

# Malnutrition and climate change: linked challenges, linked solutions

AFP/Dipendu Dutta 2016



# Alliance2015 policy Recommendations to the EU

*Climate change is multiplying the threats to the world's most vulnerable groups and regions. Often the people most at risk are those who already suffer from hunger and poverty, have contributed the least to climate change, and yet have the least capacity to adapt and respond to its impacts. It is time for policy makers to make drastic advances in climate change mitigation and adaptation, to guarantee people's food and nutrition security.*

The **Global Hunger Index 2019** expands our understanding of the interplay between climate change and malnutrition. The EU has been a global leader on nutrition in terms of commitments met and funding disbursed<sup>1</sup>, and plans to play a leadership role on climate issues with its proposed Green New Deal under the new Commission.

But, **as we are not on track to meet Sustainable Development Goals 2 or 13**, Alliance2015 proposes the following recommendations to the EU, to maintain the EU's global nutrition leadership, and build its leadership impact on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/fourth\\_progress\\_report\\_on\\_eu\\_apn.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/fourth_progress_report_on_eu_apn.pdf)

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A rice producer spreads out the harvest to dry in the sun in Dudhitanr, Jharkhand, India. Rice, the main staple crop for more than half of the world's population, is highly sensitive to minor changes in temperature, making yields extremely susceptible to climate change.  
*Welthungerhilfe/Thomas Rommel 2019*



A storm strikes on the island of Buthony, Unity State, South Sudan. The country's problems with hunger due to prolonged conflict and displacement are exacerbated by severe recurring droughts and extreme rainy seasons.  
*Welthungerhilfe/Andy Spyra 2017*

# Key Facts

> The **2019 Global Hunger Index (GHI)** shows that the world has made gradual progress in reducing hunger on a global scale, with the **GHI** score declining by 31% since 2000, but this progress has been uneven. Hunger persists in many countries and progress is even being reversed in some countries, driven by **extreme climatic events, violent conflicts, economic slowdowns and crises.**

> **The number of people who are undernourished actually rose from 785 million in 2015 to 822 million in 2018.**

> **At the pace of hunger reduction observed since 2000,** approximately 45 countries will fail to reach low hunger levels by 2030 as defined by the **GHI** Severity Scale and therefore fail to achieve several SDG 2 targets.

> Many of the **countries with high levels of hunger are also worst affected by climate change.** Countries with high **GHI** values are

often highly vulnerable to climate change but are ill prepared to cope with it. At the same time, they have often contributed the least to the factors that cause climate change.

> **Climate change further increases the burden of responsibility and the workload of women,** particularly in low-income countries and rural areas, as women are often responsible not only for producing food, but also for managing and distributing it within families.

> Due to climate change, **disasters have disproportionately harmed low-income people and their access to nutritious food.** Climate models project higher average temperatures in most land and ocean regions, hot extremes in most inhabited regions, and heavy precipitation and an increasing probability of drought in some areas—all additional challenges for reducing hunger.

Patrick Ghembo stands in his maize field in Monyo Village, Malawi, his harvest destroyed by Cyclone Idai. He returned to his farm to fish in order to feed his family, who lived in a temporary camp for displaced people. *Concern/Gavin Douglas 2019*

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## Alliance2015 therefore **calls** on the **EU** to:

> Show leadership with a **meaningful new funding commitment at Nutrition for Growth** and by **immediately increasing its 2030 climate target to 55% emissions cuts** while ensuring Member States contribute more to the UN Green Climate Fund to support least developed countries with adaptation and mitigation.

> **Use its policy and funding weight to transform food production and consumption patterns to reach climate and nutrition goals:** a radical transformation of production and consumption patterns, especially in high-income countries, is crucial to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and

ensure that all people have access to healthy and sustainable diets.

> **Reinforce policy coherence across agriculture, development and trade to strengthen impact of resilience programming in the face of economic, climate, crisis and conflict shocks,** by strengthening territorial food systems, improving access to finance for agroecological approaches, and ensuring the diversification of agricultural production and integrated farming systems.

> **Prioritize community and public participation in climate decision making and policy making;** develop adaptation strategies together with affected communities based on local needs, integrating indigenous and traditional

knowledge particularly of women, and ensuring increased access to new research, technologies, and agricultural and meteorological data.

> **Increase the policy focus and proportion of spending on those most vulnerable to climate change, and food and nutrition insecurity in least developed countries,** protecting and increasing official ODA commitments, such as new commitments to Nutrition For Growth, while balancing financing for climate change adaptation with that for mitigation.

> Ensure stronger monitoring systems, both quantitative and qualitative, to ensure that **ECHO and DEVCO spending is**

in line with established policy commitments, guiding principles, official recommendations and agreed regulatory frameworks, for example:

**I. Develop, upgrade and rigorously implement regulatory frameworks that are in line with international guidelines protecting food and land rights** such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for all affected local communities.

**II. Ensure that the new MFF 2021-27** delivers the minimum 20% benchmark on the support for social sector spending (required in the MFF 2014-2020).

**III.** Allocate the promised 25% spending target for climate objectives in the new

**Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI)**, with strong, meaningful indicators for adaptation and mitigation impacts.

**IV. Rapidly implement the recommendations of the Task Force for Rural Africa<sup>2</sup>** : in particular to attain greater levels of gender equity in sustainable land- based solutions for tackling climate change.

**V. Invest in local not global agri-businesses: the investments made under the European External Investment Plan and traditional DEVCO grant making** should strongly focus on local and sustainable food systems, including the development of local, regional and national markets, addressing gendered barriers to participation, and contributing to the improvement of local food security, instead of focusing on export commodities for the world market.

**> Build resilience, prepare and respond to disasters more effectively by:**

**I. Increasing new investments in disaster prevention and disaster risk reduction, especially in vulnerable regions prone to extreme weather events.**

This includes funding early warning and response systems, forecast-based financing mechanisms, and adapted infrastructure; making rapidly dispersible, flexible and multi-year funding available to tackle food crises and respond to disasters when they occur.

**II. Funding innovation and increased participatory and inclusive research** that combines farmer- and citizen-led innovation with scientific research to identify locally relevant solutions (e.g. drought-resistant crops).

**III. Rigorously using conflict-sensitive and do no harm approaches.**

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## About Alliance2015

We are a strategic network of 8 European NGOs, working globally across 90+ countries, we spend together over EUR 1bn/year in humanitarian, development and advocacy initiatives, aiming for greater quality, scale and impact by working in value-adding collaborations, in particular towards SDGs 1 and 2. We are a member of Generation Nutrition. For further information please contact [info@alliance2015.org](mailto:info@alliance2015.org). For further information on the **2019 Global Hunger Index**, please visit [www.globalhungerindex.org](http://www.globalhungerindex.org).

A woman collects water at a river in Jean-Rabel, Nord-Ouest Department, Haiti. In recent decades Haiti has been hit by several natural disasters, with severe impacts on food and nutrition security. Crop failures have led to increased food prices, food insecurity, and political instability. *Welthungerhilfe/ Thomas Rommel 2019.*



<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/farming/documents/report-tfra\\_mar2019\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/food-farming-fisheries/farming/documents/report-tfra_mar2019_en.pdf)

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