



Global Famine

"Famines are not natural phenomena, they are catastrophic political failures."



"Well, you keep telling me there are starving kids in Africa so I am sending my Brussel Sprouts to them."



FINISH YOUR DINNER-
THERE ARE PEOPLE IN
CHINA AND INDIA WHO
ARE STARVING...

Definitions

Food Security

- Access of all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

UN food and Agricultural Organization

Starvation

- The phenomenon of some people not **having** enough food (not the phenomenon of there not **being** enough food)

Amartya Sen, Poverty and Famines

Famine

- An episode of extreme widespread hunger causing higher mortality

Phase 5, on the integrated food security phase classification scale, or 100,000 or more excess deaths caused by hunger or related causes



The Three Elements of Food Security

Food Availability

- Levels of food production and supply

Food Entitlement

- The ability of poor people to obtain sufficient food through their own production, wages, gifts or benefits

Acts of Starvation

- The deliberate deprivation of people by military, political or criminal acts



Main Causes of Famine

Conflict is the biggest driver of famine.

- Hunger levels worsen when conflict drives large numbers of people from their homes, their land and their jobs.
- Famines occurs in areas where access is restricted

Impacts of **climate change**

- More regular droughts are increasing food shortages
- Drought means fewer crops and labor capacity
- Farmers are driven from their land.

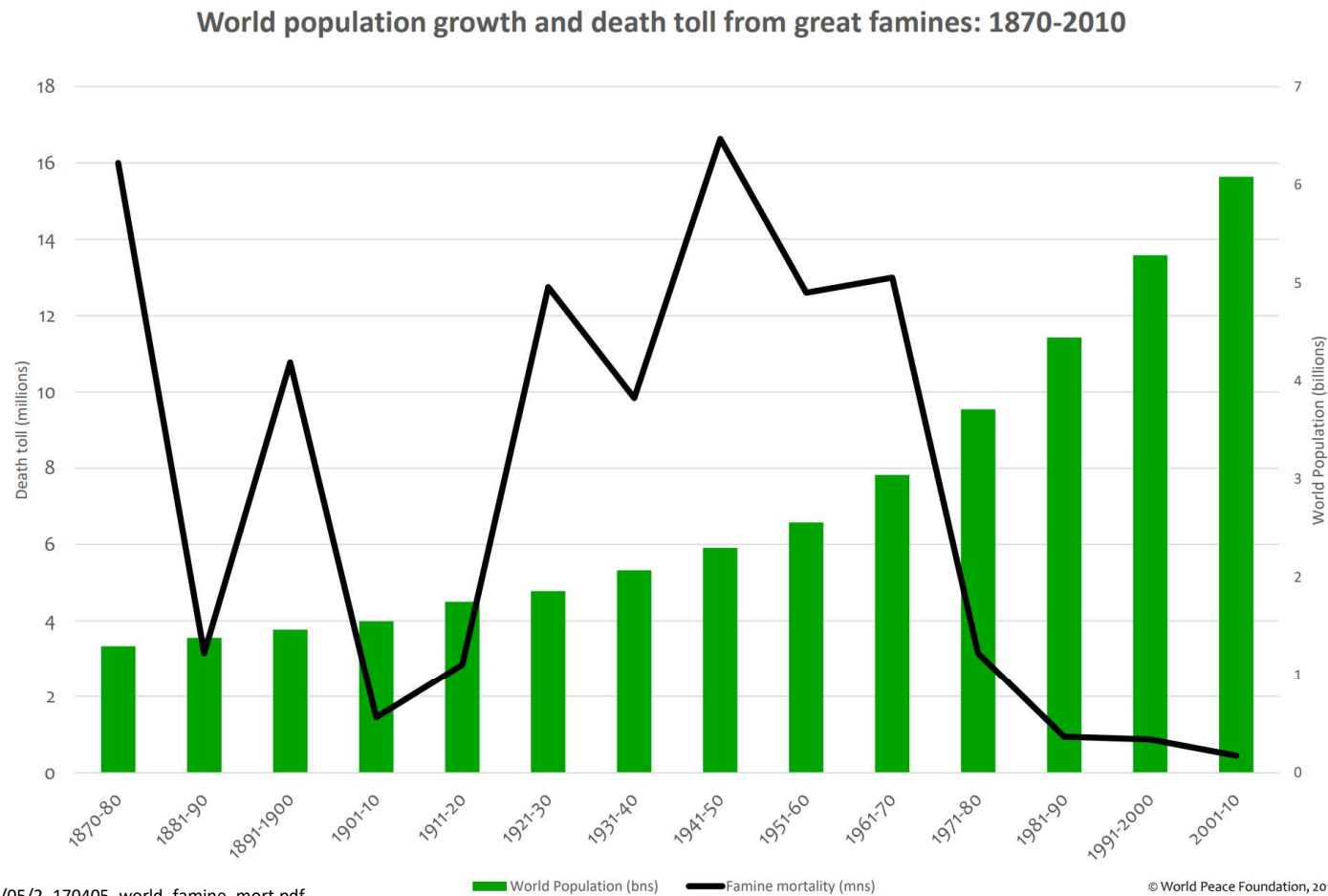
Inequality also critical factor

- Low incomes putting affordable food beyond the reach of millions.

We have the erroneous view that attributes famine to overpopulation and natural disaster

World Population Growth and Death Toll from Great Famines: 1870-2010

Decline in famines is inversely correlated with the growth in world population, from 1.3 billion in 1870 to 7 billion today.



Gender Roles in Global Famine



- Let's not forget Gender Roles
- Often men instigate and participate in wars and political turmoil
- Woman experience the fallout, live longer, nurture the survivors
- Human suffering and responses to suffering are influenced by gender
- Empowering women can help eliminate hunger

5 Steps From Food Security To Famine

The "Richter scale" for measuring food insecurity, and hunger, is Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

- **Food security (IPC Phase 1)**

- People "food secure" have access to sufficient, and nutritious food
- Less than 5 % of the population is malnourished
- More than 2,100 calories per day.

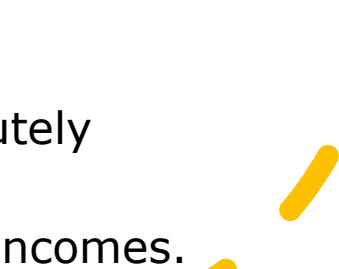


5 Steps From Food Security To Famine (continued)

2) Food insecurity (IPC Phase 2)

- Trouble meeting basic needs
- Have to make significant changes to support their non-food needs.
- Have unsustainable incomes
- 5-10 % of the population is acutely malnourished
- About 2,100 calories per day

3) Acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3)

- Some people meet minimal food needs
 - Use up essential resources to support a limited diet
 - Limited food choices
 - 10-15 % of the population is acutely malnourished
 - Serious interruption to people's incomes.
- 

5 Steps From Food Security To Famine (continued)

4) Humanitarian emergency (IPC Phase 4)

- Facing extreme food shortages
- Acute malnutrition levels are high
- Risk of hunger-related deaths increase
- Loss of income at this stage is irreversible
- 15 to 30 % of the population is acutely malnourished.
- Access to 3 or fewer food groups
- Less than 2,100 calories per day.



5 Steps From Food Security To Famine (continued)

5) Famine (IPC Phase 5)

- Most severe phase of hunger
- Complete lack of access to food
- 2 out of 10,000 people die of starvation or disease
- More than 30 % of the population is acutely malnourished
- There is total loss of income
- People just have access to one or two food groups
- There is an extreme shortage of calories
- 20 % of families face extreme food shortages

Famine Spots In The World

Nearly 45 million people are currently on the very edge of famine and risk starvation, up from 27 million people in 2019

- No country in the world currently meets **official definition** of a famine
- Many countries the risk of starvation is real and famine could happen very soon
- Majority of affected people live in countries in Africa
- The risk of famine is global
- Acute hunger is set to rise steeply from the Middle East to Latin America and the Caribbean

Famine Spots In The World

Famines tend to occur in areas where humanitarian access is restricted

- Yemen and South Sudan: Conflict, insecurity and resulting displacement are driving acute hunger.
- People facing catastrophic levels of hunger in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Somalia
 - Afghanistan the world's largest humanitarian crisis

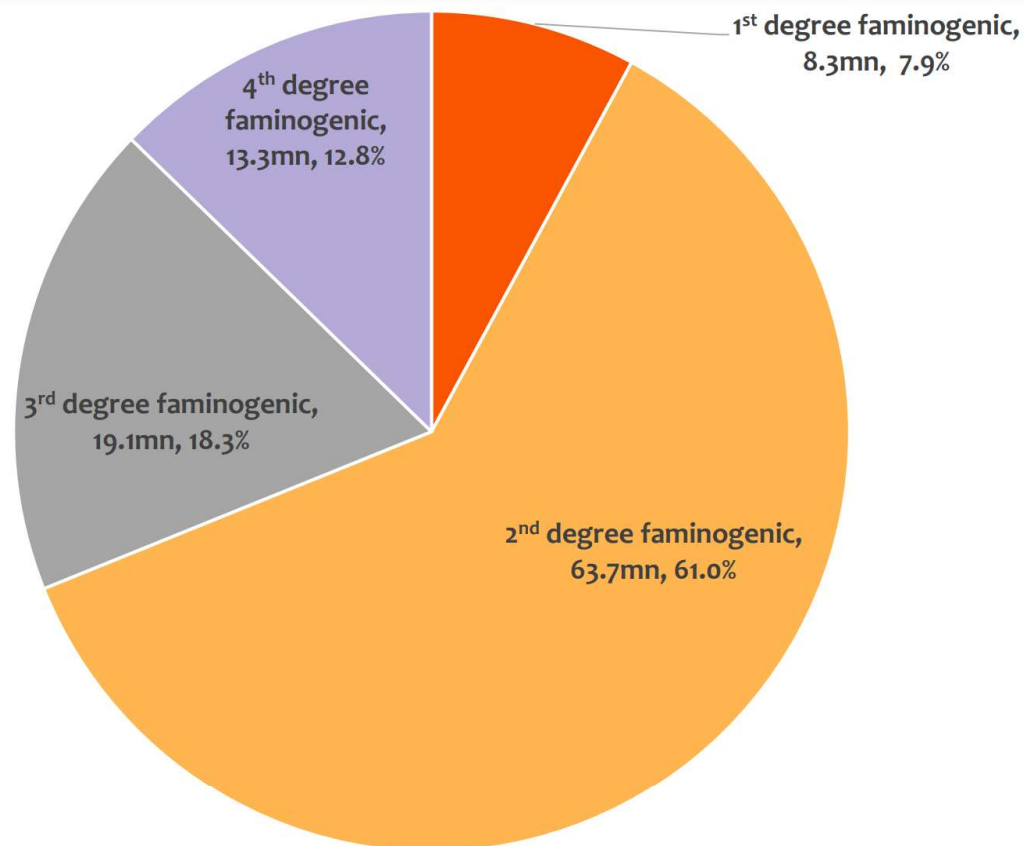


Famines are almost always man-made often used as a deterrent. Since ancient times, food and hunger have been a weapon of politics and war.

Among the 815 million people suffering from chronic malnutrition in 2016
60 % lived in areas affected by armed conflict.

Famine Deaths and Faminogenic Behavior

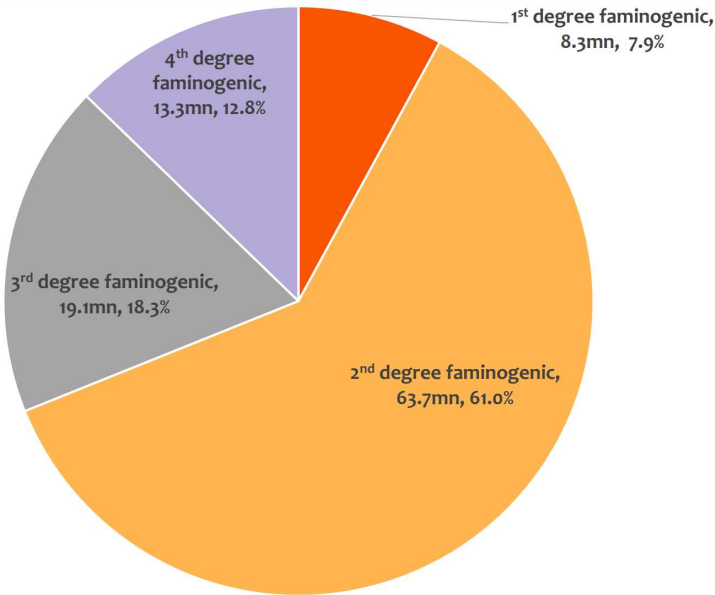
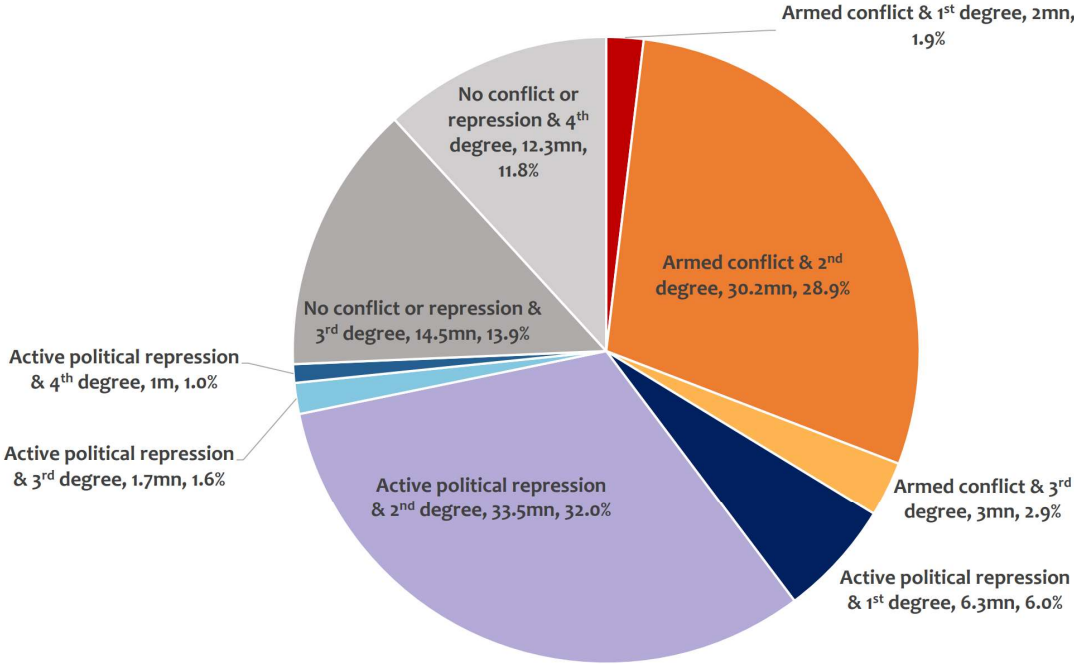
David Marcus (2003)



1st degree faminogenic behaviour refers to the use of famines by governments as a deliberate tool of extermination;
2nd degree faminogenic behaviour refers to the pursuit of policies by public authorities which were the principal cause of famine;
3rd degree faminogenic behaviour refers to circumstances where public authorities are indifferent: they may not be the principal cause of famine but do little to alleviate hunger, and
4th degree faminogenic behaviour refers to incapable or incapacitated authorities who, faced with a food crisis, are unable to respond effectively to the needs of the population.

Famine deaths, armed conflict and faminogenic behavior: 1870-2010

Famine deaths, armed conflict & faminogenic behaviour: 1870-2010



The War Crime of Starvation

Definition in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Article 8(2)(b)(xxv))

- Intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including willfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions
- In the period 1870-2010 most famines and especially the most lethal famines were caused by imperial conquests, total war, genocidal policies or communist social engineering

Food and War

The history of warfare is filled with examples of military tactics deliberately used with the intent of starving enemy armies or civilian populations

- U S Civil War, 1862, Union soldiers fought under the Lieber Code, which allowed them “to starve the hostile belligerent, armed, or unarmed.”
- Africa, the Herero and Namaqua genocide in German South-West Africa (now Namibia) from 1904 to 1908 by the German military forces, called Schutztruppe, .
- Among contemporary wars, 3 examples serve to indicate the nuances of the problem of hunger in conflict zones:

Food and War South Sudan

The world's youngest and poorest nation, declared independence from Sudan in 2011

- Civil war broke out in 2013.
- 400 thousand deaths and drove four million from their homes and food sources.
- In 2017, conflict and poor harvests contribute
- Armed groups terrorize the population
- In 2017, was the world's most dangerous nation for humanitarian aid workers
 - More than 100 were killed between 2013 and 2018.

Food and War Yemen

Yemen : “the worst human-made disaster in the modern history of the world,” one that “starkly demonstrated the unequivocal link between conflict and hunger (2018 report by the UN’s World Food Programme (WFP))

- Currency collapsed, public employees stopped receiving their pay, and food prices skyrocketed
- Saudi-Emirati coalition shut down the Red Sea port at Hodeida
- End of 2018, more than half Yemen’s population urgently needed food assistance to prevent starvation.(UN)

Food and War Syria

Conflict began in 2011, by July 2019 has displaced more than 12 million people from their homes, with more than six million displaced within Syria.

- Syrians fleeing the fighting contributed to the largest global refugee crisis since the end of World War II
- The Syrian government and its rebel opponents, uses starvation as a military tactic
- Syrian government placed blockades on incoming supplies while bombing civilians

Should The West Step In With Food Shipments To Aid Middle East and African Countries?

Political decision or political failing is an essential element in every famine

The spread of democracy and human rights, and the ending of wars, are major factors in the near-ending of this devastating phenomenon.

Famine is never inevitable – with proper planning, less political turmoil and coordination, it can be prevented

Is Humanitarian Aid effective?

- “The collective scale-up of humanitarian assistance, including Somali capacities, has prevented food insecurity and acute malnutrition from reaching Famine (IPC Phase 5). As of October, **humanitarian partners have reached about 6.8 million people with life-saving assistance,**” said Adam Abdelmoula, Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia



- **Humanitarian Live Aid**, a 1985 fund-raising effort headed by Geldof, induced millions of people in the West to donate money and to urge their governments to participate in the relief effort in Africa.

Thank You