Not flashy, just steady. Works quietly where it needs to. Keeps pace without drawing attention. Runs in the background like a quiet engine.

It starts with a rule - Section 135 under the Companies Act, 2013 - that nudges firms to back efforts tackling hunger and better nutrition. Money flows through CSR into groups doing good work: nonprofits get help, transport systems move meals, tech tools connect surplus food with those who need it.

Scaling becomes possible through CSR, thanks to backing that's both monetary and logistical. Still, the majority of efforts last only as long as specific projects do - brief windows where lasting impact struggles to take hold.

Some businesses stay away because it is unclear how apps and online services fit into current rules. A shaky definition makes companies cautious about getting involved.

#### **4.5 Data-Driven Governance**

Fresh ways of sharing meals now follow where numbers lead. What shows up on screens shapes who gets fed next. Patterns hidden in figures decide which corners receive help first.

Later on, knowing how much extra food exists - and where - makes sharing it faster. Because of this, teams adjust pickup paths more smoothly while using what they have in smarter ways. Patterns in extra supply and what people need start to show up, which makes choices work better. Efficient decisions grow when these trends become clear through observation.

Still, data sees little use, failing to connect with wider decision-making systems.

#### **4.6 Legal Standing of Online Platforms**

Unclear where these online food sharing systems stand under current laws.

Food safety rules today mostly hold donors accountable. Still, when platforms manage transport details, doubts emerge over who should be liable.

Personal information managed by these platforms falls within the scope of the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. Meeting legal standards becomes more complex as a result.

Without firm laws to follow, many platforms rely on deals with partners and internal rules instead of official oversight. Yet structure remains loose, shaped more by agreement than statute.

#### **4.7 Urban–Rural Divide**

Fresh ideas about sharing surplus meals tend to gather where city lights shine brightest.

Built-up neighborhoods often enjoy steady power, strong links between places, also a flow of extra harvests. Meanwhile, country spots wrestle with spotty web service, roads that slow movement, along with fewer skills on screens.

Besides that, wasted food in country areas happens mostly when growing crops, whereas online tools target extra meals already sitting on plates.

Because things do not line up, tools struggle to make a real difference in cutting down wasted food throughout the whole chain.

#### **4.8 Strengths and Limitations**

Faster connections shape city life now, thanks to tools that cut delays plus waste. Coordination moves quicker, so less gets lost along the way.

- Still, some big gaps stick around
- Fragmentation due to multiple independent platforms
- Limited scalability beyond major cities
- Dependence on voluntary participation
- Lack of institutional integration

Without tougher laws and clear policies, tech fixes fall short when it comes to cutting food waste.

#### **4.9 Conclusion**

Now showing up in India, food sharing shifts away from casual handouts into organized networks. Tech steps in alongside charities and businesses, reshaping how surplus moves. Not

random anymore, these efforts link many players who track, sort, and send meals differently. Systems grow where once only loose giving happened. More eyes on waste means more routes to those in need.

Some places move ahead faster than others. Big towns gain ground quicker compared to villages left behind. What happens often depends on habit, not rules. It stays unclear who should do what.

For now, sharing surplus food sits between stages - not as scattered as it once was, yet falling short on coordination, clear laws, or presence across the whole country.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. United Nations Environment Programme, Reaping the Digital Dividend: AI Solutions Helping Cut Food Waste (2021), <https://www.unep.org>.
2. Farming and eating stuff tracked by a UN group finds tons vanish before plates. Their online spot shares numbers on what disappears between soil and supper. Pages at fao dot org show how much never gets chewed worldwide.
3. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Eat Right India Initiative, <https://eatrightindia.gov.in>.
4. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Food Sharing Platform, <https://sharefood.eatrightindia.gov.in>.
5. Section 135 of India's Companies Act, passed in 2013 as Number 18.
6. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Surplus Food Distribution Notification (2019).
7. Government of India, Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### Comparative Legal Frameworks on Food Waste Governance

#### **5.0 Introduction**

These days, handling wasted food isn't just about tossing it anymore. Instead of only managing trash, efforts now include stopping waste before it happens. Some nations once saw surplus food as simply garbage needing removal. Prevention plays a bigger role than before. Laws used to mix food scraps with regular rubbish rules. Now policies often connect leftover food to hunger and planet health. Redistribution helps get unused meals where they're needed. Sustainable choices shape how governments act today. What was ignored is now taken more seriously across the board

Looking at laws in France, the U.S., Italy, the EU, and the Philippines shows a mix of styles. One place leans on strict rules others use rewards to shape behavior. Some blend methods while another pushes goals without fixed paths. Each system reflects its own way of handling control and compliance. Rules here differ widely yet aim at similar outcomes through separate roads. One look at the rules shows how gift duties, shields from blame, along with rewards play a role - each weighed against what fits India today. What stands out is not just structure, but whether it holds up here.

### **5.1 How food waste rules have changed over time**

Few places now treat wasted food just as trash to dump. Instead, rules are slowly starting to focus on stopping waste before it happens.

Back then, trash was handled only once it already existed - mostly gathered up then buried. Yet as people started noticing weak spots across how goods move, things began changing: avoiding surplus came first, sharing extras followed. Nowadays, laws focus more on cutting waste right where it starts. Sharing extra food gets a boost through new rules. Public agencies working with businesses see stronger links forming.

Protections against legal risk help too. Rewards of different kinds push more people to join in. Out front, cities now plan ahead instead of just cleaning up later. A change like this shows how handling trash has shifted gears entirely.

### **5.2 France Uses Required Organ Donation**

France adopts a strict regulatory approach.

Food that's still good to eat must be given away by big stores under the 2016 Garot Law. Getting rid of it instead comes with fines. Charities approved by authorities receive these donations. Backed by tougher rules and steeper fines, the 2020 Anti-Waste and Circular Economy Law pushes further than before. While it tightens requirements, enforcement gains more weight under this update. Putting avoidance first, France lines up its trash rules with giving stuff another life before burning or burying it. What comes before dumping is passing things on, fixing them, or skipping waste altogether.

Businesses face heavy demands under this system, yet it keeps adherence strong.

### **5.3 United States Uses Incentives to Drive Behavior**

Voluntary involvement drives U.S. systems - backed by law and rewards that quietly encourage engagement.

Most people worry about getting sued if something goes wrong. Yet giving away extra food safely became easier after a federal law stepped in. When someone shares meals honestly, without cutting corners, they usually cannot be held responsible. Fear of lawsuits drops way down because of that shield. More groups now step forward, knowing rules back them up. Costs of giving get easier when tax perks kick in, thanks to updates from the PATH Act.<sup>6</sup> Still, giving isn't required, so results differ based on what support exists nearby and how much people know.

#### **5.4 Italy: Hybrid Approach**

A fresh approach takes shape across Italy - mixing support with rewards. Steps unfold through quiet encouragement rather than force. Not every path looks the same, yet results align.

Movement grows where help meets motivation.

Backed by the 2016 Gadda Law, giving gets easier through fewer paperwork hurdles along with perks at tax time. Risk drops too, since rules around responsibility are now clearer for companies saying yes.

While France requires involvement, Italy backs engagement - offering hands-on help along with funding to make it easier.

Flexibility grows this way, yet it relies on people choosing to follow along plus how towns decide to apply rules.

#### **5.5 European Union Adopts Target Based Approach**

A fresh method takes shape across Europe, built around shared goals instead of isolated efforts. Each nation lines up its steps with neighbors through quiet alignment rather than top-down orders. Progress moves not by decree but by steady sync between different systems. Direction comes from common markers set ahead of time. Cooperation replaces compulsion at every turn. The Waste Framework Directive ranks waste methods with prevention and reuse at the top. By 2030, countries must cut food waste - new rules make that mandatory.<sup>9</sup>

Most of the time, rules come from national governments even though the direction is shaped in Brussels. Each country finds its own way to meet shared targets set by the group.

Execution stays flexible, yet the framework still gives clear guidance along with responsibility built in. Though methods can shift, purpose remains fixed through structured support that tracks progress without forcing steps.

## 5.6 Philippines: Welfare-Oriented Model

Voluntary steps shape how care is given across the islands. Welfare comes first, quietly built into everyday choices.

Businesses get legal safety when giving extra food, thanks to the 2009 Food Donation Act.<sup>10</sup>

Voluntary involvement shapes the setup, since no enforced duties exist. Government bodies work alongside nonprofits - not because they must, but by choice - linking efforts without requirement. Cooperation happens when needed, driven more by shared intent than rules.

Because it leans on social norms, weak follow-through keeps results thin.

## 5.7 Comparative Analysis

Three main ways rules are managed come out of the comparison. One shows control through oversight. Another relies on gradual adjustments instead of fixed rules. A third uses feedback loops to adapt over time. Compliance comes through France's required rules, though these demands weigh heavily on those affected. Because of liability shields and rewards in places like the United States and the Philippines, more people join in - yet outcomes still differ widely. Not everyone gains the same advantage when these tools shape involvement. Where such measures exist, activity rises - but fairness doesn't always follow. Unequal effects surface even when the rules try to boost engagement through perks and legal cover. Some mix things like Italy does, others follow rules more closely - flexibility finds a way here alongside order. Not every place chooses one path only; balance shows up where you least expect it. Rules bend slightly without breaking, yet plans still hold firm when needed most. A single solution never works completely. Where rules are enforced, results tend to be better - though pushback often follows; without requirements, performance drifts unevenly.

What holds things together isn't just rules - rewards play a part, yet shared timing matters too. Starting late often fails unless everyone adjusts, because structure needs both pressure and rhythm instead of mere promises. One piece missing throws off the balance, since function leans on linked parts rather than isolated efforts.

## 5.8 Relevance to India

Trying out someone else's system straight up won't work because India runs on its own rules, shaped by constitution and shared power across states.

Folks handling food rules split duties across national and regional levels, so one-size-fits-all orders from the top stumble in practice. Though meant to streamline, rigid nationwide plans often fail where local control holds sway.

However, certain elements are adaptable:

- Shielding donors from blame helps boost giving
- Incentives to support redistribution
- Each state shapes its own path within national goals

Still, these methods fit within India's current laws and how things actually run on the ground.

## 5.9 Emerging Best Practices

Global trends suggest that effective food waste governance requires a balanced approach. Key elements include:

- Prioritising prevention and redistribution through a waste hierarchy
- Meeting duties while earning rewards under shield of law
- Strengthening coordination between public and private actors
- Setting measurable targets and improving data systems

These days, tossing out food ties into bigger issues like feeding people, protecting nature, one meal at a time. While wasted meals pile up, so does pressure on land, water - stuff we can't replace easily. Instead of just growing more, maybe saving what we already have matters just as much.

India might do better tweaking those ideas instead of copying one outright. FOOTNOTES

1. Every year, huge amounts of food disappear before reaching people. The United Nations group focused on farming and meals first shared these numbers in 2011. Their report shows where most waste happens across the world. Details came from tracking harvests, transport, storage, and markets. Some regions lose more during early steps, others at retail points. Data remains a key reference for experts studying supply chains. Source: <https://www.fao.org>.
2. United Nations Environment Programme, Food Waste Index Report 2024 (2024), <https://www.unep.org>.
3. Law number 2016-138 dated February 11, 2016, adopted in France.
4. Law number 2020-105 dated February 10, 2020, enacted in France.
5. Named after Bill Emerson, a law protects those who give away food. This rule is part of U.S. Code, Title 42, Section 1791. People sharing meals without charging aren't held liable if someone gets sick. The protection applies only when the giver acts responsibly. Rules like these encourage helping others instead of wasting food.
6. Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act, Pub. L. No. 114-113 (2015).

7. Legge 19 agosto 2016, n. 166 (Italy).
8. Directive 2008/98/EC (EU Waste Framework Directive).
9. Directive (EU) 2025/1892 (Food Waste Targets).
10. Republic Act No. 9803 (Philippines).

## **CHAPTER 6**

### Legal and Structural Gaps in India's Food Waste Management

#### **6.0 Introduction**

Most days, India handles food problems using rules built into its constitution. Still, tossing out edible food doesn't stand alone as a crime on paper. Instead, it slips into view through health codes, nature protections, or efforts to care for people in need. Out here, efforts drift apart - making teamwork shaky, roles blurry, who does what a guessing game. Prevention? Rarely lands on anyone's plate. Sharing gains equally slips through the cracks just as fast.

Looking closely at how things are set up reveals holes in rules that still block real progress on handling wasted food across India. Not everything works together smoothly when laws fall short and systems lack support behind them. Broken links show up where policy ends meet daily reality without clear direction forward. Gaps remain wide even now because structures fail to connect properly under current law. How waste gets managed often stumbles due to missing pieces built into the system itself.

#### **6.1 Absence of Dedicated Laws**

Right now, no national rule targets food waste directly.

Food waste lacks a precise legal meaning. Still, some rules touch parts of it here and there. Not one law sets firm goals for cutting losses. Prevention efforts drift without guidance.

Redistribution happens in pieces, unconnected. A full system remains absent, even now. Laws exist, yet they miss alignment.

Most places have clear rules about cutting down on trash first, then reusing it - India does not. Instead of ranking these steps by law, there's no official order that pushes for stopping waste before managing it. What you see is a system without a legal backbone for giving preference to sharing extras or avoiding junk altogether.

Most rules around wasting food lack real consequences. When there are no firm goals, people do not take them seriously. Responsibility slips through because expectations stay vague. Results change wildly depending on who is involved. Follow-through often disappears without

required actions.

## 6.2 Fragmented Institutional Framework

Across different agencies, oversight of wasted food splits between those handling health rules, land use, city planning, and nature concerns. From farm to table, different groups handle leftovers their own way. Nobody oversees it all as one system.

Where one role ends, another begins - blurred lines show up. Missed duties slip through without clear ownership. A shared plan never takes shape, left hanging between groups.

Still, control stays split up even with many groups involved.

## 6.3 Liability Questions Around Donating Food

Even if giving leftover food follows FSSAI rules, those who donate it still face uncertain legal safety.<sup>4</sup>

Once food gets handed over, nobody spelled out legal safety nets for donors. Rules about blame? Left hanging.

Still, the doubt remains for companies - big efforts slow down, despite clean records on safety. Facing murky rules on who's responsible, groups like NGOs run into daily hurdles that slow down sharing networks. These stumbling blocks make it harder for reuse efforts to grow beyond small circles.

## 6.4 Weak Economic Incentives

The economic framework does not encourage food donation.

Some companies choose to discard items simply - donating brings unclear rules on taxes, following laws, and moving goods.<sup>5</sup>

Most nations offer straightforward tax benefits to encourage giving. India does not provide such organized rewards for donors. Financial perks tied to contributions remain unclear there.

Without defined advantages, donating feels less appealing. Other places use policy tools to boost generosity. That system is missing within its economic framework.

So food sharing still depends more on goodwill than profit motives.

## 6.5 Data Deficiency and Missing Reports

Without consistent numbers, tracking what gets tossed out becomes a guessing game. One big problem shows up when records are spotty or uneven across regions. Measuring leftovers accurately? Nearly impossible without uniform methods. Picture trying to count something that

nobody measures the same way. Gaps like these make progress hard to see.

Businesses aren't forced to track how much trash they produce. Reporting it remains optional. Right now the information we have comes in pieces, scattered unevenly across sources. Because gaps show up everywhere, seeing how big the issue really is feels like guessing. Without clear patterns emerging, planning solid responses becomes a challenge. Each attempt at solutions risks missing the mark simply due to patchy knowledge.

When you can't track it, cutting food waste rarely matters to leaders.

### **6.6 Weak Municipal Implementation**

When it comes to trash, city councils mostly respond after problems arise. Their involvement tends to follow events rather than shape them.

Most people do not sort their trash properly right from the start, while systems meant to handle kitchen scraps remain underdeveloped.<sup>7</sup>

Still, rules get applied differently depending on where you are. What matters most stays stuck on gathering trash and getting rid of it - hardly ever about stopping waste before it happens or finding ways to reuse what's already out there.

Local control loses strength when tackling wasted food.

### **6.7 Ignoring Unofficial Ways**

Food moves across India in surprising ways, often riding on local efforts like neighborhood collectives or religious centers. Temples open their doors, sharing meals beyond worship. Volunteers step in where systems thin out, passing leftovers hand to hand. Much of this happens off official records, woven into daily routines. What gets saved from waste finds new paths through trusted faces.

Still, the law does not officially acknowledge such setups.

Because of this, there's little backing from organizations, money flows in slowly, yet their work matters deeply on the ground. Still, efforts stay scattered without clear direction.

### **6.8 Food Safety Versus Food Sharing**

Uncertainty tends to follow food donations, even though rules meant to keep meals safe sit at the core. These guidelines matter deeply - yet they sometimes stir confusion instead of clarity. Facing uncertainty once goods move beyond their reach, companies and middlemen question what rules still apply. Compliance becomes unclear when food is no longer in house.

Because of this, people often choose to throw things away instead of giving them away.

What trips things up isn't the guidelines - it's how fuzzy they feel when trying to juggle care and sharing at once.

## 6.9 Conclusion

What holds back India's handling of wasted food isn't missing rules. It's that the pieces just don't fit together.

Most current systems handle safety, trash handling, or worker well-being separately. Each runs on its own without connecting to others.

Most of the time it just responds after problems happen, dealing with waste instead of stopping it before it starts or sharing resources more wisely.

Messy teamwork, fuzzy roles - these drag down results even more. What happens next depends on who shows up late. Effort fades when nobody cares who does what.

Still, tackling wasted food happens in pieces, not as a clear legal goal. Though rules exist, they rarely connect into one strong system. Because of that, progress feels scattered instead of focused. What gets done often depends on location, not law.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Regulatory Framework Overview, <https://fssai.gov.in>.
2. Fresh laws took shape in India during two separate years. One arrived in 2006, focused on what people eat. The other began earlier, back in 1986, built around guarding nature. Each carries a number - thirty-four and twenty-nine. Their purpose differs, yet both set rules meant to protect life. Not all regulations feel the same, but these stand firm under Indian law.
3. Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, G.S.R. 1357(E) (India).
4. Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Surplus Food Redistribution Guidelines, <https://fssai.gov.in>.
5. Section 80G of the Income Tax Act from 1961 applies in India. The country also follows the Goods and Services Tax Act introduced in 2017.
6. Published by the United Nations Environment Programme, this report came out in 2024. It focuses on food waste trends around the world. Data inside reflects findings from that same year. The full title is Food Waste Index Report 2024.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### Policy Path and Legal Updates to Cut Food Waste

#### **7.0 Introduction**

Starts at farms, moves through markets, ends on plates - waste shows up everywhere in India's food chain. Each step has its own fix, yet none connect well with the next. Now moving into fixes instead of just breaking things down. Attention turns to hands-on changes

- ways to tighten teamwork across groups, boost what current setups already do well, tools that turn cutting food waste into something government actions can actually handle, not scattered attempts barely holding together.

#### 7.1 Integrated Governance Framework

Stopping food waste won't happen just because one rule changes or one office tries. Success comes when every part of how food moves works together.

One way forward fits laws, systems, and real-world steps into one clear path. Rather than scattered duties, a common aim takes shape - staying ahead of problems, spreading resources fairly, using what we have without waste. Tracking extra food and waste becomes possible when tech steps in. Yet involvement from businesses, nonprofit groups, together with corporate responsibility efforts, shapes how well it works.

Start by stopping trash before it happens. Usable meals move to those who need them instead. Only what's left behind gets thrown out.

#### 7.2 National Authority for Reducing Food Waste

One change stands out: a new group forms to keep things in sync. This team pulls direction from different sides, linking pieces that were once split apart. From here on, decisions gain a backbone they lacked before.

A fresh start doesn't mean scrapping what's already there - just weaving it together more clearly. One steady hand could shape how numbers are gathered, instead of everyone using different rules. Watch progress closely? That becomes possible when goals line up. Working across teams gets smoother when guidance comes from a single direction.

Right now, one agency does its own thing while another follows a separate path - results end up uneven. Oversight could tighten things up, cutting repeat work through clearer rules run by a single group.

What matters most is working together smoothly instead of adding more rules. Bureaucracy grows heavy when it should stay light.

### 7.3 Good Samaritan Law Protects Food Donations

Fear of lawsuits often stops people giving extra food away. Laws might seem unclear on who takes responsibility if someone gets sick.

Food givers shouldn't face legal trouble when they donate safely and honestly. Protection under a Good Samaritan rule must cover those sharing meals without risk or ill intent. Besides cutting worry over legal risk, it could draw companies into steady involvement.

Fences around these pathways could help spread resources better, since trust grows when things work without fail. Reliability invites growth, after all.

### 7.4 Fiscal and Economic Incentives

Decisions about money often shape how much food gets tossed aside.

These days, tossing things out feels simpler than giving them away because taxes are unclear and rewards don't exist.<sup>5</sup>

For donations to get support, knowing how GST applies helps a lot. Besides that, when people see real tax perks for giving, they tend to join in more.

Where things are handled day to day, fees for trash might go down if less is thrown away or shared out instead. People tossing fewer scraps could see lighter bills when systems give back more than they take.

What matters is building a system where giving supports donors, not only relying on goodwill.

### 7.5 Mandatory Reporting and Auditing

Without measuring it, food waste stays invisible. What gets tracked can change shape. Numbers shine light where eyes miss. Seeing the pile grows helps shrink it later. Hidden loss hides solutions too.

A single bite at a time, big kitchens must track what they make, use, leave behind.<sup>6</sup>

Just basic forms work fine - no need for complicated setups here.

Checking things now and then keeps data trustworthy. As days go by, people start owning their actions more, leading to smarter ways of handling trash.

Starting small might mean testing first in big cities. From there, steps follow where growth happens slowly. One place at a time becomes part of the process. Movement outward comes after early spots show how it works. Later stages include more areas when timing fits.

## 7.6 Strengthening CSR Integration

Fresh meals reach more people when companies share surplus instead of discarding it.

One way forward might start with ditching piecemeal efforts. Firms could back organized setups- think transport routes, warehousing, supply chains - not just isolated fixes. What matters grows clearer when pieces connect deliberately.

Working steadily alongside nonprofits often brings steadier results along with wider reach.

CSR should move beyond one-off help toward long-term building efforts. Instead of short bursts, it grows step by step. Over time, aid turns into steady progress. What once came in waves now flows constantly. Temporary acts fade, replaced by lasting frameworks. Help that flickers becomes something solid.

## 7.7 Circular Economy Approach

Leftover food can become useful again, if handled right. A chance to rethink scraps lies in how we see them. Turning what's unwanted into value happens more easily than most assume. Seeing waste as raw material shifts everything quietly.

Compost, biogas, or even animal feed might come from unavoidable waste - safety rules decide which path it takes.<sup>7</sup>

Fewer dumps get filled when local setups handle waste. These systems step in where old methods used to dominate.

Resource recovery becomes the priority instead of getting rid of waste. Focus moves away from throwing things out.

## 7.8 Changing How People and Systems Work

Food waste is also driven by behaviour.

Start small by thinking ahead each week - meals go further when fridges stay organized. Leftovers last longer if people take time to pack them right after eating. Instead of tossing scraps, get into the rhythm of repurposing bits into next day's lunch.

Food lasts longer when labels explain dates plainly. Confusion fades once people grasp what those stamps really mean. Misreading them less means tossing out fewer items. A simple word change might save a lot from the bin.

From town councils down, efforts should grow sharper when it comes to spotting problems and spreading knowledge while gathering trash. Awareness gains ground where oversight tightens, even as bins get emptied on schedule. With each round of pickup, attention shifts - quietly - to how well people understand disposal rules. Where routines form around collection

days, learning spreads without fanfare. Oversight deepens not through mandates but steady presence near curbside activity.

A single shift in habit might seem tiny - yet multiply it across days, weeks, lives. What looks quiet at first reshapes entire patterns. Tiny moves pile up where attention goes. One choice repeated becomes invisible force. Momentum builds without noise. Small steps aren't small after all.

### **7.9 Phased Implementation**

Reforms should be introduced gradually.

First up, people start learning about it. Donation guidelines get easier to follow. In big towns, trial updates begin showing results. Next up, teams start working together across agencies. Reporting spreads wider through regular updates. Rewards show up to encourage participation. Now comes step three: a connected setup where checks happen often because someone always needs to answer for results. Step by step, it moves forward - keeping things light on the machinery. Each phase slips into place before the next begins, avoiding cluttered results.

### **7.10 Conclusion**

What holds India back isn't missing rules - it's pieces that don't fit together.

A patchwork of rules covers pieces of food waste, yet they work alone - so impact fades. Each piece moves without the others, leaving results thin.

Starting off, the changes suggested here aim to make things line up better. One thing leads to another when directions are easier to follow. What matters is how well ideas work in real situations. Smooth connections between steps often reveal where improvements can take hold. Starting fresh each day, new rules could shape how food gets saved instead of tossed. Officials might adjust systems so less ends up rotting unseen. Rewards shift slowly when people see value in what was once thrown away. Actions change, one choice at a time, without needing grand plans.

Working better together matters more than adding new guidelines. What counts is shaping what we have into something that flows.

### **FOOTNOTES**

1. Farming and eating stuff around the world ties into what the U.N.'s food group studies. This topic shows where extra care helps save meals before they disappear. Work on tossing less happens through reports from that office online at their website.

2. NITI Aayog, Circular Economy Sectoral Insights, <https://niti.gov.in>.
3. National Strategy for Reduction of Food Waste Bill, 2022 (India).
4. Food Donation Policy Atlas, India Legal Framework Analysis, <https://atlas.foodbanking.org>.
5. Law number twelve from two thousand seventeen about central goods and services tax in India.
6. World Resources Institute, Food Loss and Waste Policy Brief, <https://www.wri.org>.
7. Farming and eating stuff worldwide gets tracked by a UN group. Their tool shows where food disappears before it reaches people. Data helps shape better rules across countries. You can check their work online at fao dot org.

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6. Central Goods and Services Tax Act, No. 12 of 2017 (India)
7. Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, G.S.R. 1357(E) (India)
8. Food Safety and Standards (Recovery and Distribution of Surplus Food) Regulations, 2019 (India)
9. Comparative Statutes
10. Loi n° 2016-138 du 11 février 2016 (France – Garot Law)
11. Loi n° 2020-105 du 10 février 2020 (France – AGECE Law)
12. Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1791 (United States)
13. Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act, 2015 (United States)
14. Legge 19 agosto 2016, n. 166 (Italy – Gadda Law)
15. Directive 2008/98/EC (European Union Waste Framework Directive)
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