



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Peace, Conflict and Food Security

What do we know about the linkages?

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Maurice Saade
FAO Representative in Lebanon



Peace, Conflict and Food Security

What do we know about the linkages?

Key questions:

- 1) The impact of conflict on food security
- 2) Can food insecurity lead to conflict?
- 3) Food security and peace dividends



Food Security: a multi-dimensional concept

World Food Summit, Rome, 1996:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”

- **Food Availability** (Quantity and Dietary Energy supplies)
- **Access to Food** (Physical and Economic)
- **Utilization** (Nutritional status, food quality & safety, health, hygiene)
- **Stability** (Vulnerability due to shocks: conflicts, climatic, import disruptions, swings in global food prices, etc.)



Conflict, violence and hunger are closely correlated:

Some facts and figures:

1- The proportion of undernourished people living in conflict countries is three times higher than in other developing countries

2- Post-conflict countries with high food insecurity are 40% more likely to **relapse into conflict** within a 10-year timespan

3- Civil strife can caused major loss in average per capita daily food intake

4- Since 2000, 48% of civil conflicts have been in Africa where **access to rural land** underpins the livelihoods of many.

5- Every day in 2014, conflicts and violence forced approximately 42,500 people to flee their homes and seek safety either internally or across borders.

6- In 2014, **children** constituted 51% of the refugee population, the highest percentage in more than a decade.



Key findings: Impact of conflict on food security

Uncontested finding: Conflict is the major driver of food insecurity and malnutrition

- Countries with the highest levels of undernourishment tend to be those engaged in violent conflict, or that have recently emerged from it.
- High risk of conflicts is a key characteristic of fragile states and the probability of a high burden of hunger rises exponentially with the degree of fragility
- Conflict directly and indirectly affects food availability, access, utilization and stability.
- Conflict has lasting impacts on human development as a result of increased malnutrition



Key findings: Can food insecurity lead to conflict?

- Food insecurity can also be a source of conflict, but it is never the one single factor behind the strife.
- Sudden and unexpected **food price rises** can be a catalyst for civil and political unrest
- But can food prices cause social unrest? A recent study concluded that **the answer is a qualified 'yes'**.
- **Extreme weather events** and the incidence of civil conflicts:



Key findings: On peace dividends and food security

Little is known about how improved food security could build and sustain peace. But based on a disperse findings some potential mechanisms are posited:

- **Greater food price stability** and the recovery of local agricultural and food markets
- **Support for agriculture** is a crucial step for restarting the economic engine to drive recovery
- **Food assistance** can offer valuable peace dividends, as well as contributing to restoring trust in governments and rebuilding social capital.
- **Targeting women as the first beneficiaries** can contribute significantly to improving household resilience and to peacebuilding.



Peace, Conflict and Food Security: Key messages

- ✓ Investing in resilience and food security helps fight hunger and build peace
- ✓ Food security and agriculture should be supported across the conflict cycle
- ✓ Food and agriculture help manage conflict risks
- ✓ Investing in rural livelihoods consolidates peace
- ✓ Significant peace dividends can be earned from agricultural recovery and food security



Last, but certainly not least

Targeting women as the first beneficiaries during and post conflict can contribute significantly to improving household resilience and to peacebuilding.

Men have certainly proven their efficiency at war-mongering and destruction!

*....but in post conflict, **women are at the forefront** of rebuilding local communities shattered by conflict, including their leading role in rebuilding food security and health.*



Thank you

Reference:

Peace, Conflict and Food Security

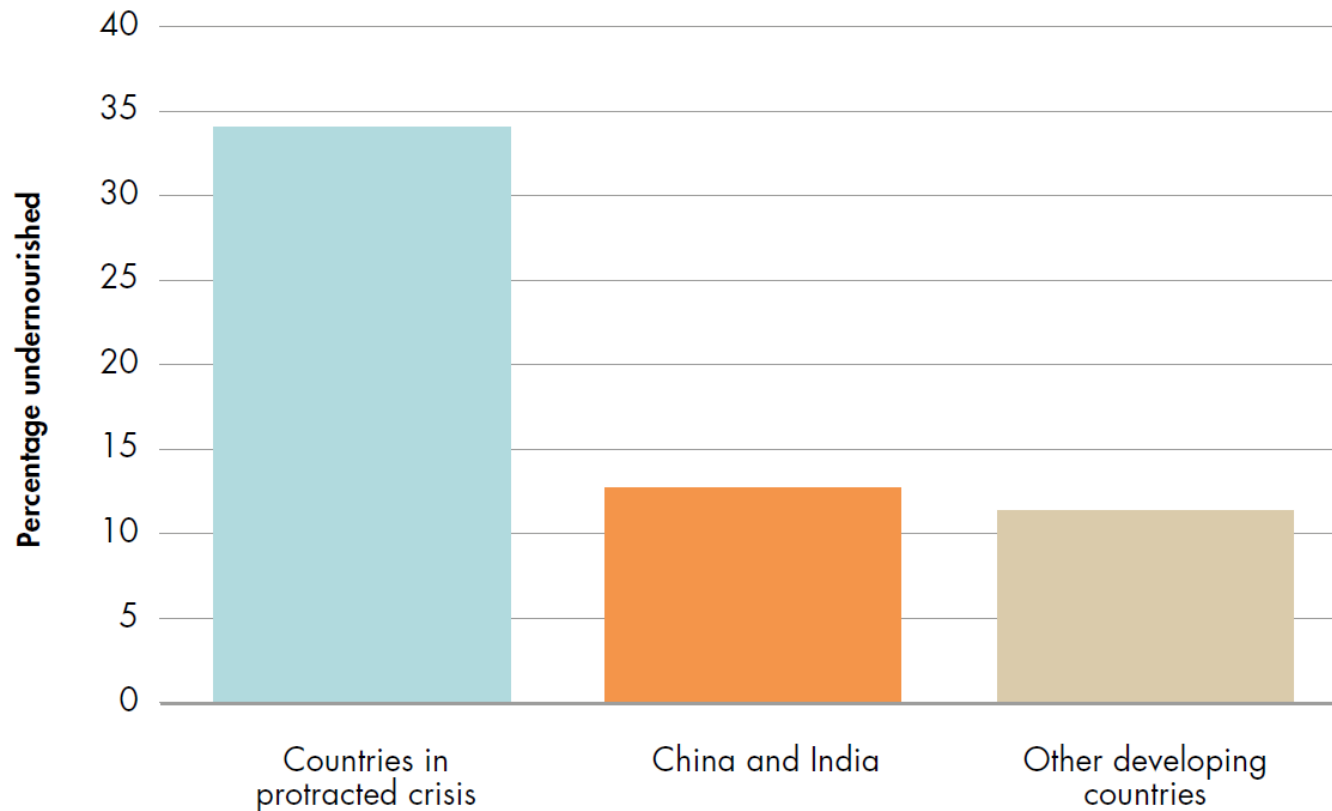
What do we know about the linkages?

A Technical Note, FAO, March 2016

Download at: www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/documents/resources-detail/en/c/405395/

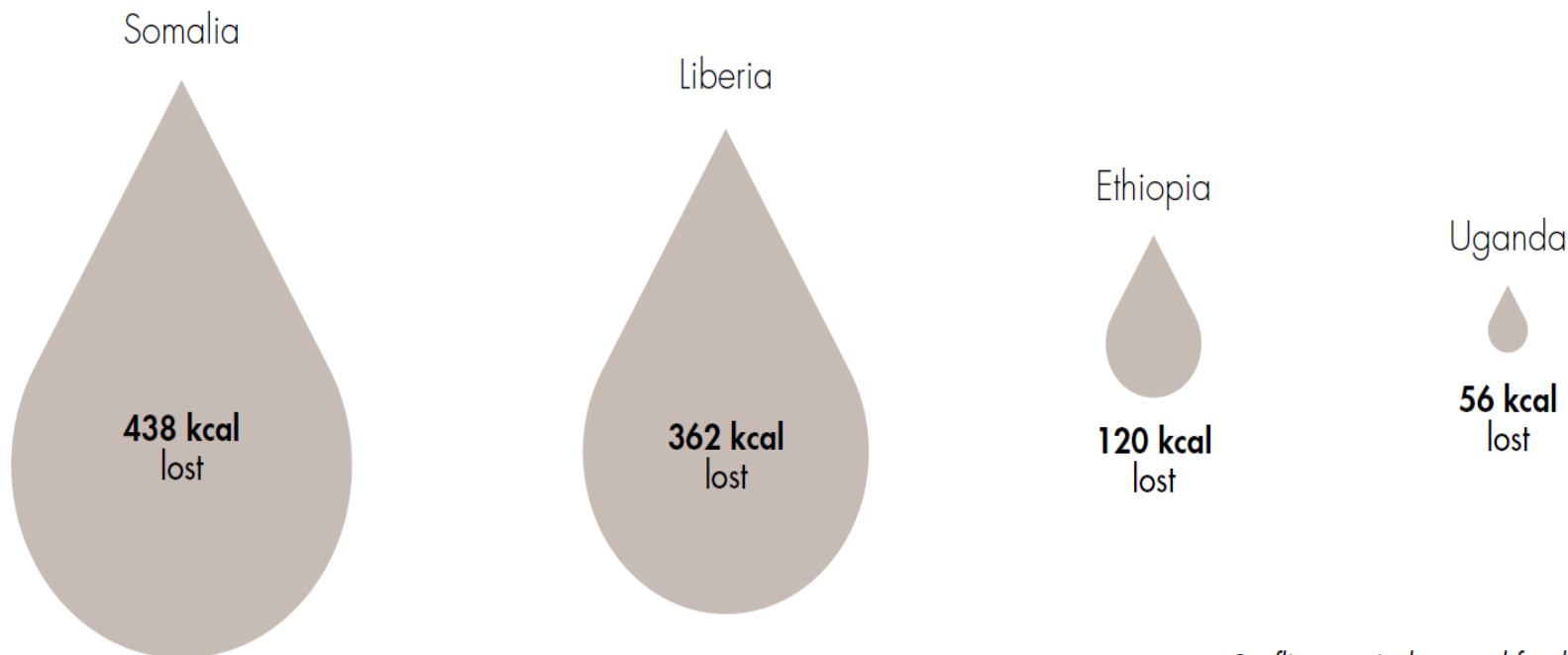


PROPORTION OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IS ABOUT THREE TIMES HIGHER IN COUNTRIES IN PROTRACTED CRISIS (PERCENTAGE OF UNDERNOURISHED IN 2012-14)



Source: FAO.

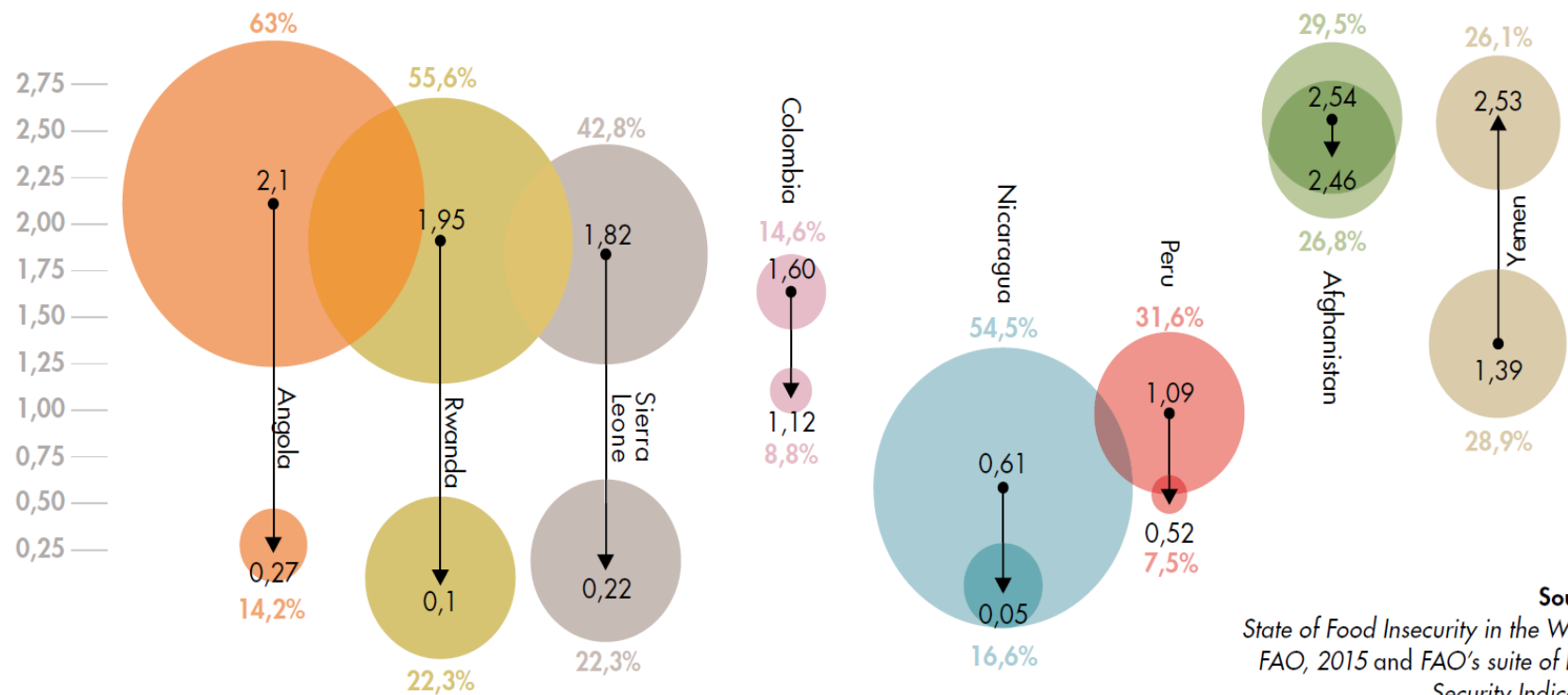
IMPACT OF LATE 20TH CENTURY CIVIL WARS ON HUNGER in terms of average per capita lost food energy



Source:
Conflicts, agriculture and food security. FAO, 2000.

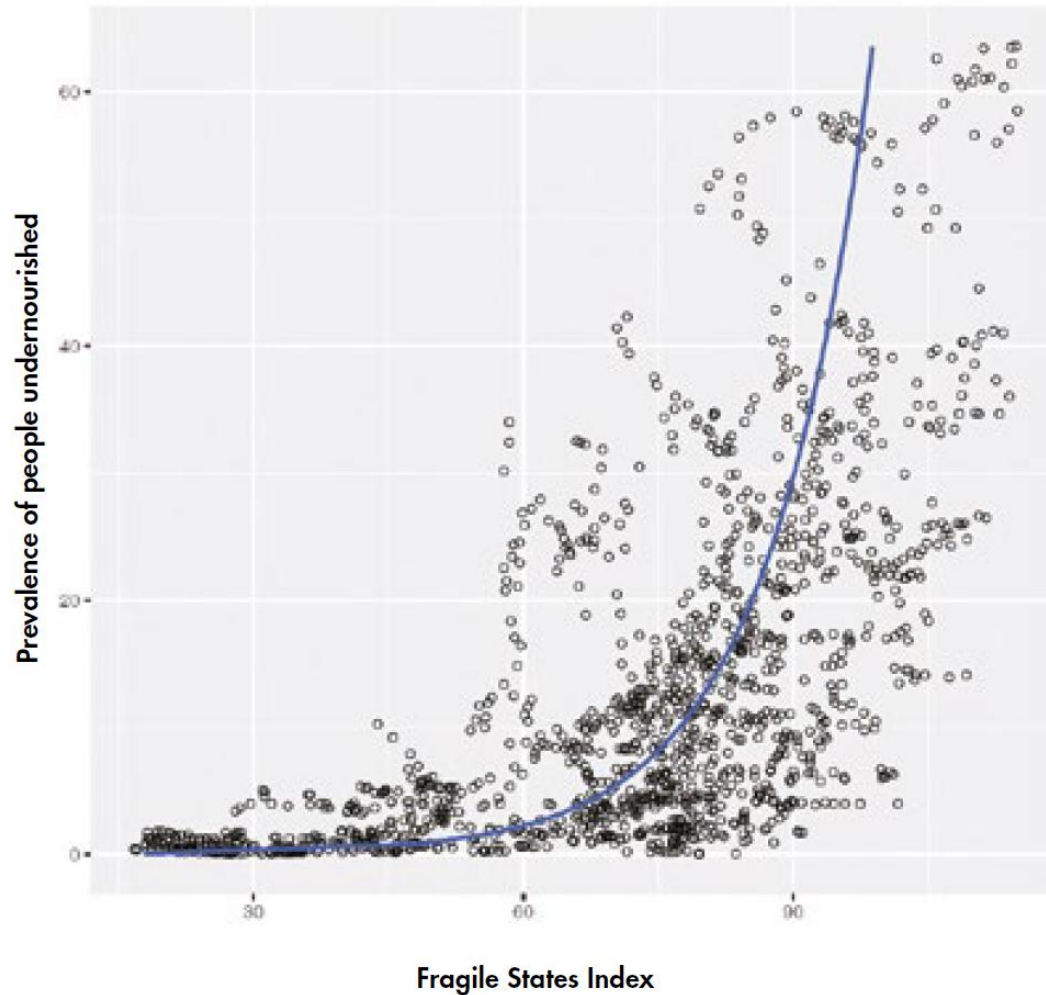
CORRELATION BETWEEN VIOLENCE AND HUNGER

Violence index ↓ Hunger percentage ●



Source:
State of Food Insecurity in the World.
FAO, 2015 and FAO's suite of Food
Security Indicators

THE BURDEN OF HUNGER RAPIDLY RISES WITH THE DEGREE OF FRAGILITY (ALL COUNTRIES, 2006-2014)



Source: FAO (for PoU data) and Fund for Peace (for fragile states index).