

# Stability in the 21st Century

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY FOR  
PEACE AND PROSPERITY

## REPORT SUMMARY

Prepared by an Independent Task Force  
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## Food security is essential to national security and economic opportunity

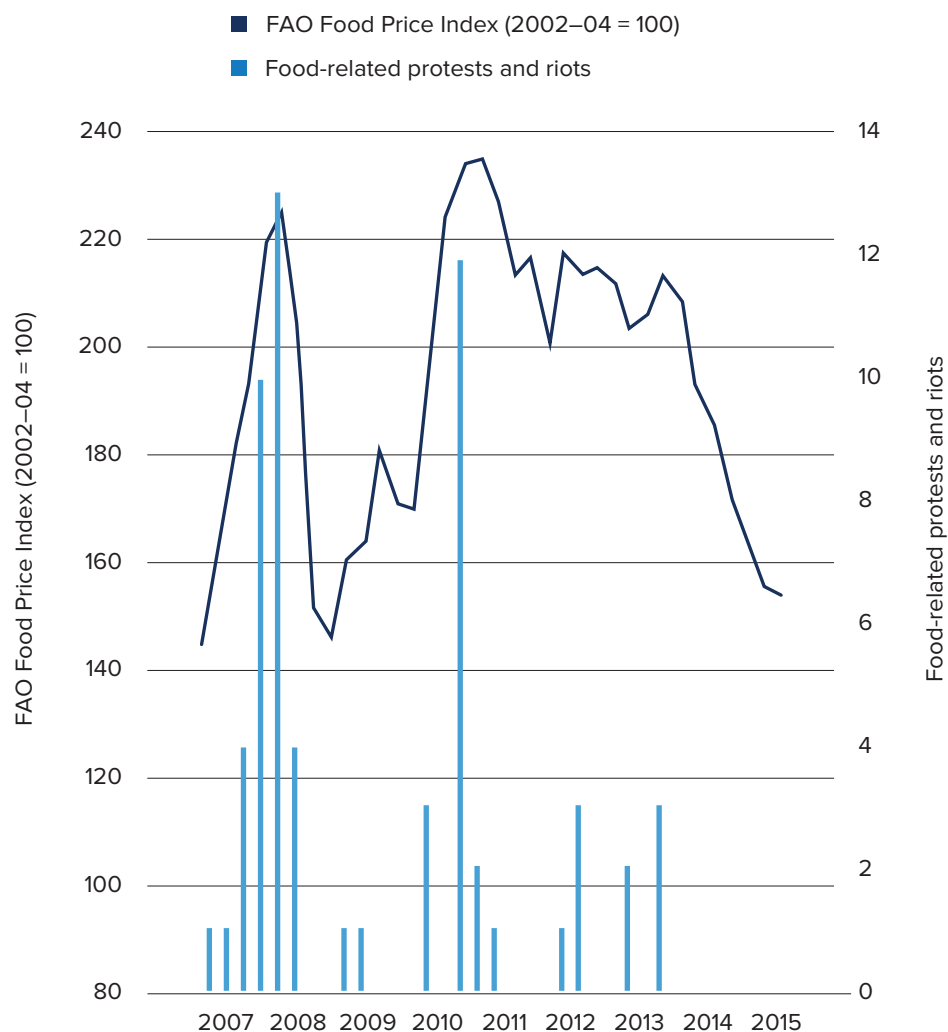
- ▶ The world today faces enormous challenges, including the threats of rapidly increasing instability, conflict, and migration as a result of inadequate food supplies and water scarcity. To combat these threats, a commitment to global food and nutrition security is more important than ever.
- ▶ The United States—together with its allies—has never been better equipped to expand its historical commitment to food and nutrition security. This commitment will not only protect America's national security, but also open up new business opportunities and partnerships in emerging economies and bolster the livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs around the world.
- ▶ This report recommends how the US government—in partnership with national governments, the private sector, the scientific community, and civil society—can lead the way in ensuring that food systems deliver safe and nutritious food to those who need it, while enabling small farmers and rural economies to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive.

# Food security promotes national security

- ▶ Food price–related unrest can have an immense impact on the stability of countries vital to US interests, as food price shocks can lead to both nonviolent and armed conflict.
- ▶ Food insecurity can also be a powerful driver for migration, as people flee hunger and poverty in search of a better life.
- ▶ In contrast, countries that have achieved sustained development progress and greater food security are less susceptible to volatility and violence. Many have become allies of the United States in the fight to reduce global security threats.

## Food prices and food-related protests, 1990-2015

**Extreme food price volatility correlates with the occurrence of food-related protests and riots.**



Source: Hendrix, 2016. Food price data are from the FAO. Protests and riots data are from the World Bank Food Price Crisis Observatory (2015) and only cover 2007-14.



## Food security promotes economic growth and new markets

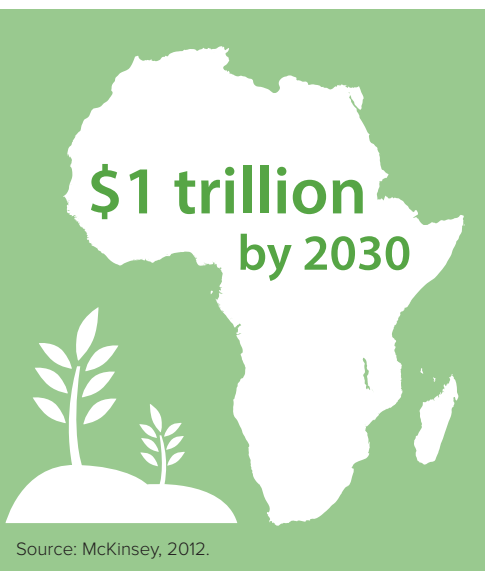
- ▶ Global growth creates stronger markets for American goods and services. As economies grow, so does their demand for products. Rising incomes and changing diets in low-income countries are leading to demand for more diverse and nutritious foods.
- ▶ This growing demand is not limited to the food and agriculture sector. In 1990 low- and middle-income countries accounted for one-third of the global economy. Today, their share is half, and they purchase more than half of US exports.

*Sustainable growth, job creation, and stability in low-income countries are not possible without a robust and productive agricultural sector.*

## Agricultural development spurs improvements in health and well-being

- ▶ Low- and middle-income countries have made unprecedented gains in hunger and poverty alleviation in the last few decades, and agricultural development has been at the heart of this progress.
- ▶ Agricultural production has, on average, almost doubled in low- and middle-income countries since 1995, and more than one billion people had been lifted out of poverty.
- ▶ Investments in agricultural development are highly cost effective and have been proven to be more than twice as effective at reducing poverty as investments in other sectors.

**In Africa alone, the value of the agriculture and food sector is expected to reach...**



# Current challenges must be met

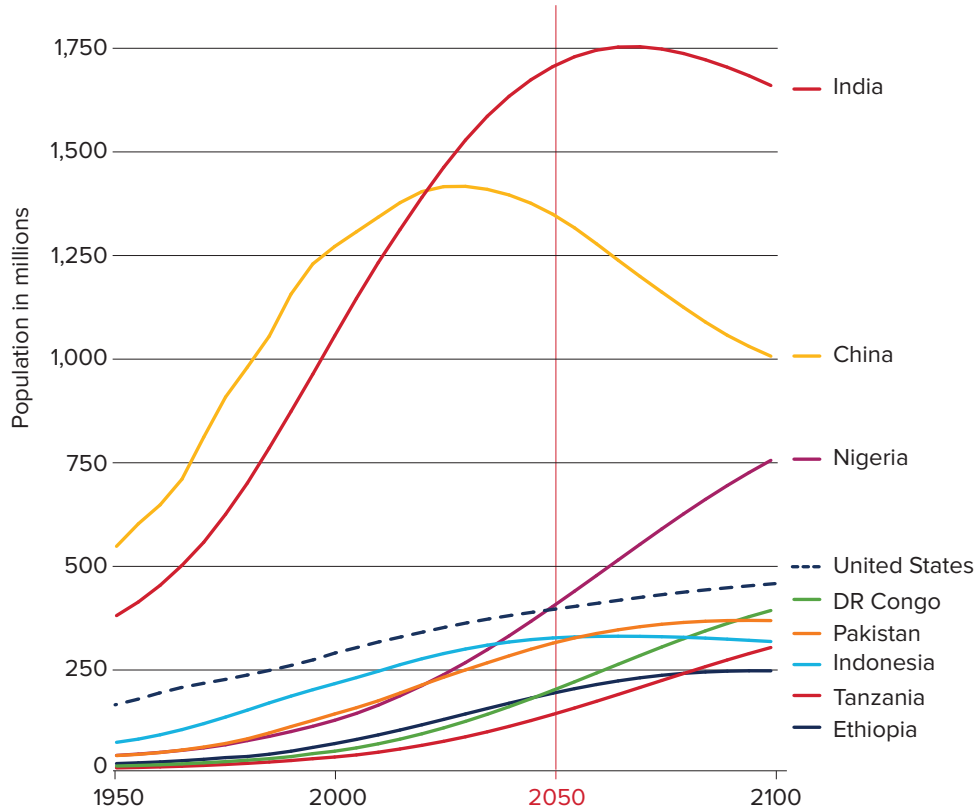
While great progress has been made, obstacles loom large.

- ▶ Global economic growth has slowed significantly, straining currencies and budgets.
- ▶ Gains in agricultural production have not reached everywhere that they are needed.
- ▶ Nearly 800 million people remain chronically hungry, and 700 million still live in extreme poverty.

## Population growth and the youth bulge

- ▶ The global population is growing rapidly and will reach 8 billion by 2024 and 10 billion by 2056. Ninety-nine percent of the projected growth in the next century will occur in low- and middle-income countries.
- ▶ A large and increasing share of populations in much of Africa and South Asia will be comprised of adolescents and young adults—known as a “youth bulge.” There are currently 200 million people in Africa between the ages of 15 and 24, and this number is expected to double within the next 30 years. Already, 60% of the unemployed in Africa are young people.
- ▶ A thriving food and agriculture sector, while by no means a silver bullet, is important to addressing the youth bulge. It not only ensures food and nutrition security, but offers a source of employment throughout agricultural supply chains.

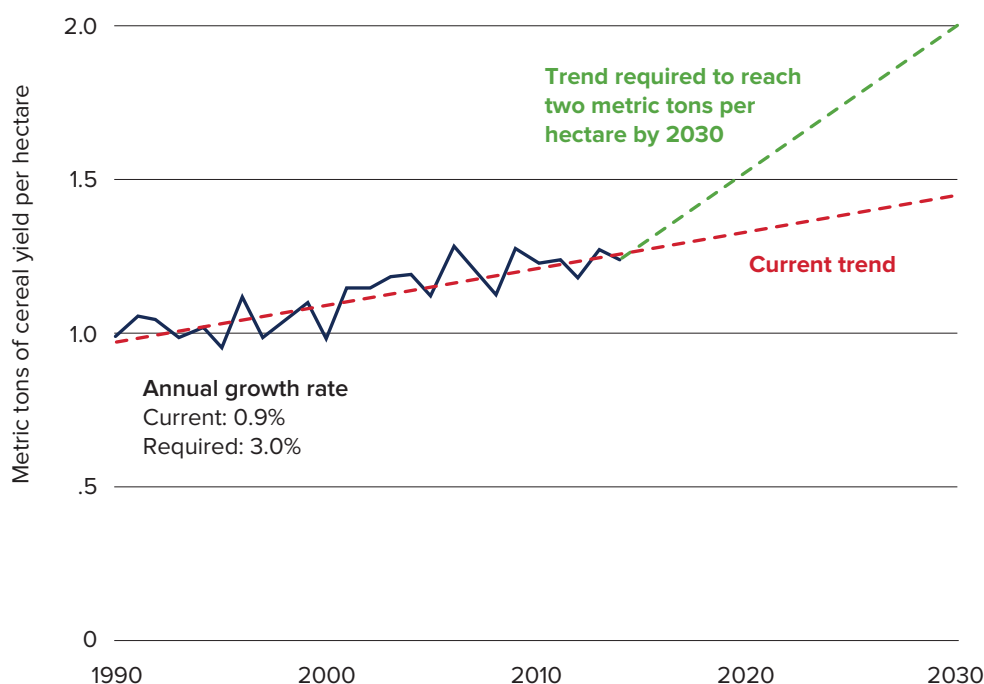
## Population growth in countries of Africa and Asia



Source: UN, 2015.



## Average cereal yields required in low-yield countries to meet demand



Note: Only countries with less than 2 metric tons per hectare in 2013.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators (2015), and calculations from “Ending Rural Hunger.”

## Climate and natural resource pressures

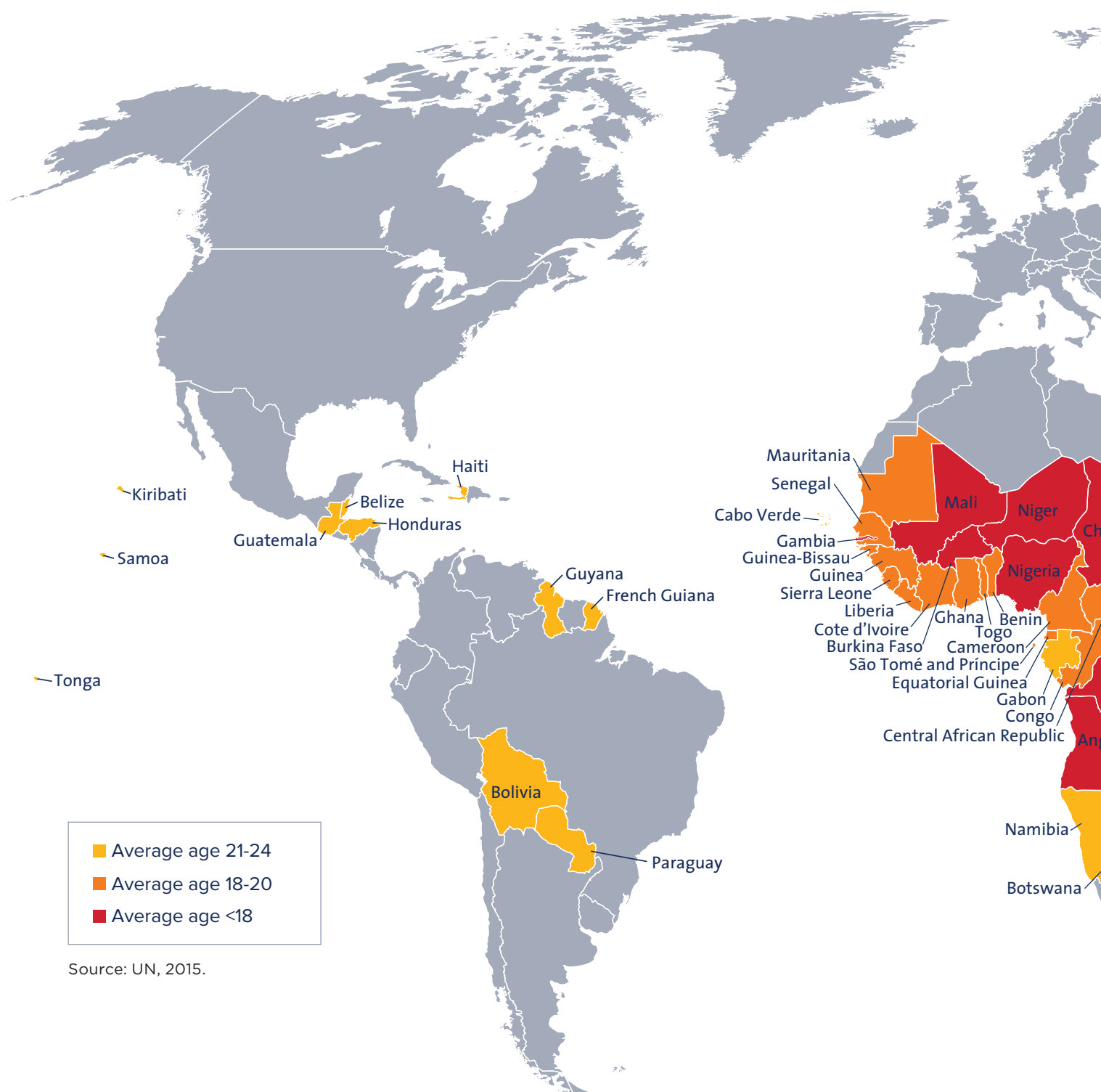
- Temperatures are rising. Weather patterns are becoming increasingly variable and are expected to become more volatile and unpredictable from month to month and season to season.
- Water scarcity is increasing. By 2050 one billion people will have insufficient water resources.
- Soil degradation and poor soil health also pose a major threat to agricultural production and food security.

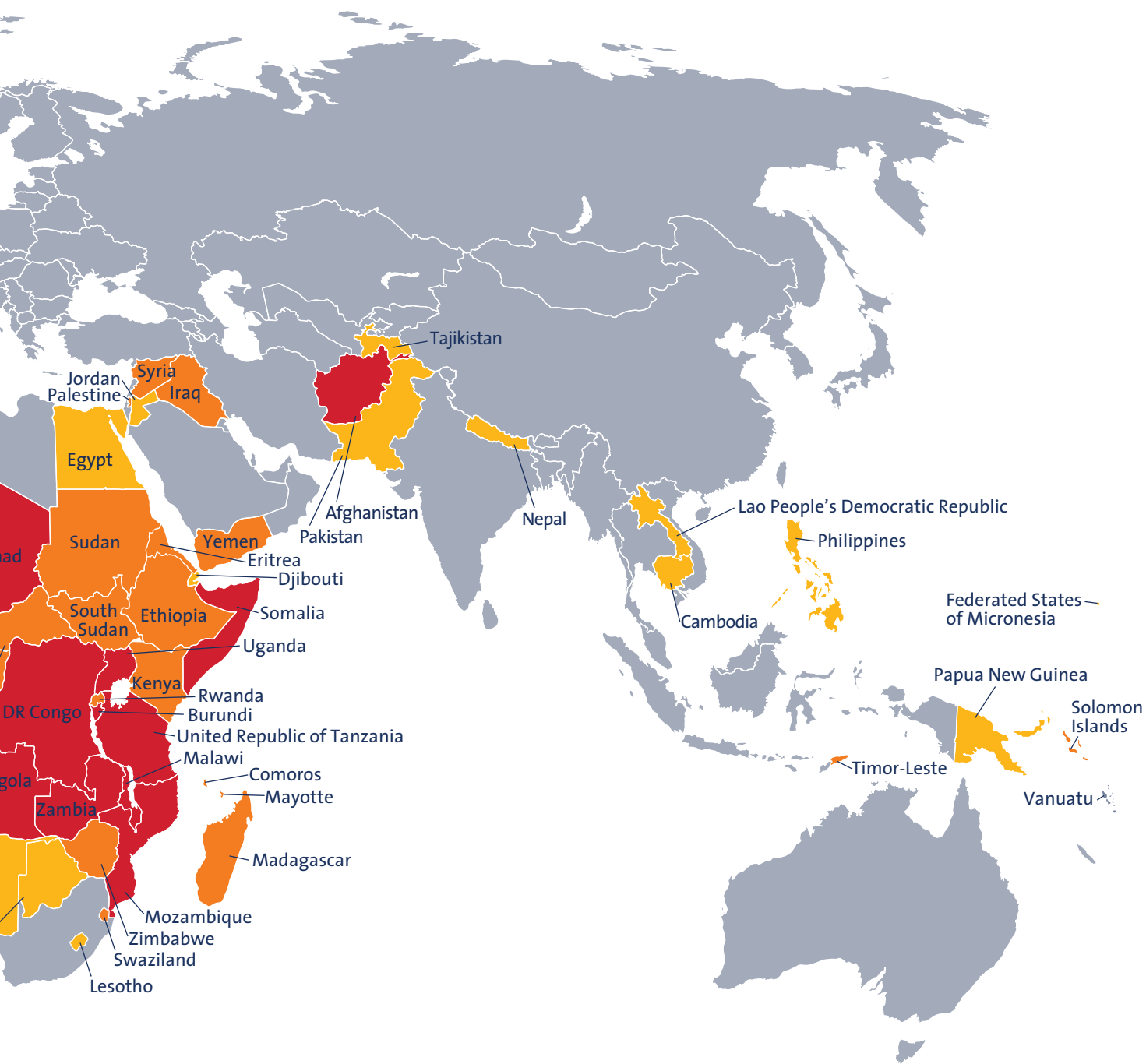
## The consequences of inattention to these challenges are catastrophic

Hunger, poverty, displacement, and instability have tremendous national and global implications, as current trends make clear.

- Over 20 million people in four countries alone—Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, and northeast Nigeria—are currently at risk of famine and starvation in what the UN has called the worst humanitarian crisis since World War II.
- With 65.3 million people worldwide who are currently displaced, today’s refugee crisis is unprecedented in modern history.
- The conflict in Syria was preceded by years of severe drought, which left numerous Syrian farmers without food or income—adding fuel to the fire of the crisis that was to come.

## Countries where the average age of the population is 24 or less (2015)







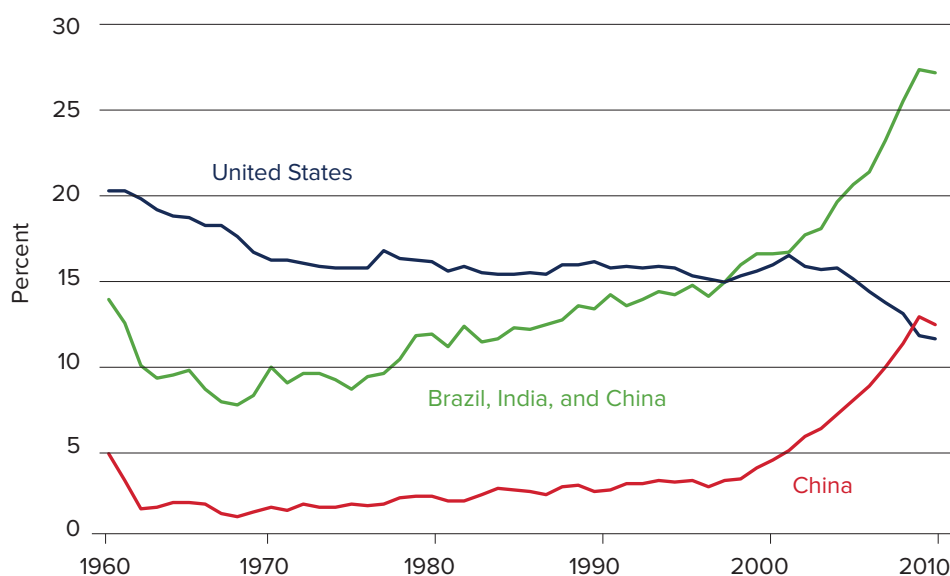
## Collaboration with our allies and partners to end hunger and malnutrition is essential

- While it is crucial that the United States act to fight hunger and enhance global food security, it should not and will not act alone. Other governments have contributed significantly to improved global food security in recent years, and US leadership can help ensure that global commitments continue.

*Every \$1 dollar of US commitment at the 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila helped leverage more than \$6 from other donors.*

- Rising powers like China, India, and Brazil are among those investing in the development of agriculture and food systems in emerging markets. While these investments are welcomed, the United States should not lose its edge in this area and miss out on the significant benefits and market opportunities that those investments would bring.

### Country expenditures as a share of total global public agricultural research and development (1960-2011)



Source: Pardey and Beddow, 2017. Reprinted with permission from Farm Journal Foundation.



## Partnering with governments in low-income countries and the private sector can help speed progress

- ▶ Governments in many low-income countries have significantly increased their own investments at home. On average, public agricultural expenditures rose by more than 7 percent per year across Africa between 2003 and 2015, nearly doubling public agricultural expenditures in just over a decade.
- ▶ Agriculture and food production are driven in large part by the private sector. Although private-sector investment in areas related to food security has increased rapidly in recent years, businesses still face many obstacles and impediments, keeping investment from reaching its full potential. Unlocking that potential is a key challenge and opportunity.

*Driven by ingenuity and entrepreneurship, the private sector is particularly well positioned to develop and advance technological breakthroughs at every point along the food supply chain.*

# The United States must strengthen its commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition

Since World War II there has been a strong bipartisan commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition around the world—not just as a moral imperative but as a matter of national security. The impact of this commitment has been tremendous, and the results have been among America’s greatest triumphs.

- ▶ In July 2016 Congress overwhelmingly passed the Global Food Security Act, authorizing the administration to continue to meet US global food and nutrition security goals. The act passed with strong bipartisan support, with no objections in the Senate and 87 percent approval in the House.

*The United States has the opportunity to demonstrate leadership and generosity at this critical moment by reinforcing the US commitment to global food and nutrition security.*

- ▶ The crises and challenges facing the world and threatening food and nutrition security continue to call for action by the US government. Now is the time to commit to the leadership necessary to achieve a food-secure world.

## RECOMMENDATION

1

**Make global food and nutrition security a pillar of US diplomatic and national security engagement.**

- ▶ Amplify the importance of global food security for US national security and diplomatic activities.
- ▶ Maximize resources through smart integration and coordination among agencies and between the US government and civil society.
- ▶ Work closely with bilateral and multilateral partners to achieve collective goals.

## RECOMMENDATION

2

**Prioritize public research investments to unlock innovation.**

- ▶ Harness the unparalleled expertise of American universities and their research partners to solve the most pressing problems in agriculture, food, and nutrition at home and abroad.
- ▶ Expand support for the development of scientific and technological innovations that improve agricultural productivity, pest and disease resistance, supply chains, and nutrition.
- ▶ Develop new technology platforms to collect more and better data and improve communication among key stakeholders.





## RECOMMENDATION

3

**Amplify the power of the private sector to transform food and nutrition security.**

- ▶ Form strong public-private partnerships to harness the private sector's strengths and spur inclusive and sustainable growth in smallholder agriculture and food systems in low-income countries.
- ▶ Strengthen and open the environment for investment, action, and collaboration.
- ▶ Increase access to finance and mitigate the risks that undermine opportunities for investors.

## RECOMMENDATION

4

**Ensure efficiency in assistance programs and build countries' capacity.**

- ▶ Strengthen the accountability and effectiveness of development assistance through strong commitment to monitoring, learning, and evaluation.
- ▶ Build national governments' capacity to prioritize, implement, manage, and measure their agricultural and nutrition policies, strategies, and goals.

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