



Global Hunger Continues to Rise

According to the **United Nations' State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report 2018**, climate change is having a negative effect on global agriculture and is driving up the number of hungry people around the world.

- The report was jointly published by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO).
- The report is part of tracking progress towards **Sustainable Development Goal 2-Zero Hunger**, which aims to end hunger, promote food security and end all forms of malnutrition by 2030.
- The 2017 report observed **conflict, climate and economic slowdowns** are the factors behind the recent rise in hunger. It also provided an in-depth study of the role of conflicts.
- The 2018 report focuses on the role of climate variability and extremes to explain the observed trends in food security.

Key Findings

- About 800 million people, one in every nine, were malnourished in 2017, putting at risk the UN's goal of eradicating hunger in the world by 2030.
- Evidence continues to signal a rise in world hunger. According to available data, the number of people who suffer from hunger has been growing over the past three years, returning to levels from a decade ago.
- There was also limited progress in 2017 in addressing multiple forms of malnutrition, such as child stunting (in which children don't grow properly due to undernourishment) and adult obesity, putting the health of hundreds of millions of people at risk.
- The situation is worsening in South America and most regions of Africa, while the trend in undernourishment in Asia seems to be slowing significantly.
- The effects of climate variability on rainfall patterns and agricultural seasons, and climate extremes such as droughts and floods, are among the key drivers of the rise in hunger, together with **conflict and economic slowdowns in nations such as Yemen and economic crises in countries like Venezuela** which have restricted people's access to food.
- Changes in climate are undermining production of major crops such as wheat, rice and maize in tropical and temperate regions, a trend that is expected to worsen as temperatures become more extreme.
- The number of undernourished people tends to be higher in countries highly exposed to climate extremes.
- The late or early start of rainy seasons and the unequal distribution of rainfall within a season are affecting food production. Other effects include food price hikes and losses in poor farmers' incomes.
- Globally, Africa and Asia accounted for about 40% and 55% of all stunted children, respectively. Africa has seen an upward trend in the number of stunted children, while Asia has experienced the largest relative decrease in stunting prevalence.
- Children with low weight-for-height (wasting) have an increased risk of mortality.
- While the prevalence of overweight in children under five years may not have changed significantly in recent years, adult obesity continues to rise and one in three women of reproductive age in the world is anaemic.
- Adult obesity is worsening, and more than one in eight adults in the world is obese. The problem is

most significant in North America, but Africa and Asia are also experiencing an upward trend.

- Poor access to food and particularly healthy food contributes to undernutrition as well as overweight and obesity. It increases the risk of low birthweight, childhood stunting and anaemia in women of reproductive age, and it is linked to overweight in school-age girls and obesity among women, particularly in upper-middle- and high-income countries.
- The report launches an urgent appeal to accelerate and scale up actions to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity in the face of changing climate variability and increasing extremes.

Recommendations in Report

- Policies must pay special attention to groups who are the most vulnerable to the harmful consequences of poor food access: infants, children aged under five, school-aged children, adolescent girls, and women.
- A sustainable shift must be made towards nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems that can provide safe and high-quality food for all.
- Stepping-up of efforts to build climate resilience through policies that promote climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction.
- Ensure better integration of the global policy platforms like climate change (governed by the UNFCCC and the 2015 Paris Agreement), disaster risk reduction (the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction), development (as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) etc and processes to ensure that actions across and within sectors such as environment, food, agriculture and health pursue coherent objectives.

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