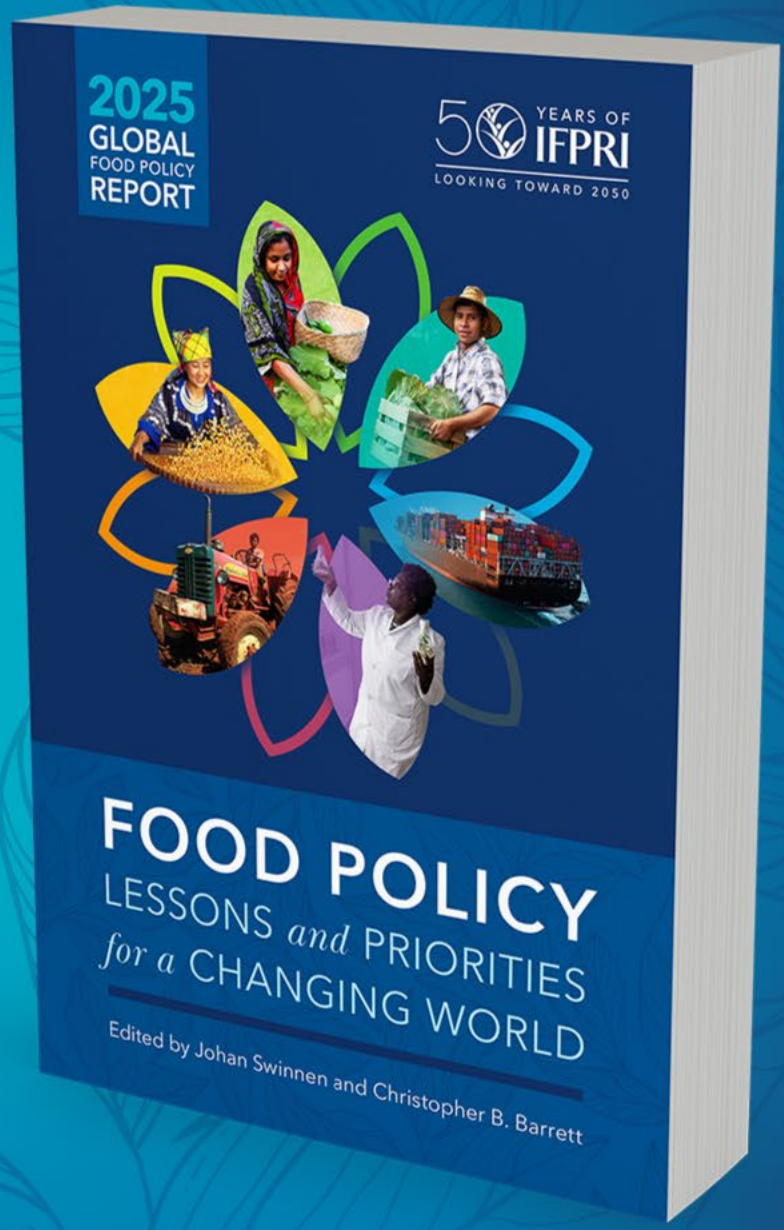
Download the book



2025 GLOBAL FOOD POLICY REPORT

50 YEARS OF IFPRI
LOOKING TOWARD 2050

भाकृअनुप ICAR

SOUTH ASIA LAUNCH EVENT

FOOD POLICY *for a* CHANGING WORLD

LESSONS *and* PRIORITIES *for* SOUTH ASIA

16 September 2025

14:30 – 18:15
India Standard Time

Hotel Jaypee Siddharth
New Delhi

2025 GLOBAL FOOD POLICY REPORT

50 YEARS OF IFPRI
LOOKING TOWARD 2050

FOOD POLICY
LESSONS *and* PRIORITIES
for a CHANGING WORLD

HYBRID GLOBAL LAUNCH EVENT

16 September 2025

Global Food Policy Report

Overview

Johan Swinnen and Chris Barrett
Director General and SPC Chair
IFPRI

IFPRI has evolved over time

1975

Staff: 40

IFPRI joined CGIAR in **1979**

2000s

Staff: 200

HarvestPlus
Better Crops • Better Nutrition

De-centralization 2004

2025

Staff: >500
Interdisciplinary
60% in country programs

Research focused on international public goods → Greater focus on specific policy issues at national, regional, or global level → Continuous decentralization and focus on capacity sharing → Greater specialization to address fast emerging issues in a rapidly changing world

Research Programs

- World food trends
- Agricultural production
- Agricultural growth linkages
- Food subsidies

- Water resource allocation policies
- Diet quality & diet changes of the poor
- Property rights & collective action
- Pathways from poverty
- Urban challenges to food security
- HIV/AIDS & food & nutrition security
- Large scale interventions to enhance human capital
- Market development
- Genetic resources policy
- Policy processes in food security & nutrition
- WTO, regional trade & globalization
- Priorities for public investment

…and several more

- Development Strategies & Governance
- Foresight & Policy Modeling
- Markets, Trade & Institutions
- Innovation Policy & Scaling
- Natural Resources & Resilience
- Nutrition, Diets & Health
- Poverty, Gender & Inclusion

Hunger to hope: 50 Years of Food System Transformation in South Asia

From Food Deficits to Policy-Driven Progress

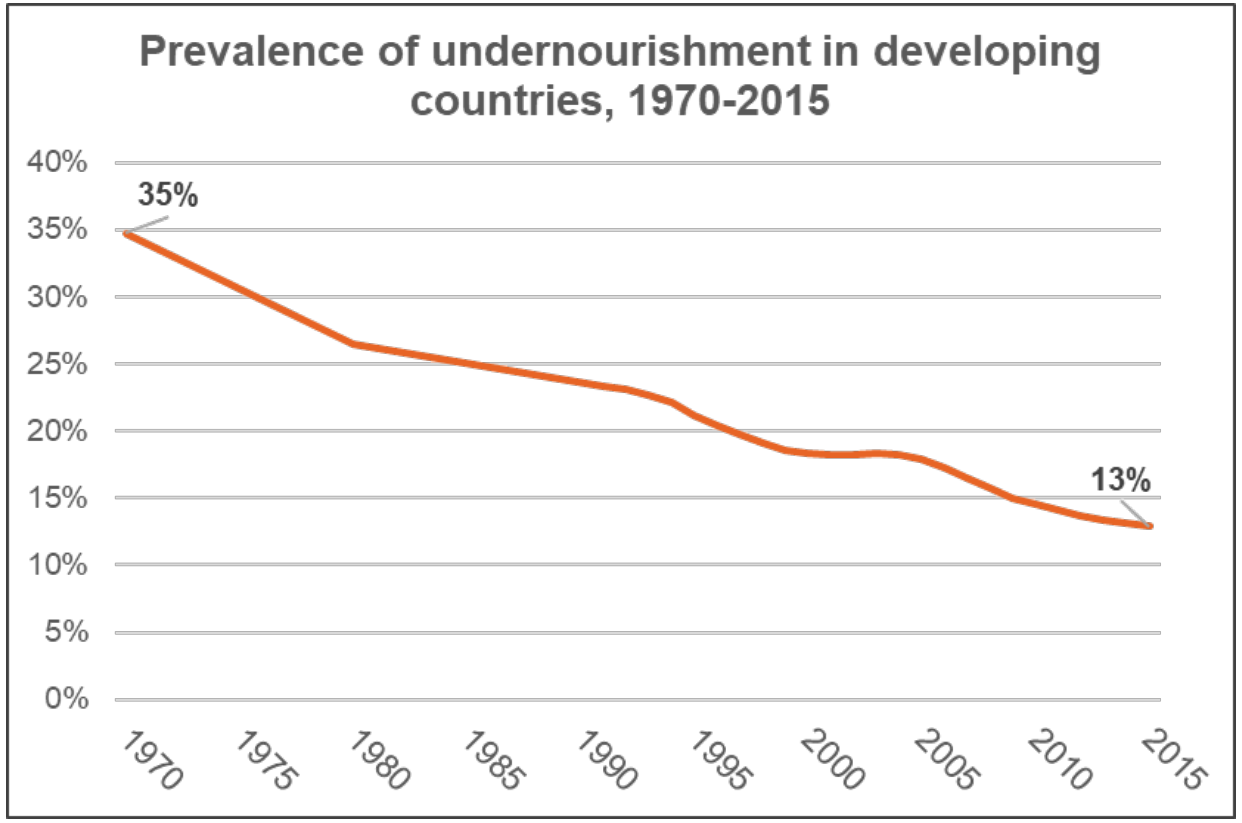
1. **Green Revolution:** Rapid productivity rise turned chronic food deficits into surpluses.
2. **Agriculture-Led Development: Broader** acceptance of agriculture-led economic development transformation.
3. **Smart Public Investments:** Shift I public policy thinking based on the evidence of high returns on agri investment
4. **Social Protection Innovations:** Better understanding of **Food Security → better** in design and implementation of social protection program (targeting, conditional transfer, and integration of nutrition, gender, and livelihoods).
5. **Nutrition and Empowerment:** Agriculture-nutrition-gender linkages (e.g. ANGeL project, POSHAN): Women's group platforms leveraged to improve diets & welfare.

New Challenges to food systems:

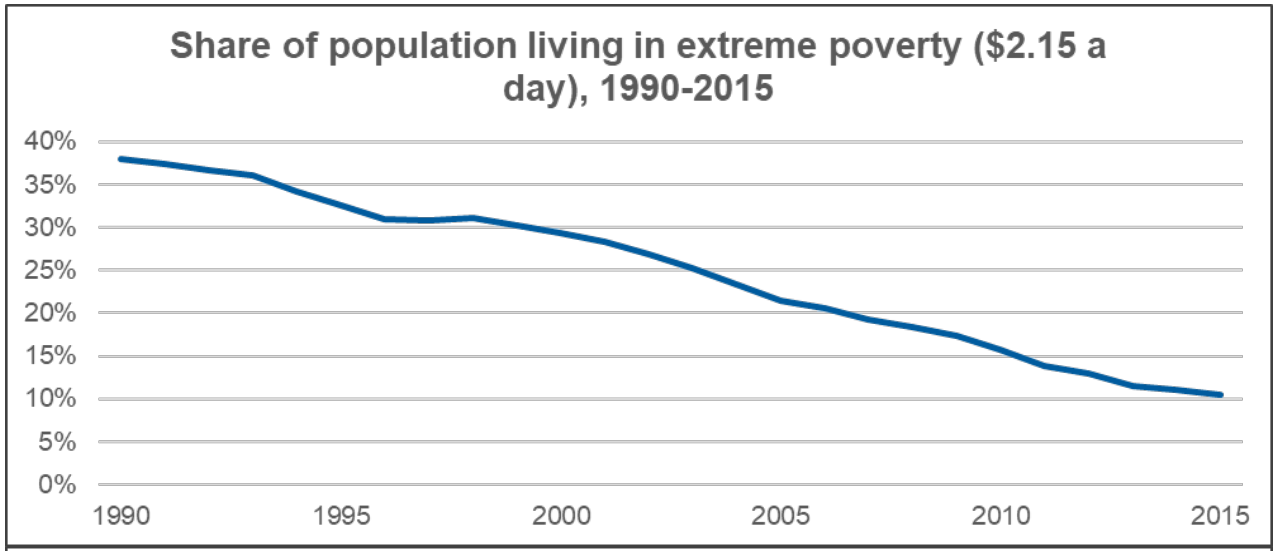
1. Climate induced productivity declines
2. Stagnation & reversal of development outcome
3. Growing fragility & conflicts (threatening food security)
4. Disruptive technology (bone or bane?)

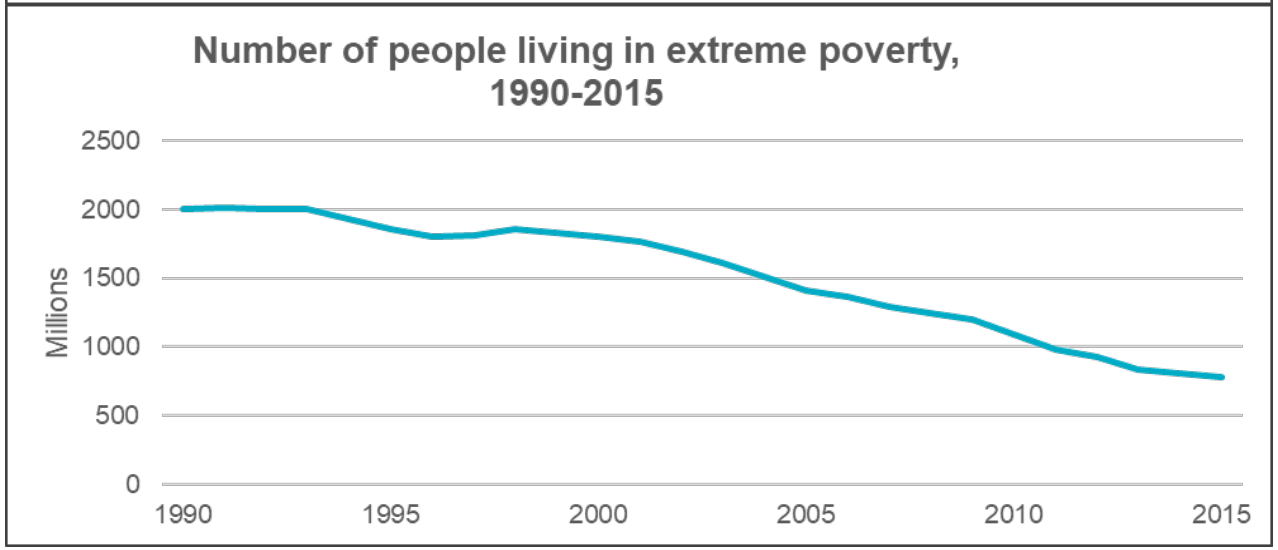
Evidence generation for policy shift

1975-2015: Unprecedented progress in reducing hunger and poverty



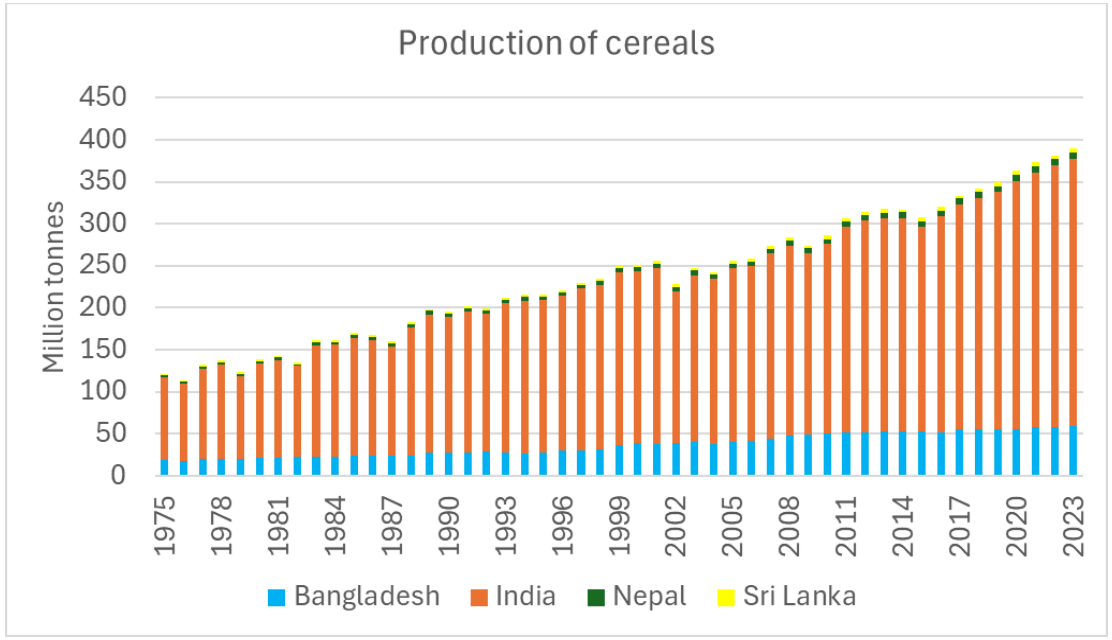
Data: FAO

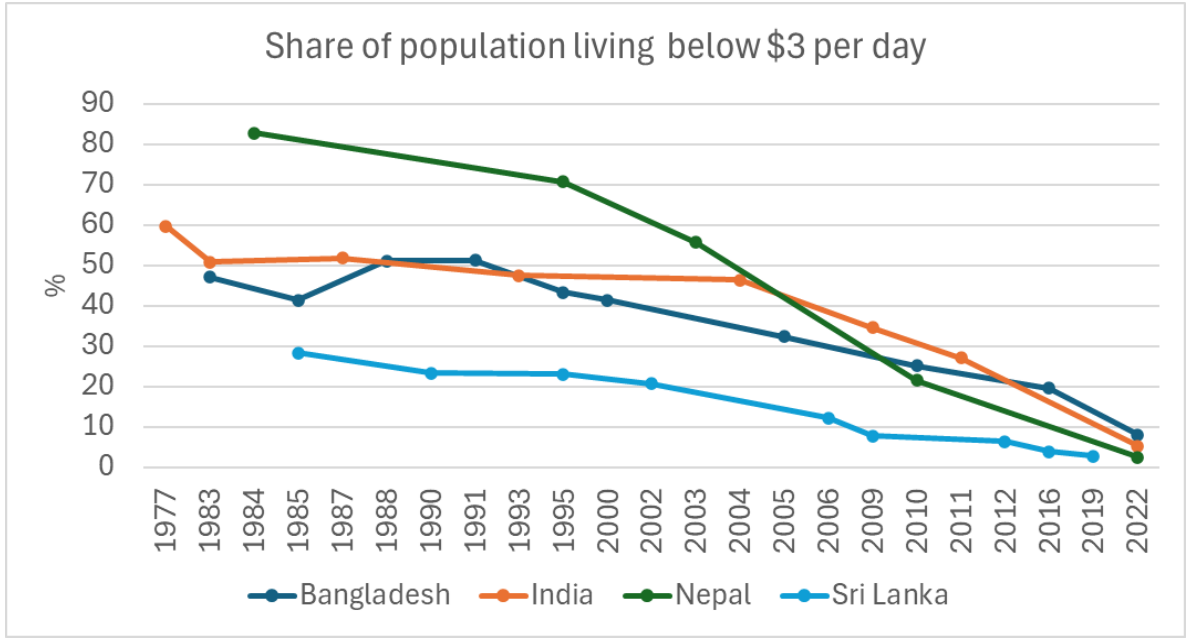




Data: World Bank Poverty and Inequality Platform

70 years of economic progress



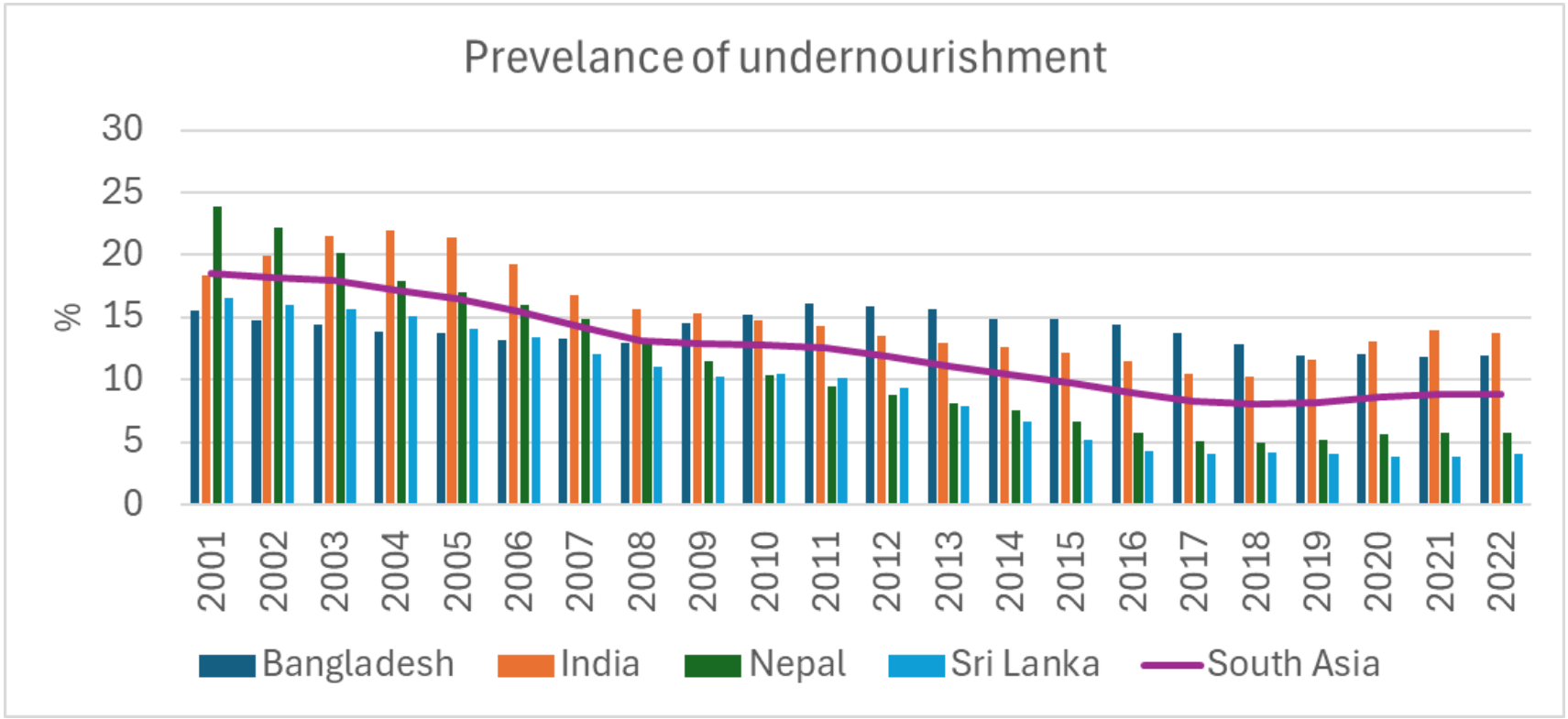


Source: World Bank

- **A 25-fold increase in South Asia's GDP from 1960 to 2024**
  - **15-fold increase from 1975 to 2024**

- **A 10-fold drop in poor population**

Progress in Combating Undernourishment (2001-2022)



Source: FAO

- **Remarkable reduction in undernourishment followed by a stagnation in recent years**

Challenges

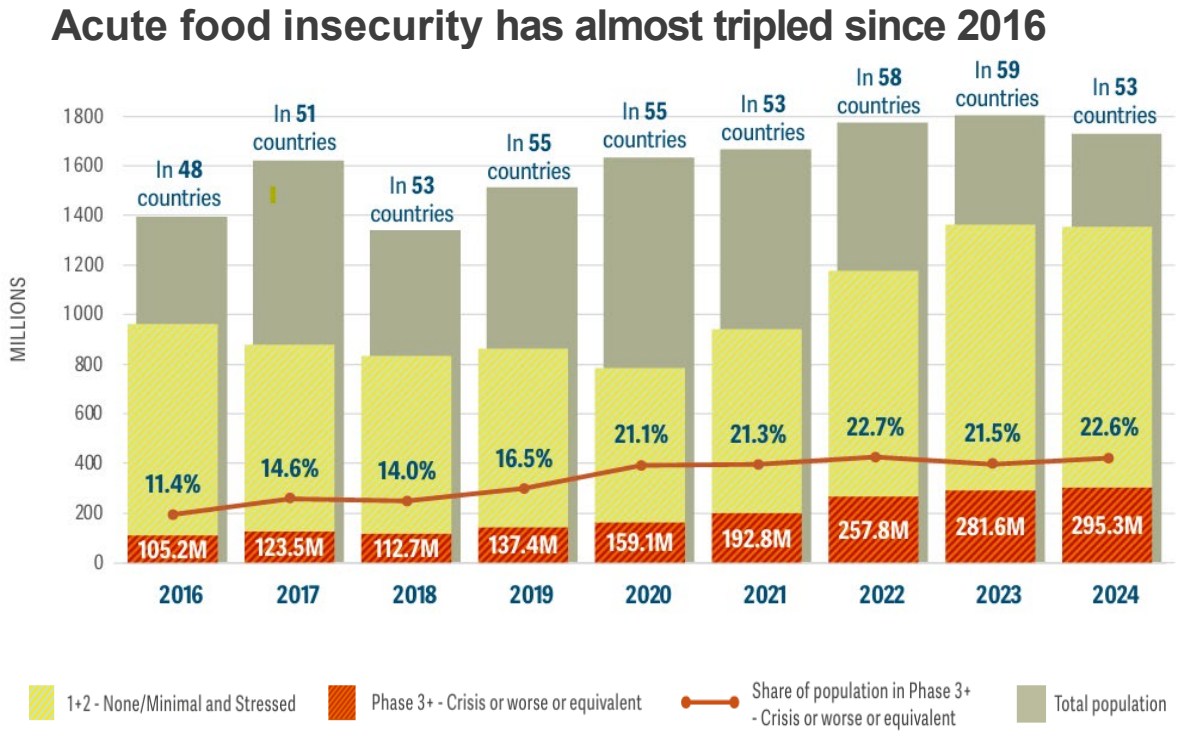
Agri-food system is under stress:

Emerging Challenges

- **Climate & Environmental Pressures**: Stagnating productivity, land degradation, water stress
- **Changing Diets, Persistent Undernutrition:** Low affordability and intake of fruits & vegetables; rising micronutrient gaps
- **Equity & Demographic Transitions:** Gender gaps, youth joblessness, urbanization pressures
- **Signs of Reversal:** Hunger & poverty progress slowing or reversing in parts of region

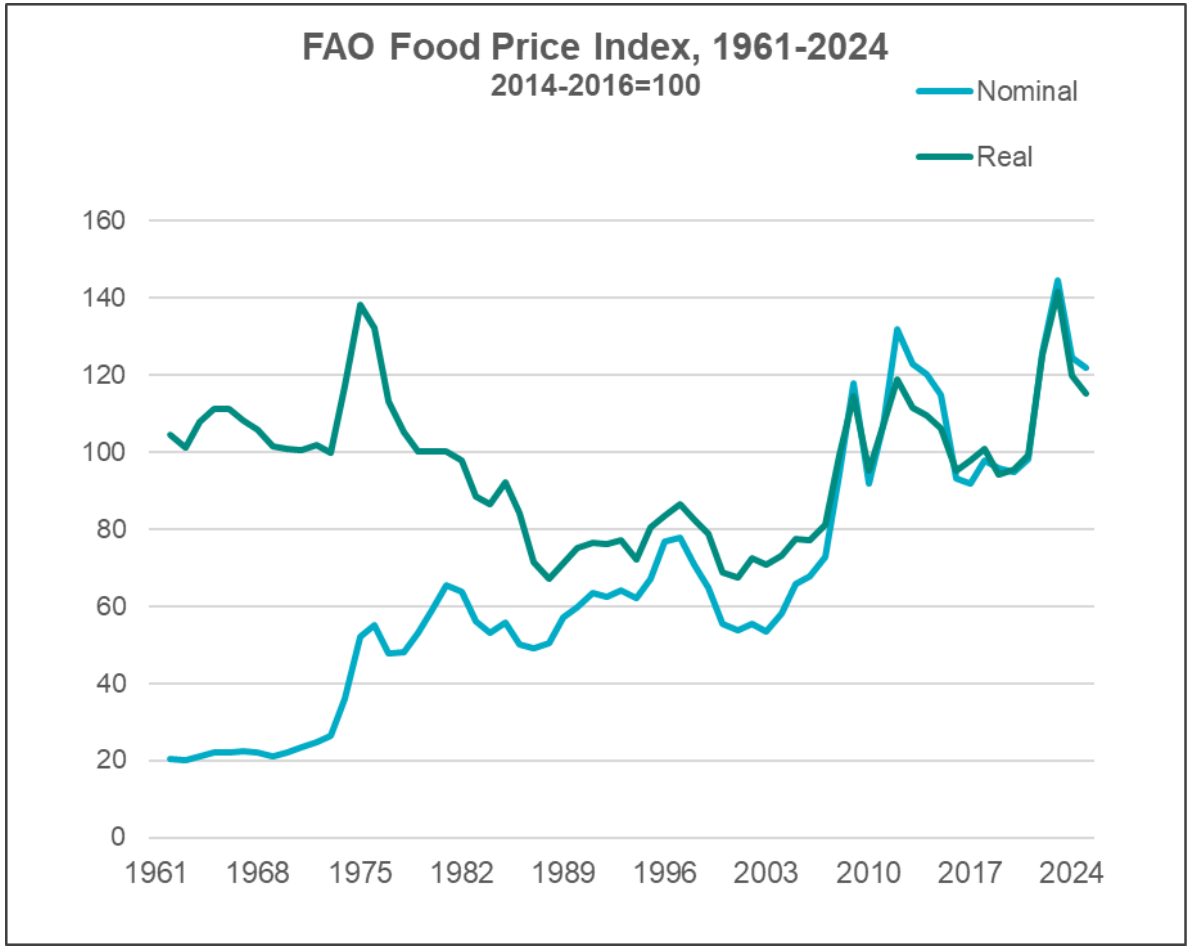
New Opportunities

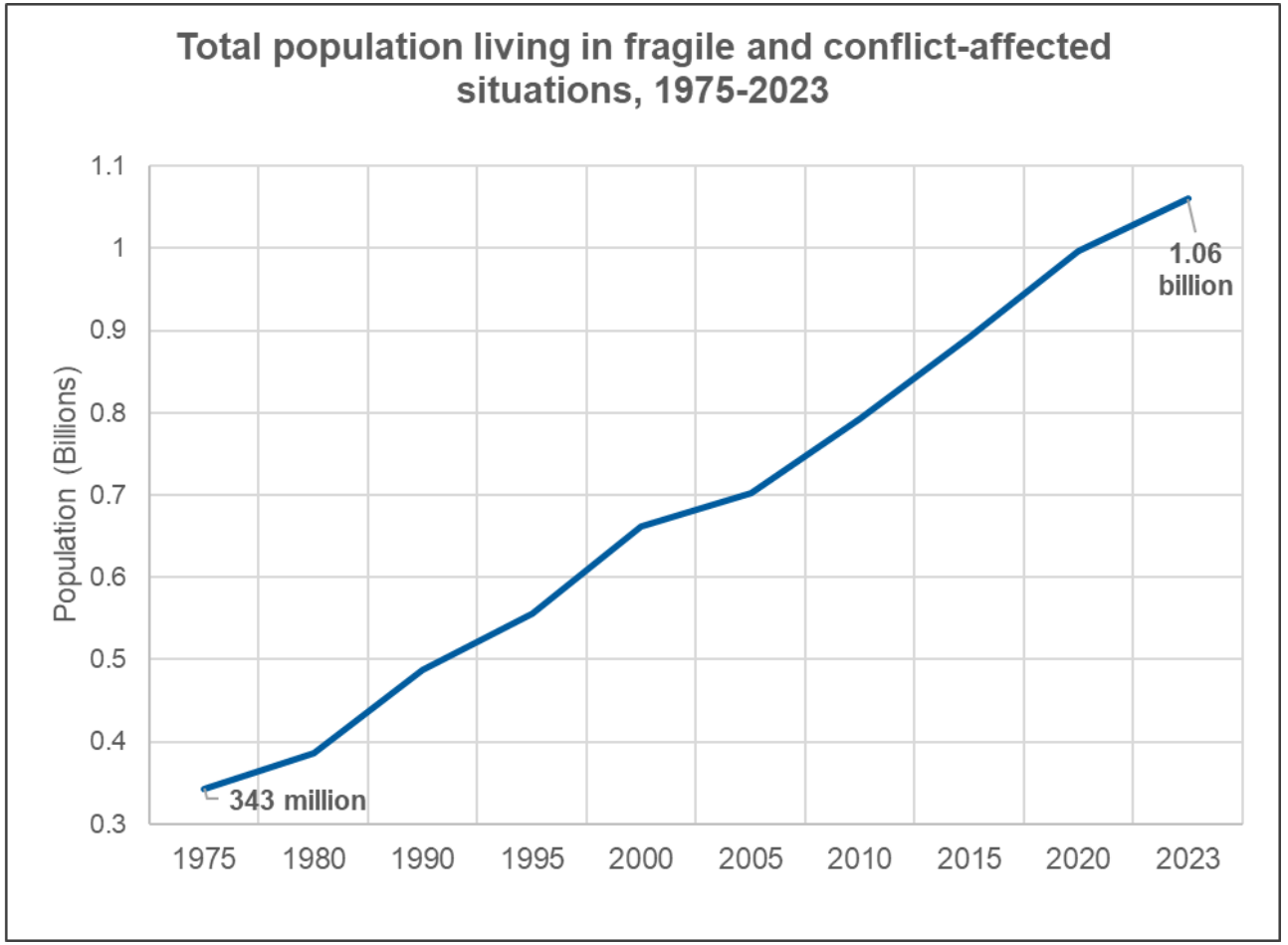
- **Research Priorities Ahead:** Climate-smart agriculture, digital tools, stronger and inclusive social protection, stronger agri-nutrition linkages, improved governance, efficient data system s development



Credit: Global Report on Food Crises 2025

Increased volatility, shocks, and conflict



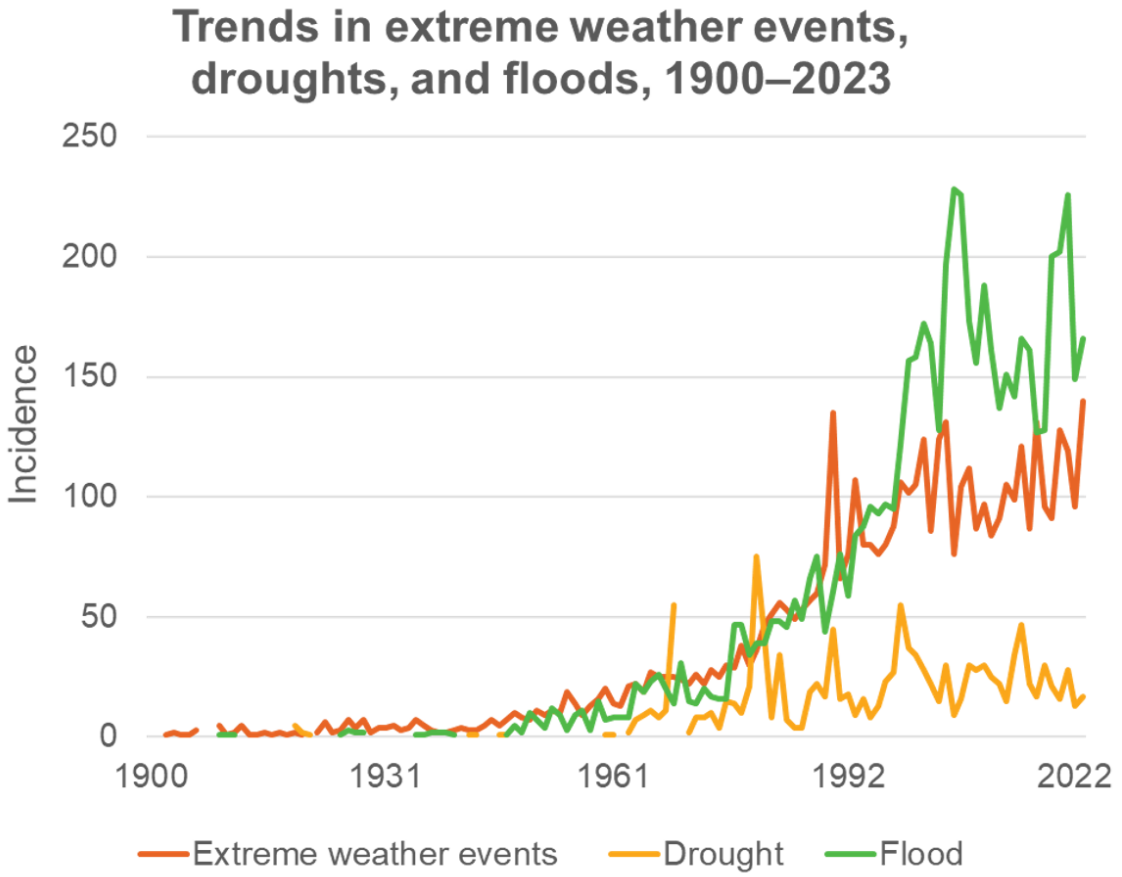


Data: World Bank

Externalities and sustainability of food production

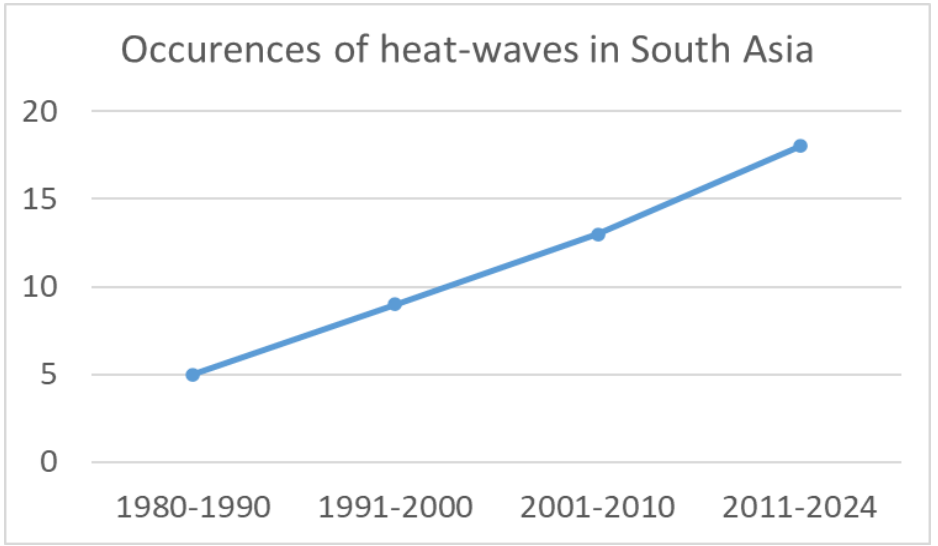
Agriculture and the food system

- consume **>30%** of energy
- produce **>20%** of GHG emissions
- use **>70%** of freshwater resources
- major contributor to **biodiversity loss**
- **environmental and health hazards** due to chemical inputs and excess fertilizer



Climate Change & Food System Vulnerabilities

- Average temperatures in South Asia rising faster than global mean; severe heatwaves becoming more frequent
- Accelerated Himalayan glacier melt threatening long-term water availability
- Irrigation and fertilizer subsidies in South Asia drive groundwater overuse and soil degradation, undermining long-term farm productivity.
- Erratic and intense rainfall disrupting planting and harvesting cycles



Source: EM-DAT

Stubborn persistence of under nutrition diets affordability challenges

High Malnutrition Burden

- 53% of people (1.07 billion) cannot afford a healthy diet
- ~30% of children under 5 are stunted

  (Source: FAO et al. 2024)

Emerging Challenges

- Overweight, obesity, and NCDs rising - especially among adults
- Poor diets extend beyond income or awareness gaps

Rapid Dietary Transitions

- Ultra-processed food market tripled in 10 years
- From $19B (2015) to over $70B (2025 projected)

  (Source: Euromonitor International 2024)

AI & Digitization in Agriculture

Capacity Strengthening Training on Data Interpretation & Economic Outcome Analysis

Use of AI to monitor crop health and automate crop loss assessment

Increasing use of precision farming

Solar-powered irrigation systems

AI & Digitization in Agriculture

- AI and digitization are boosting agriculture through precision farming and drone-based crop monitoring, enabling smarter input use and higher productivity.

Barriers to Equitable Digitalization:

- Institutional and infrastructure bottlenecks
- Market failures: limited digital infrastructure, concentration of market power
- Data challenges: weak governance, privacy concerns
- Risk of a “digital divide”, as seen during the COVID-19 education crisis

Thank you