



## HIGHLIGHTS OF GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES 2018

**Dr. Narendrakumar B. Patel**

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Economics, Bhavan's Sheth R.A. College of Arts & Commerce, Ahmedabad

### Abstract:

The Global Report on Food Crises brings together regional and national data and analysis into one report to provide a clear comprehensive picture of acute food insecurity in the many countries affected by food crises around the world. The report goes beyond the figures to explore key drivers of food insecurity, looking in greater depth at the effects of factors such as conflict, climate change and natural disasters, and inflation. Food security analysis is complemented with an overview of the nutrition situation and the drivers of malnutrition, considering food consumption, caring practices and public health-related factors.

**Keywords:-** Food Crises, Food Security, Food Insecurity, Nutrition, Malnutrition, Consumption, Climate Change, Natural Disaster, Inflation

### Introduction

In a food crisis or during protracted acute food insecurity, information can save lives. Analyses of food insecurity and malnutrition are carried out in countries and regions that are vulnerable to food crises and have large food-insecure populations and a high burden of malnutrition. The analyses identify who the food insecure and malnourished are, when they are food insecure, how severe the situation is, and how many food-insecure people there are in any given country or region. They establish where the food insecure live and the factors contributing to their vulnerability. And, when possible, they analyses how the situation is likely to evolve.

This Global Report on Food Crises provides a comprehensive picture of the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity and malnutrition in 2017 in 51 countries and territories, with in-depth analysis of the 26 crises with the largest populations in need of urgent action. Given the rising level of needs, the Global Report on Food Crises 2018 is a vital tool to help decision-makers plan humanitarian interventions, and allocate and prioritize resources. The report aims to facilitate greater coordination among and within agencies to address these complex issues and hopes to encourage high-level political buy-in to support the implementation of durable solutions to food crises.

### What is food insecurity?

Food insecurity refers to the lack of secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. For people to be food secure, food must be available in sufficient quantities – either homegrown, locally grown or imported from elsewhere. Food must be accessible – in other words, people must be able to acquire it regularly in adequate quantities and diversity whether through purchase, home production, barter, gifts, borrowing or food aid. And finally, the food that is available and accessible needs to have a positive nutritional impact on people. This refers to the way it is utilized by households, for instance, household storage, cooking, hygiene and sharing practices. Availability, access and utilization are known as the three pillars of food security. A fourth pillar – stability – refers to the fact that all three must be maintained on a consistent basis.

Acute food insecurity and malnutrition are any manifestation of food insecurity found in a specified area at a specific point in time of a severity that threatens lives or livelihoods, or both, regardless of the causes, context or duration. They are highly susceptible to change and can occur and manifest in a population within a short amount of time, as a result of sudden changes or shocks that negatively impact on the determinants of food insecurity and malnutrition (IPC, 2017).

### **What is malnutrition?**

Malnutrition refers to the abnormal physiological condition caused by deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in energy and/or nutrients necessary for an active, health life. Malnutrition includes under nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity. These conditions can arise separately or coexist. Under nutrition refers to the outcome of insufficient intake, and/or poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed. It includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin for one's height (wasted) and deficient in vitamins and minerals (micronutrient deficiencies). All forms of malnutrition result from inadequate nutrient intake, repeated infectious disease, and/or poor care and feeding practices.

### **Highlights of global report on food crises 2018**

- In 2017, almost 124 million people across 51 countries and territories faced Crisis levels of acute food insecurity or worse and required urgent humanitarian action. In 2016 the population in need of urgent action was estimated at 108 million across 48 countries.
- When comparing the 45 countries included in both editions of the Global Report on Food Crises, there has been an increase of 11 million people in need of urgent action, an 11 percent rise from 2016. This is largely attributed to new or intensified conflict and insecurity in Myanmar, north-east Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Yemen. Prolonged drought conditions also resulted in consecutive poor harvests in countries already facing high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in eastern and southern Africa.
- North-east states of Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen have experienced significant acute food insecurity and malnutrition. Famine was declared in February 2017 in two counties of South Sudan. Despite the different contexts of the four countries, humanitarian assistance mobilized by the international community contributed to preventing deterioration in food security and nutrition. However, humanitarian needs remain exceptionally high with almost 32 million food-insecure people in need of urgent assistance in 2017 across the four countries – an increase of almost 5 million from 2016. By mid-2017, Catastrophe/famine conditions persisted in South Sudan for 40,000 people and in north-east Nigeria for 50,000 people.
- In many countries, food insecurity is driven by multiple factors. However, the overview given in this report focuses on the main driver. In 2017, conflict and insecurity were the major drivers of acute food insecurity in 18 countries and territories where almost 74 million food-insecure people were in need of urgent assistance. Eleven of these countries were in Africa and accounted for 37 million acutely food insecure people; the largest numbers were in northern Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and South Sudan. Four countries affected by protracted conflict and with very high numbers of food-insecure people in Crisis conditions or worse were in the Middle East: Yemen had 17 million food-insecure people in need of urgent assistance, while Syria, Iraq and Palestine together accounted for over 10 million. In Asia, conflict, insecurity and climate

disasters drove large numbers of people into acute food insecurity in Afghanistan and Myanmar.

- Food security and livelihood interventions save lives, safeguard livelihoods and strengthen resilience in conflict situations and can contribute to generating peace dividends and to sustaining peace. Unless peace is restored and structural changes made, the situation in these conflict-affected countries will continue to be volatile with millions of people facing Crisis conditions of food insecurity or worse.
- Extreme climate events – mainly drought – were also major triggers of food crises in 23 countries with over 39 million food-insecure people in need of urgent assistance in 2017.
- Two-thirds of these countries were in Africa, where almost 32 million people faced Crisis conditions of acute food insecurity or worse caused by climate shocks. More than 3 million food-insecure people were in Latin America and the Caribbean (five countries), while 3 million were in South Asia (three countries).
- Drought in East Africa damaged already strained livelihoods, destroyed crops and pushed up food prices, particularly in Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya. Lack of rain in 2016 in Uganda led to increased food insecurity in early 2017, at a time when the country was already facing high food insecurity due to an influx of refugees. Southern Africa suffered severe food insecurity conditions in early 2017 following prolonged drought in 2015/16. The dire situation in early 2017 in Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and most other mainland southern African countries improved with good 2017 harvests. However, the situation remained worrying in southern and southeastern Madagascar, where about half the population were in need of humanitarian assistance, reflecting successive years of below-average rice harvests in the north.
- In South Asia, drought affected agricultural production and food security in four districts of Sindh province in Pakistan, while severe and widespread floods in northern rice-growing areas of Bangladesh limited access to food for poorer households. Food access was also restricted in Cox's Bazar, where almost a million Rohingya refugees are located.
- In the Caribbean, two extremely powerful hurricanes (Category 5 hurricanes Irma and Maria) in September devastated entire communities and exacerbated the already fragile food security situation in Haiti, where chronic poverty and successive climate disasters have undermined households' resilience to shocks.
- Food insecurity in other countries presented in this report was also driven by factors such as population displacement and crop production shortfalls.
- Conflict and climate shocks have forced large numbers of people to abandon their homes – either fleeing abroad or sheltering elsewhere in their own countries. The analysis in this report indicates that conflict and climate disasters have often occurred simultaneously, and several African countries – including Nigeria, Somalia and Sudan – have seen significant population displacement associated with both. Internal and external displacement disrupts livelihoods, undermining access to income-earning opportunities and putting pressure on resources, with major consequences for the food security of host communities and displaced populations. Among the countries analyzed in this report, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Myanmar/Bangladesh are those most affected by displacement.
- Weather hazards, crop production shortfalls and conflicts have also prompted price spikes in a number of countries, hindering food access. In 2017, high – and even record – staple food prices affected a number of countries, restricting access to food and increasing food insecurity. Weather-induced crop production

shortfalls in East Africa triggered sharp cereal price increases in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Similarly, floods in Bangladesh and drought conditions in Sri Lanka reduced rice production, pushing prices to historical highs in the first half of 2017. Conflict and insecurity – which disrupts market functionality, hampers agricultural activities and brings about economic decline and currency depreciation – also prompted price spikes in Nigeria, South Sudan, Yemen and Burundi. Prices in southern Africa were at near-record levels in early 2017, but large increases in cereal production brought prices down for most of the year.

- The short-term outlook for 2018 suggests conflict will remain a primary driver of food insecurity in major emergencies, particularly in Africa (Somalia, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic and Nigeria); in Asia (Afghanistan); and in the Middle-East (Yemen and Syria). South Sudan is expected to face rising acute food insecurity up to the peak of the lean season in July, with 155,000 people likely to face Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) conditions. In north-east Nigeria, 3.7 million are expected to be severely food insecure through August 2018, with almost 13,000 people in Famine (CH Phase 5). The conflicts in Afghanistan and Yemen are expected to exacerbate food insecurity in 2018, with Yemen remaining the world's most concerning food crisis due to access restrictions, economic crisis and outbreaks of disease.
- In 2018, dry weather conditions are likely to aggravate food insecurity in some countries. The Horn of Africa pastoral areas in Somalia, south-eastern Ethiopia and eastern Kenya are expected to receive below-average rainfall during the March-May rainy season.
- Western African and Sahel countries including Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal are also expected to face increased food insecurity in pastoral areas due to the lingering effects of dry weather in 2017. Cape Verde has reported almost no harvests for the 2017/18 agricultural season because of a severe drought. In several countries, food access is expected to be limited by persistently high and/or rising domestic food prices, which will have a severe impact on the most vulnerable households.
- Food security is also of concern in Eritrea, Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Venezuela, but no estimate of the number of food-insecure people in these countries could be made because of a lack of data.
- The global prevalence of wasting is around 8 percent, still higher than the internationally agreed nutrition target to reduce and maintain childhood wasting to below 5 percent by 2025. Global wasting levels have remained static, and although there has been a reduction in stunting over the last decade, high wasting and stunting levels persist in areas of protracted crisis.
- This report draws attention to the often huge differences in child wasting levels within countries. Extremely high rates of acute child malnutrition are found in areas affected by conflict such as north Darfur in Sudan (28 percent), South Sudan (23 percent), the Lac region of Chad (18 percent) and northern Nigeria (10-16 percent). The level of risk of malnutrition in food crises depends on factors such as the degree of civil security and displacement, the availability and accessibility of nutritious foods, access to health and nutrition services, and water and sanitary conditions. Those affected often have poor nutritional status before the crisis, as observed in the Rohingya crisis, Somalia, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen and in the Lac region of Chad. Nutritional status deteriorates as the crisis affects communities and damages infrastructures, threatens livelihoods and disrupts social structures.

- When access to health and sanitation services is also curbed, the risk of disease increases, and populations become more susceptible to infection. Many of the countries profiled in this report experienced severe outbreaks of cholera in 2017 including Yemen (almost a million cases), Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Borno state in Nigeria, Kenya, Sudan, Malawi, Mozambique, Burundi, Chad and Somalia, which raised the levels of acute malnutrition. In countries with conflict and displacements, it is more difficult to contain and treat diseases, which also increases the levels of acute malnutrition in the population. According to the Global Nutrition Report 2017, unclean water and poor sanitation is associated with 50 percent of under nutrition by increasing the risk of disease: when children are malnourished their resistance to illness is lowered and when they fall ill, malnourishment worsens.
- In areas with climate shocks, where access to food, health care, clean water and sanitation services are limited, high acute malnutrition rates persist, as is the case in northern Kenya, in Sindh province in Pakistan as well as parts of Ethiopia and Madagascar. The report highlights that a high proportion of children under 2 are not consuming the minimum diet required for optimal growth and development, which contributes to high acute and chronic malnutrition levels.
- A comparison of 2016 and 2017 shows that more people need support and for longer periods. Young children and pregnant and breastfeeding women are extremely vulnerable in emergencies and their nutritional status must be protected to prevent malnutrition and guarantee survival.

**References:-**

- FAO-Food and Agriculture Organization (2018), “Global Report on Food Crises 2018”,
- FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP & WHO. 2017. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2017. Building resilience for peace and food security. Rome: FAO.
- <http://www.fews.net/our-work/our-work/scenario-development>
- FAO. Crop Prospect and Food Situation, December 2017. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/a-i8278e.pdf>
- UNICEF. Humanitarian Action for Children. Available at <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/2018-HAC-Eritrea.pdf>
- Dr. N.B.Patel (2015), “A Study of Food Security in Gujarat”, Ph.D. Thesis, HNGU