

Gender, Food Crisis and Food Security in Developed and  
Developing Countries

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# OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

Distinguishing Food Crisis and Food Security

Dimensions and Indicators of the Global Food crisis

Structural causes of the crisis

- Production and stock shortfalls, structural weaknesses of agricultural policies
- Climate change

Immediate causes -oil price rise, rising demand, financial crisis (?)

Effects of the food crisis

- macro effects at national level, Net effect on food importers and food exporters
- micro effects at household level - food security problems

Climate change as intervening cause

Gender dimensions of the causes – structural and immediate

Gender dimensions of the effects – gender and food security

Counter-effects in developed and developing countries (globalization and trade)

Conceptualizing the linkages between financial crisis and food crisis and gender

Global and national responses: gender blindness

Engendering the causes, effects and responses

# WORKING

## DEFINITION OF FOOD CRISIS

- Food crisis : a situation in which masses of the people are faced with a disequilibrium in the food market, occurring over a relatively short period of time due to a policy shock or natural or man-made disaster;
- Food Security compromised – a situation that transiently increases the number of food insecure persons. food becomes widely unavailable, inaccessible or unaffordable for more than two production cycles – supply, locational and price issues are involved
- a deterioration in food consumption both in quantity and quality whereby the response/coping mechanisms lead to lowered Quality of Life of a large section of populations.

# Food Crisis and Food security

## Distinguishing between acute food crisis and chronic food insecurity

- Food crisis is not synonymous with food insecurity although, food security is a necessary but not sufficient condition for managing food crisis.
- The current Food Crisis has been
- triggered at a higher level of technological production – aggregate production level, mainly from the net food exporters where agriculture contributes less than 10% of GDP.
- Food insecurity has occurred **systemically** at a different level – among the net food importers and those whose economies depend more on agriculture (contributing greater than 60% of GDP).
- Food crisis from perspective of LDCs is reinforcing structural problems of food insecurity
- An acute food crisis from perspective of Dvdp countries is creating new population of the food insecure;

# Food Crisis and Food security

- Food insecurity can also lead to food crisis. There could be a gradual transmission from a food insecure situations to full scale famine (crisis) as food supply-demand gap widens unmitigated.
- Food crisis is felt at the level of supply (macro) while food insecurity is felt at the level of consumption – demand. Acute food insecurity that comes comes from food crisis (low availability) tends to be worsened by poverty – low economic access.
- Therefore, the causes and effects of the food crisis are different between developing (with existing food insecure populations) and developed countries – food secure populations)
- In low income countries, food insecurity has become a stronger symptom of the crisis; In developed countries, it is more in terms of high urban CPI, lowered purchasing power of income – less in form of food insecurity, among the poorer people, usually mitigated by some form of social security.

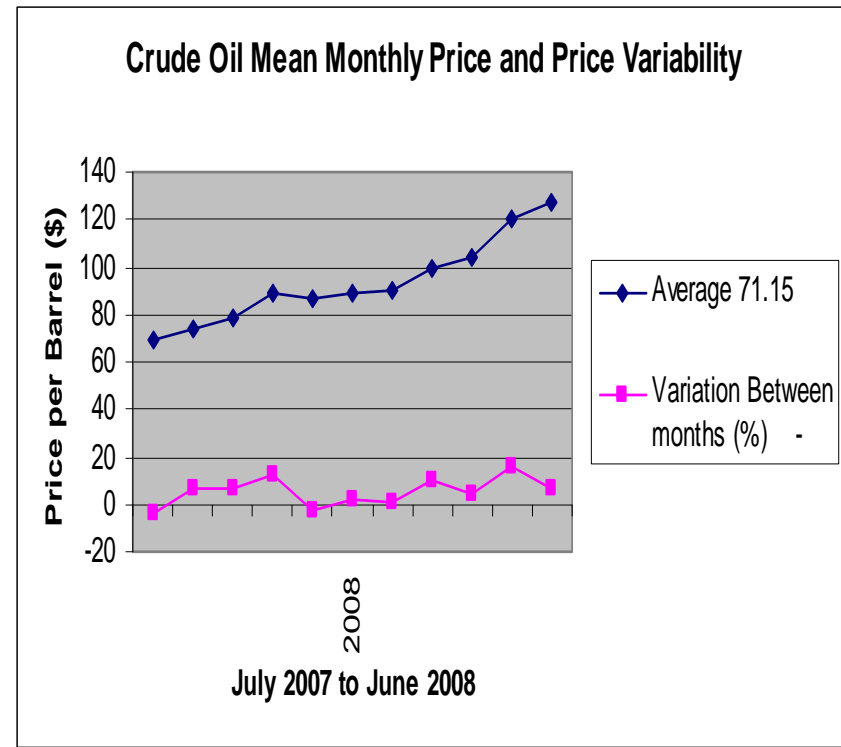
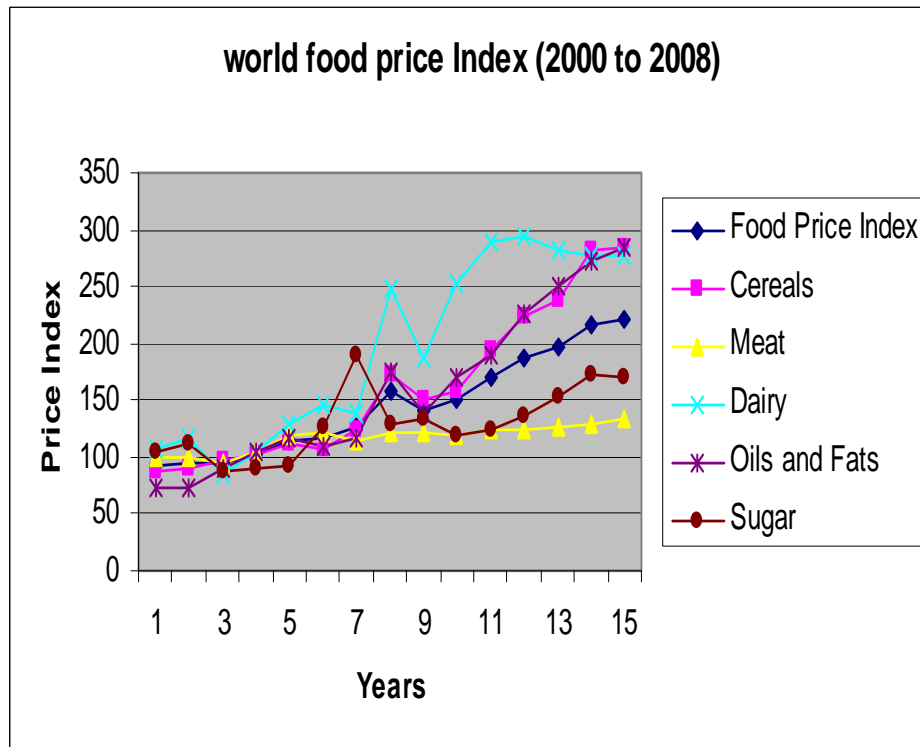
# Other characteristics of food crisis

- Causes may be short-term or long term –short term in terms of natural hazards, market distortion for substitutes, inputs or output;
- long term in terms of structural or systemic problems, triggered by a short-term shock; So effect is worse where structural problems exist;
- Usually associated with social and political conflicts (food riots in Haiti, Bangladesh, Egypt);
- The poor are more vulnerable due to limited safety nets (assets, skills for livelihood changes) to smoothen consumption in the immediate; labor is their only/greatest asset; when agricultural systems are dysfunctional, the poor are trapped in high labor-low return activities – women more inclined to do this.
- Farmers are heavily represented among the poor with female farmers at the bottom of the ladder; Their low capacity/Inability to respond appropriately on the supply side leads to cyclical reinforcement of food crisis;

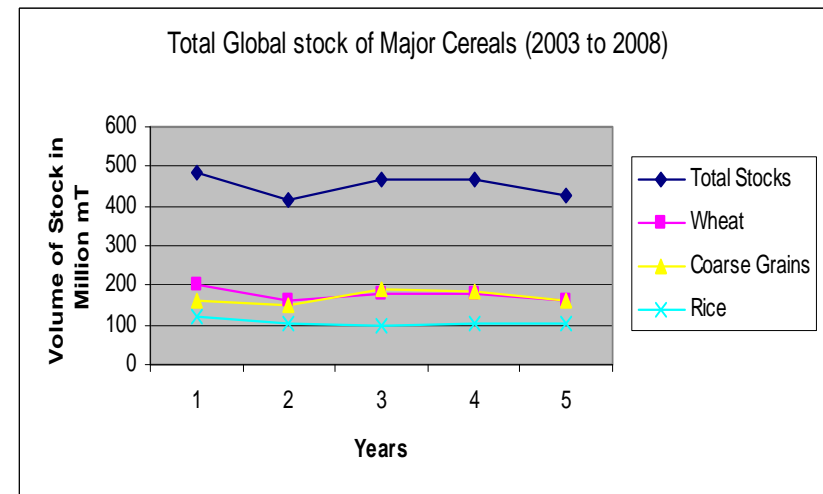
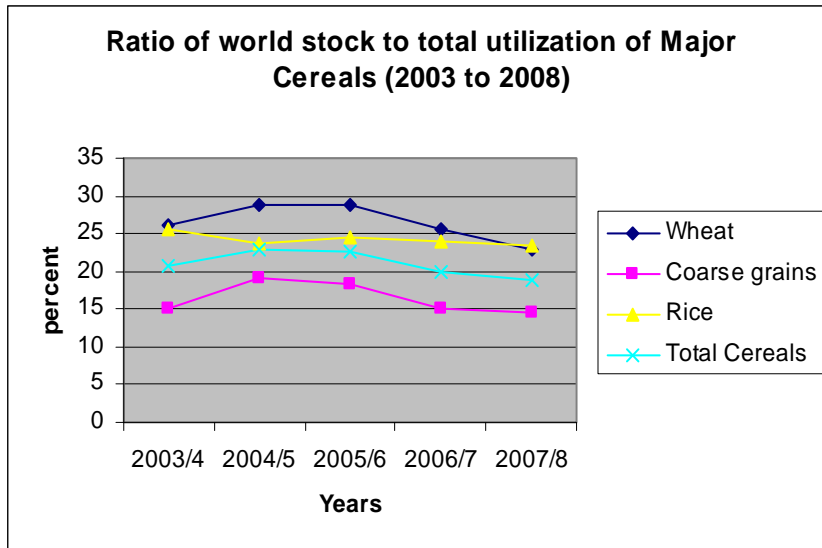
# KEY INDICATORS OF FOOD CRISIS

- Supply shortfalls (net food stock i.e utilisation to total stock percentage, drop in output growth rate);
- Sharp and rapid food price inflation;
- Variability in price and supply of food and related food price drivers (oil prices, price of close substitutes – manufactured goods);
- Widening demand-supply gaps – inability to mitigate dd-ss gaps (cobweb theory faulted);
- Trade dimensions – trade deficits in net food importing countries, reduced export revenue in net food exporting countries; Net decline in the flow of capital between trading partners;
- Is there a (local) food crisis?? Correlation between Domestic and International food Price (how universal is the crisis);

# Trends in global food prices (2007 to 2008)



# World Stock of Major Cereals



## MAJOR CAUSES OF FOOD CRISIS

### THESE HAD BEEN PREDICTED (IFPRI, 1999)

- Population growth – predicted to rise by 70% by 2020 with global urban population doubling and urban population rising to 52% in developing countries;
- Growth in world income by 4.3% annually
- Growth in food demand especially due to rising prosperity in populous India and China;
- Per Capita cereals demand in East Asia – from 66kg to 373kg; in SSA from 143 to 156kg;
- Changing diets and growth in demand for livestock products
- Cereals fed for livestock expected to rise by 100% while human demand would rise by 40%; Most of this in developed and newly industrializing countries;

# Systemic Shocks – immediate causes

- Rise in oil price resulting from unstable production of major producers (Iraq, Nigeria ... )
- Concurrent rise in fertilizer prices and transportation costs for farm inputs and outputs;
- Erratic capital flows into commodity markets (consequence of financial crisis)
- Increasing demand for bio-fuel as substitute for escalating fossil fuel price (beyond green policies)
- Increased competition between humans, animals and industrial use (local content initiative on maize and sorghum in Nigeria);
- Climate change and impact on farmers' response capacity (poorer yield, fragility of lands and livelihoods)
- Conflicts and civil strife in many parts of the developing world – increasing the population of the vulnerable and reducing population of producers
- Scourge of HIV/AIDS in large populations of Africa – decimating the supply capacity;

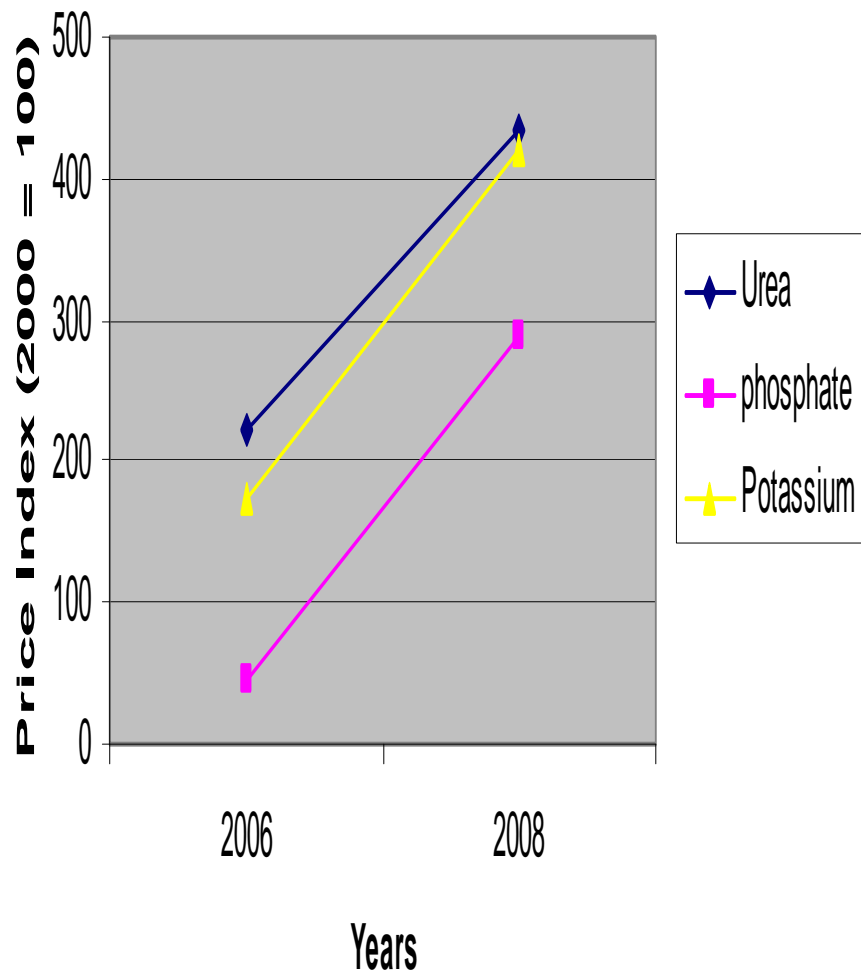
## Other Intervening Factors: Supply shortages due to structural problems of the food system;

- **In developed countries**, decline in growth rate of ss has been experienced, due to excessive fertilizer effects
- Green Policies pushing for increase in bio-fuels production in Europe and the USA (targeting a 20 percent reduction of Europe's CO<sub>2</sub> and GHGs, 10 percent of transport fuel to come from bio-fuels by 2020).
- **In developing countries**, lag in growth of supply compared to growth in population; Low technological input into agriculture; fertilizer use is about 10% of qty in developed countries;
- Growing feminisation of agriculture;
- Low resource use, brought about by liberalisation of input markets;
- Policy failures in supporting agriculture and the rural environment;
- Poor link with commodity value chains, especially by small scale farmers especially women farmers;
- Climatic effects on arable land, mainly thru changes in rainfall and temperature patterns;

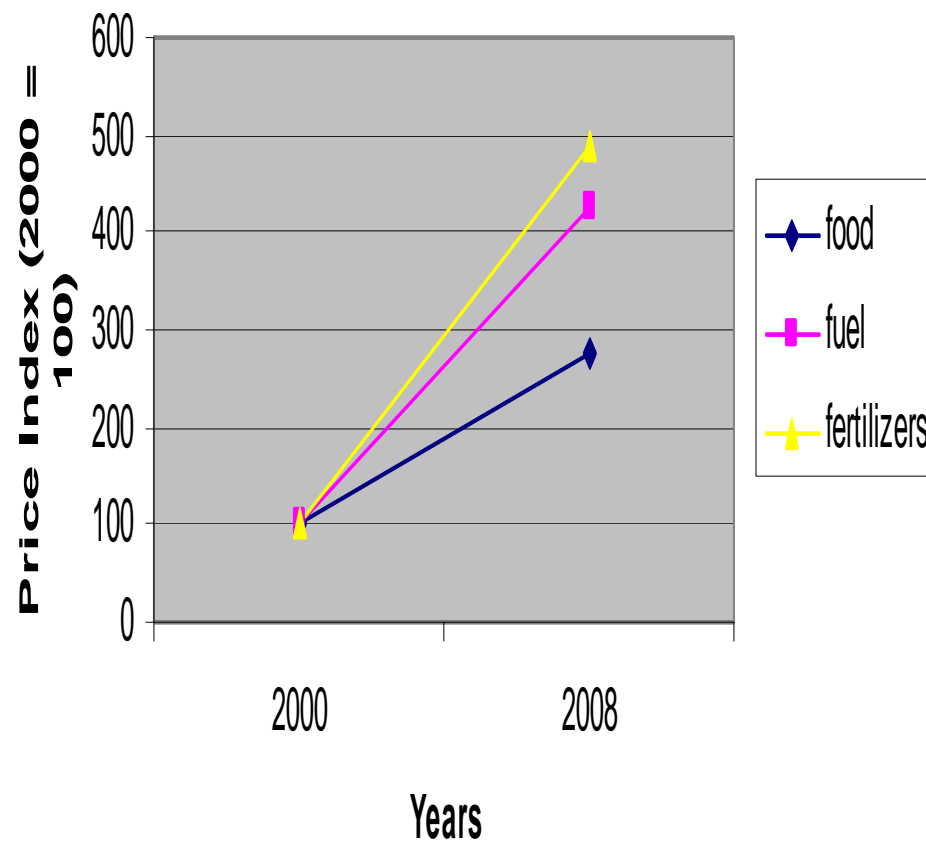
## Supply response as natural consequence of price hike??

- Price increase should be an incentive for increased domestic production by the rational farmer; But this has not happened, at least not effectively.
- **Input price index higher than food price index!!**
- Oil price hike should be a source of higher revenue in oil-producing developing countries – an incentive for agricultural investment. Why and why not?

### Fertilizer Price Index (2006 to 2008)



### Change in price Index of Food and Food Price Drivers (2000 to 2008)



# Consequences of food crisis

- For net importers, trade deficits continue to constraint government investment - fiscal development expenditure especially human development programmes and (gender) empowerment programmes;
- Hunger and food insecurity dimensions closely related to dimensions of the crisis – acute deprivation is being observed;
- For net exporters, loss of trade surpluses further constraining capital flows, in addition to the financial crisis; firming up of interest rate will keep production cost up and supply down except prices rise further!!!

# Consequences in developed countries

- The impact of the rising food prices is significant in the developed economies in various ways.
- High inflation rates are being recorded in most of the developed economies as food production costs rise.
- BBC quoting Eurostat Statistical Office, reported that annual rate of inflation in 15 EU States climbed from 1.9 percent in May 2007 to 3.3 percent in April 2008. In the USA, inflation rate May 2008 was 3.7 percent, highest since 1996.
- The drivers of inflation are food prices and transport cost which are 6.4 percent and 5.9 percent respectively of expenditure.
- As stocks of cereals deplete, and future cereal production shared between food and industrial uses, there will not be enough food to meet some international obligations/commitments especially in terms of food pledges to WFP to alleviate worsening food insecurity in developing countries and conflict zones.
- The USA and most EU countries will not have enough to export since it will have to struggle to satisfy her domestic needs.
- Future depression in supply is envisaged unless fertilizer prices are further subsidized (barring WTO intervention); **for developing countries, will this be a good sign??**

# Transmission mechanisms from Financial Crisis to Food Crisis

## Developed Countries

### Prosperity and Trade Liberalisation

#### Financial prosperity

- Increased Capital flow
- Increased Agricultural Subsidies
- Increased fertilizer use
- Increased food export and Aid Flows
- Increasing Food Demand
- Increased Oil Demand
- Increased energy prices (contributing to pressure on financial markets)

#### Financial Crisis

- Urban unemployment
- Reduced food purchasing power
- Depression of demand and negative supply response
- Oil market shocks
- Increased biofuel demand
- Rising price of fertilizers
- Reduction in supply capacity
- Reduction in surplus stock and export volume
- Increased Food Prices (and price of export)

#### Climatic factors

- Increase fertilizer use
- Increased energy use
- Increased effluents and GHGs
- Climate change and drop in productivity (ss Shortages)
- Hazards to global agrarian economies

## Developing Countries

### Poverty, Trade liberalization and structural Adjustments

#### Cheaper imports

- Net food import increasing
- Depression of domestic production
- Increased dependence on imports
- Increasing trade deficits and fiscal constraints
- Lowered domestic agricultural investment
- Increased vulnerability of farmers

#### Global financial crisis

- Reduction in aid flows
- Reduction in foreign remittances
- Reduced agricultural investment (FDI)
- Rising price of imports
- Reduced Fiscal Capacity of governments
- Political Conflicts and human development cost
- Increased vulnerability of the poor

#### Food Crisis and the domestic output

- Rising price of imports
- Reduction of Subsidies from governments
- High fertilizer price
- Higher transportation costs
- Depressed farm income
- Depressed domestic production
- Higher domestic prices of food
- Greater Vulnerability of the poor
- Exploitation of natural resources (contributing to climate change)

#### Climate Change

- Increased fragility of farm households
- Reduced economic access to food
- Negative impact on human development status
- Changes in cropping patterns – loss of prime crops/subsistence trap
- Compromise on agricultural growth

# Gender and the Food Crisis

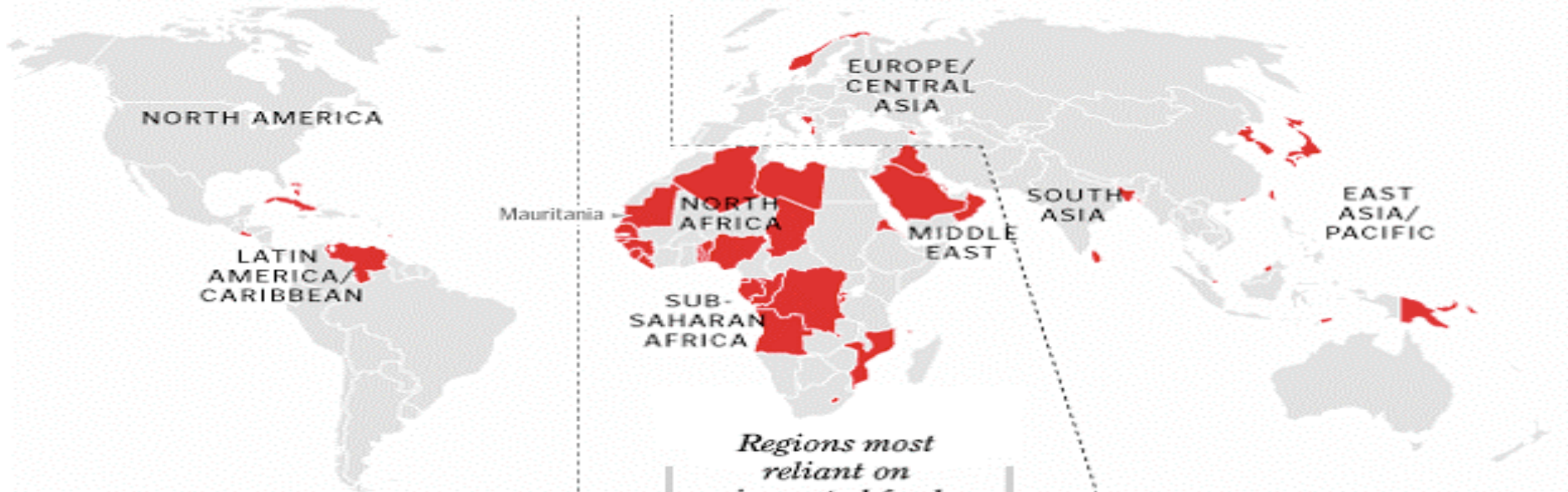
- **Women are both producers and consumers of food crops and livestock. They have a larger stake both for themselves and for their children.**
- **Women and children (especially girls) are especially more vulnerable to food, fuel, and fertilizer price increases, and to rural poverty generally, than men due to gendered pattern of entitlement to land, capital and other resources need to respond to policy and climatic shocks.**
- **women, predominantly from urban areas, have played a significant role in the protests against high food prices that have succeeded in capturing the attention of the world's leaders and the media.**
- **Consequences in developing countries reflect the gendered face of the food crisis – food insecurity and lowered QOL;**

## Consequences of Food Crisis and Gender in developing countries:

Consequences of the Food Crisis	Gender and Food security Implications
Income constraint and Squeeze on subsistence	Women's household food security impaired
High production cost and Subsistence trap	Lack of marketable surplus to meet non-food needs
Food intake substitution	Nutritional deficiencies leading to high IMR and MMR, increase in health care costs lowered health of (female) farmers, lowered agricultural productivity;
Resource Shift to meet more remunerative industrial crops demand	Loss of female farmlands and livelihoods
Reduced financial flows from developed countries and constrained access to financial markets;	Women farmers may be more constrained with backlash on market surpluses and household food security
Reduced subsidies and other government support envisaged	Gender-focused farm programmes get the hatchet
High food and non-food expenditure	Asset stripping to meet household food and welfare needs

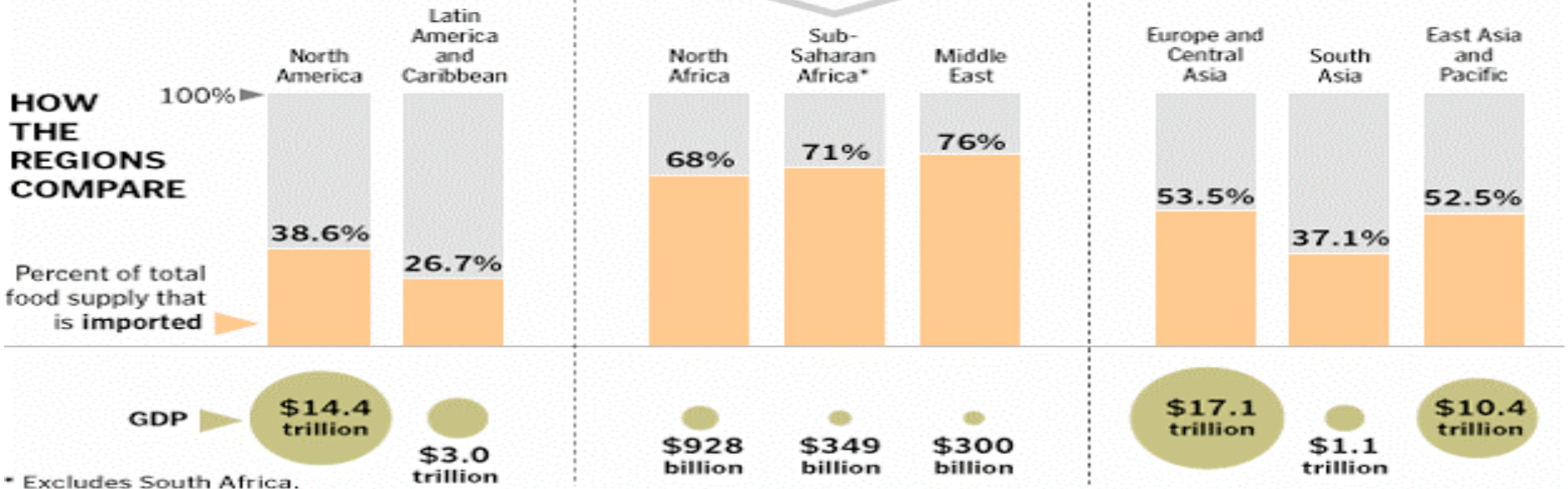
## THE MOST DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED FOOD

■ Countries that rely on the global market for most of their food supply



*Regions most  
reliant on  
imported food  
are least able to  
afford it.*

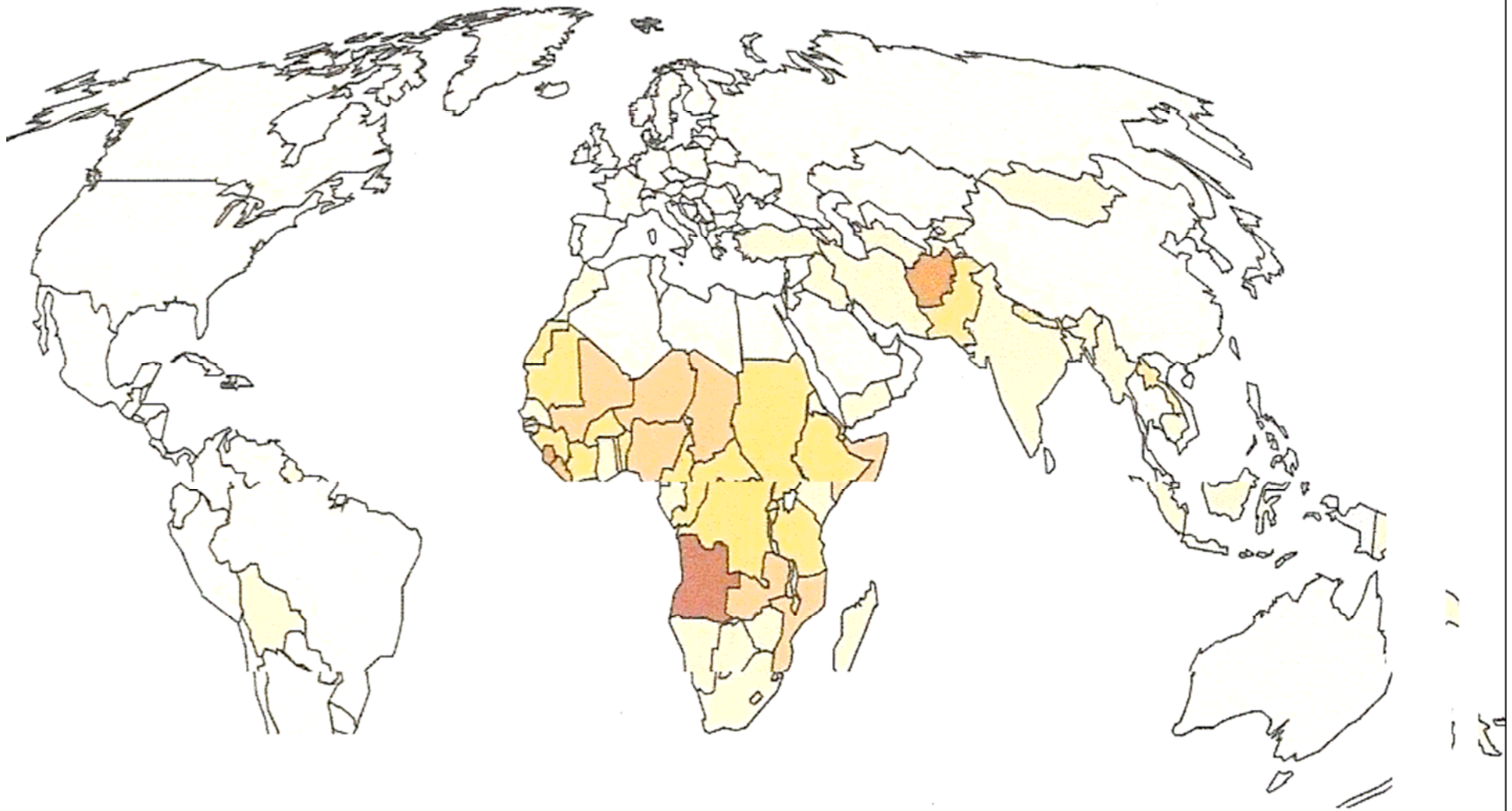
### HOW THE REGIONS COMPARE



\* Excludes South Africa.

# Infant Mortality Rate (Total Deaths per 1,000 Live Births)

2008



# **Women's ability to remain at the forefront of managing household food insecurity may be threatened**

- The evidence from much of Africa is that the ability to respond to new incentives that are presented is stronger with male farmers;
- The ability for women to participate in the growing value chain is limited due to gender blindness of policies
- The cultural entitlement system is restrictive (land, water, markets) compounded by rising transportation costs
- Increasing fragility of households has been reported;

## **Fragility and coping mechanisms (1): Selling Prime crops**

- In sub-Saharan Africa women are typically responsible for providing the “sauces” that go with staple carbohydrates at meals. Thus, women’s crops often include legumes, groundnuts, vegetables, oil-nuts, and other sauce ingredients for family consumption.
- When households are stressed, women sell their sauce crops to buy cheaper carbohydrates for family consumption, which reduces family dietary diversity and overall energy intake.
- Livestock sector is also highly vulnerable. Assets of small poultry and ruminants managed by women are usually the first to go to manage price shocks of basic staples. This translates into lower household consumption

## Fragility and Coping Mechanisms: **Resource shifts to “security crops”**

- In economically stressed rural households, women try to intensify production of “food-security crops” which are often less profitable than the prime crops;
- Such crops require less land, low-resource input, sporadic labour supplied by the household rather than the labor market and so lower yield. They include cassava, sweet potatoes, millet.
- Even some of these crops are now under intense competition with other forms of demand.

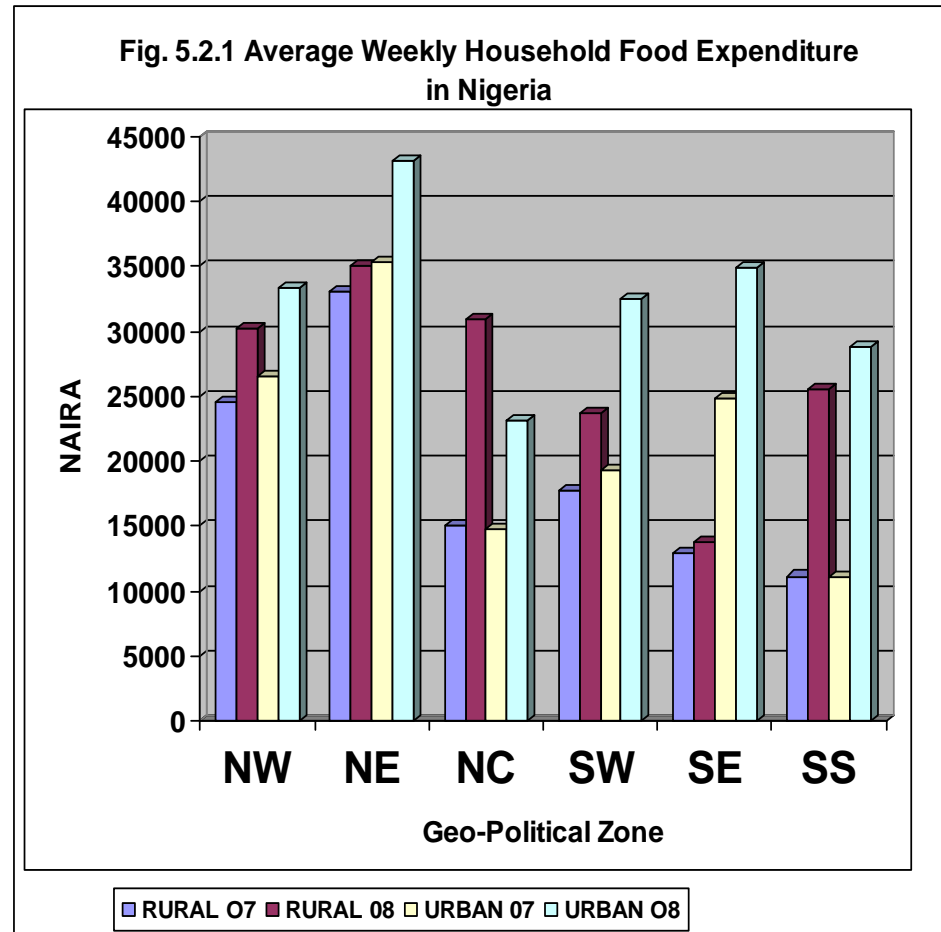
# Fragility and Coping Mechanisms: Food Expenditure (Nigeria)

**Proportion of Household's Income Spent on Food Only in the Urban and Rural Sector of each Geopolitical Zone.**

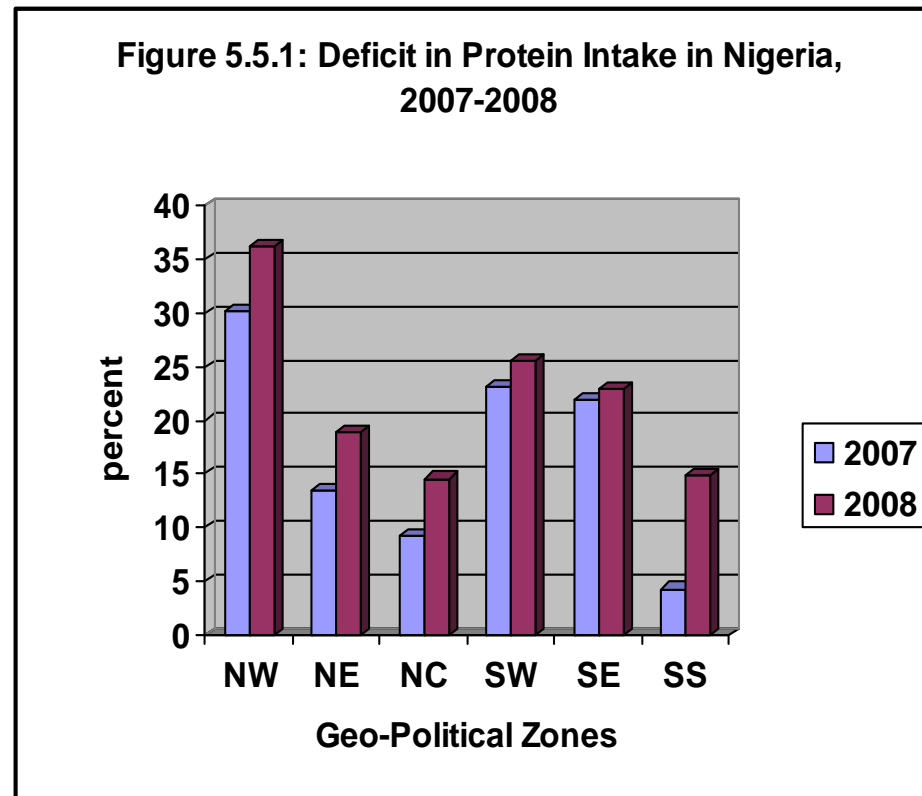
Geopolitical Zone	Urban Sector (%)		Rural Sector (%)	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
North Central(Benue State)	55.44	70.39	53.96	76.84
North East(Yobe State)	45.38	79.75	45.24	71.61
North West(Zamfara State)	64.23	78.98	52.11	74.05
South East(Enugu State)	55.95	77.89	43.82	71.60
SouthWest(Osun state)	50.18	74.34	52.47	72.59
SouthSouth(Edo State)	65.12	78.19	55.17	73.15

**Source: Field Survey, Dec 2008.**

# Fragility and Coping Mechanisms (Nigeria)



# Fragility and Coping Mechanisms: Nutritional effects (Nigeria)



# Climate change as an intervening cause of food crisis

- CC is now a global concern; front burner issue with the UN and major world governments;
- Major causal activities; increase fossil fuel use; GHG gas emissions; deforestation and a host of other degradation activities;
- Effects: increased ozone layer; atmospheric warming; increased rainfall – floods in monsoon zones; On the other hand, heat waves causing delayed rainfall and droughts, desert encroachment and reduced forest cover

*“Everyone will suffer from the consequences of CC, but the world’s poor, 70% of whom are women, are the most vulnerable, especially girls and elderly women. Their survival, livelihood and basic dignity will be severely and disproportionately threatened”*  
*(NGO/CSW Task Force on Climate Change.*

# Causes of climate change in developed countries

Causes are related to growing prosperity

- Rising (fossil) energy consumption
- Industrial effluents and toxic nuclear wastes into water bodies;
- Massive fertilizer use and soil depletion
- Consequent extremes of weather and cyclical increase demand for energy in winter and cooling systems in summer – mostly fossil energy dependent
- Aggravation of these effects with rising prosperity, technological advancement in developed economies

# Causes of climate change in developing countries

Main causes are related to poverty and Technological backwardness in adaptation/coping strategies

- Deforestation - Fuel wood use as energy substitute
- Maximum tillage and over-grazing due to scarcity of cultivable and grazing land;
- poor erosion control methods;
- Impacts of Slash and burn land use techniques;
- Impact of global warming on agricultural land mass, desert encroachment, receding of water bodies;
- Impact of exploitation by multinationals (oil and gas, chemicals, food manufacturing) especially on water bodies;

## Cross effects of climate change: developing and developed nations

CC stands at the interface of prosperity and poverty; between financial crisis and food crisis

Causes of CC are more from developed countries but impact more on developing countries' agriculture

- CC has contributed to the food crisis by reducing capacity of developing countries to increase food supply on the short run, – due to limited capacity for short-term adaptation in response to food crisis, reinforcing net food shortfalls
- Need for CC adaptation has put pressure on demand for alternative energy (bio-fuel) by developed countries, reinforcing competition with humans, reducing world food stock and exports and increasing import price in LDCs;
- Developing countries export satisfy trade needs at expense of domestic food needs;
- Financial crisis may have reduced the financial capacity for adaptation in developed countries, CC adaptation is technology intensive - development assistance to LDCs in this regard also stands shortchanged;

## Gender Issues in climate change: developing countries

Women and men contribute differently to causes of CC through:

- use of fuel wood for household energy; men worsen CC through deforestation for farming; women use marginal reserve land for subsistence farming;
- Women resort to selling fuel wood as alternative livelihood strategy while men engage in timber/logging for industrial use'
- Use of forest resources (non timber forest products) as livelihood strategies by both men and women;
- men engage more in slash and burn methods of land clearing;
- CC poses threats to household food security by reducing women's access to subsistence land and impacts on women's livelihoods;
- In as much as global prosperity has contributed to CC, food crisis has also been exacerbated;

# Gender roles in adaptation and mitigation of climate change

- World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002), and the 2005 World Summit recognized the essential role women play in sustainable development. They contribute to degradation but can also contribute to adaptation and mitigation if only the following apply:
- Gender inequalities in access to resources, including credit, extension services, information and technology, must be taken into account in developing mitigation (preventive) strategies.
- Women in rural areas in developing countries have the major responsibility for household water supply and energy for cooking and heating, as well as for food security, and are negatively affected by drought, uncertain rainfall and deforestation.
- Adaptation efforts should systematically and effectively address gender-specific impacts of climate change in these areas by providing rural infrastructure to promote agriculture and fisheries;
- Other areas that need to be engendered include biodiversity and ecosystem services, health, industry, human settlements, disaster management, and conflict and security.<sup>1</sup>

# Responses to the food crisis: cross country experiences

- Observed global and national responses to combat the rising food prices include reduction in taxes on imports of food; price controls or price subsidies; rationing and stock release; wage increases;
- without expanding domestic supply, this would lead to additional burden on national budgets and lead higher balance of payments deficit.
- A matrix of responses is shown following:

**Table 7.1: Classical Policy Responses to Soaring Food Prices**

	<b>CATEGORY OF POLICY RESPONSES</b>	<b>MAIN FEATURES AND INSTRUMENTS</b>
1	Macro-economic policies aimed at lowering of domestic food prices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪reduction of tariffs and other taxes on key staples</li><li>▪buffer stocks</li><li>▪beefing up strategic reserves</li><li>▪use of consumer subsidies</li><li>▪use of export restrictions or bans</li></ul>
2	Demand-side responses in terms of targeted safety nets aimed at improving household food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪conditional cash transfer</li><li>▪food stamps</li><li>▪school feeding programme</li></ul>
3	Supply-side responses in terms of stimulating domestic production and income of producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪input subsidies targeted at small-scale farmers</li><li>▪on-farm storage</li><li>▪investment in rural infrastructure</li><li>▪measures to reduce commodity price and weather-related risks (warehouse receipts, futures and options and weather-based insurance products)</li><li>▪increased use of irrigated land</li><li>▪commodity exchanges</li></ul>

# Supply Side Interventions

Nigeria	Suspended tariffs on rice imports for six months.
Kenya	has increased funding for expansion of strategic grains reserve over the next two years;
Mauritania	has launched program of Special Intervention including distribution of inputs and credits to farmers for the next six months – planting season.
Ghana	increased subsidy on fertilizer and made free tractor available to farmers;
Panama	government will buy the whole of paddy production from farmers and sell at subsidized rates to consumers.
In China,	exclusive supplies of diesel fuel will be available for farm vehicles during the cereals harvest season.

# Price Support Interventions

Algeria	Increased the purchase price of wheat by about 50% while bringing down the sale price to millers to support consumption of wheat products. Thereby the government is supporting production and consumption at the same time.
Congo	Reduced the VAT on a range of imported foodstuff. Kenya reduced import tax on wheat to 10% from 35%.
Zambia	raised farm price of maize by almost 100% while countries like Mexico have frozen the price of about 150 food items until the end of 2008.
India, China, Banglades	Are operating Buyer Programme for major crops like wheat at prices higher than 2007 level. These are all geared to stimulate supply response.

# Trade related Interventions

Egypt	Has extended the ban on rice export to conserve for home consumption
Liberia	Has banned all kinds of food export.
Ghana	Has removed excise duty and tax on oil and fuel for fishermen and eliminated all import duties on rice, wheat, yellow corn and vegetable oil.
Kenya	Has allowed up to 270,000mt of duty free maize, removed sales tax on rice and bread.

# Safety Net Interventions

Egypt	Has always been operating a ration card system but has not extended the register of card holders since 1988. In order to support consumption by its teeming poor population, Egypt recently re-opened the system in June 2008 to cover 55 million out of its 75 million population and also doubled the amount of rice that card holders can receive;
Rwanda	Will be distributing heads of cattle to at least 600,000 families by 2012. Flour and bread subsidies are being effected in some countries while rice seeds are being distributed free in others.
Nigeria	Expanded the School Feeding Programme (NEPAD initiative) to all states

## Some Interventions likely to reduce gendered constraints of the Food Crisis

- SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMMES ARE GAINING GROUND, ALSO PROMOTING ENROLMENT OF GIRLS;
- EXPANSION OF CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMME TARGETED TO THE MOST VULNERABLE
- NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR OPERATORS (ESPECIALLY THE INFORMAL SECTOR)

# Integrating gender in the response mechanisms

- The discourse has so far been gender – blind beyond analysis of issues by several institutions and suggestions;
- Should a gendered approach be at the level of mitigating food crisis or managing household food insecurity? At what level does gender role become transformative?
- What needs to change in the immediate for both to be gender-relevant?



## **How do we engender the Policy responses towards sustainable integration at the macro level?**

- Engendering the macroeconomic framework for agricultural development – mainly geared towards commercialization of the sector;
- Inherently disadvantage women due to low entitlement to land and private markets;
- Can the cultural entitlement structure be sufficiently modified on the short to medium terms? The last two decades have been about this with limited, tho impressive levels of success;
- Human development differentials remain a big challenge in the short run – MDGs threatened;
- How relevant is the current scope of women's food production operation in a framework of commercialization?
- Constraints of access to large parcels of land to enter into commercial agriculture remain real and may be a major challenge in the short run;

# Can Africa start on a track of structural transformation?

- Lower agricultural employment but increase agricultural GDP;
- Capital flow including FDI into large-scale agriculture and agribusiness;
- Role of regional and sub regional bodies in reshaping a direction of common and sustainable growth.

# Opportunities for women under ST

- Women's cooperatives have a good entry point compared to women farmers at the household level who will lose livelihood;
- Countries undergoing new political agenda have had the larger space to integrate women's interest in land redistribution schemes (Rwanda, South Africa)
- New and fledging democracies around the developing world provide platforms for gender inclusion an engendered national macroeconomic agenda; making gender more relevant;
- Opportunities in the crop value chain
- Building skills of women for upstream and down stream sector agricultural activities may be more effective on the short to medium term for integrating women in crop value chains while group strategy helps faster to integrate them in commercial agriculture;

# Threats of ST

- Short term displacement of women farmers
- Build on off-farm strengths and knowledge of women
- Investment in modern, technologically relevant on and off-farm skills;
- But I believe it's a direction to look in the immediate future while responding to the food crisis.

Thank you for listening