




Prof. George Mavrotas, Institute of Development Policy, University of Antwerp  
Ferdinand Seminar on *Food Security, Development Finance and Governance Quality in an Uncertain World*, Ferdi Clermont-Ferrand, 19 May 2025



# Food & Nutrition Security, Development Finance & Governance Quality- Seminar Outline

- Food & Nutrition Security (FNS) a burning issue in recent years with even growing importance currently & in the coming years – alarming trends, stylised facts and the link to 2030 Agenda
- Linking FNS to governance quality and development finance: Recent empirical evidence.
- The IFFs-FNS interface...
- Towards a political economy approach (PEA) to FNS
- The way ahead and the need for a new multidisciplinary and pluralistic research and policy agenda

# FNS one of the burning issues in sustainable development & human security in the early 21<sup>st</sup> Century

- The UN in their Handbook on Human Security in 2016 clearly identifies food security (in terms of hunger, famine and sudden rise in food prices) as one of the key domains of human security, along with economic, health, environmental, community, political and personal insecurity.
  - The relationship between Human Security and Food Security was also emphasized in the UN General Assembly's resolution 66/290 in 2012.
  - In SDG 2.1, the UN 2030 Agenda specifies the ambition to end hunger for all people, while in SDG 2.2 it defines the aim to end all forms of malnutrition, including undernourishment (UN 2020).
- 

# Malnutrition a global issue in recent years .....

**2 BILLION**

*people  
lack key micronutrients like  
iron and vitamin A*

**151 MILLION**

*children  
are  
stunted*

**51 MILLION**

*children  
are  
wasted*

**2 BILLION**

*adults  
are  
overweight or obese*

**38 MILLION**

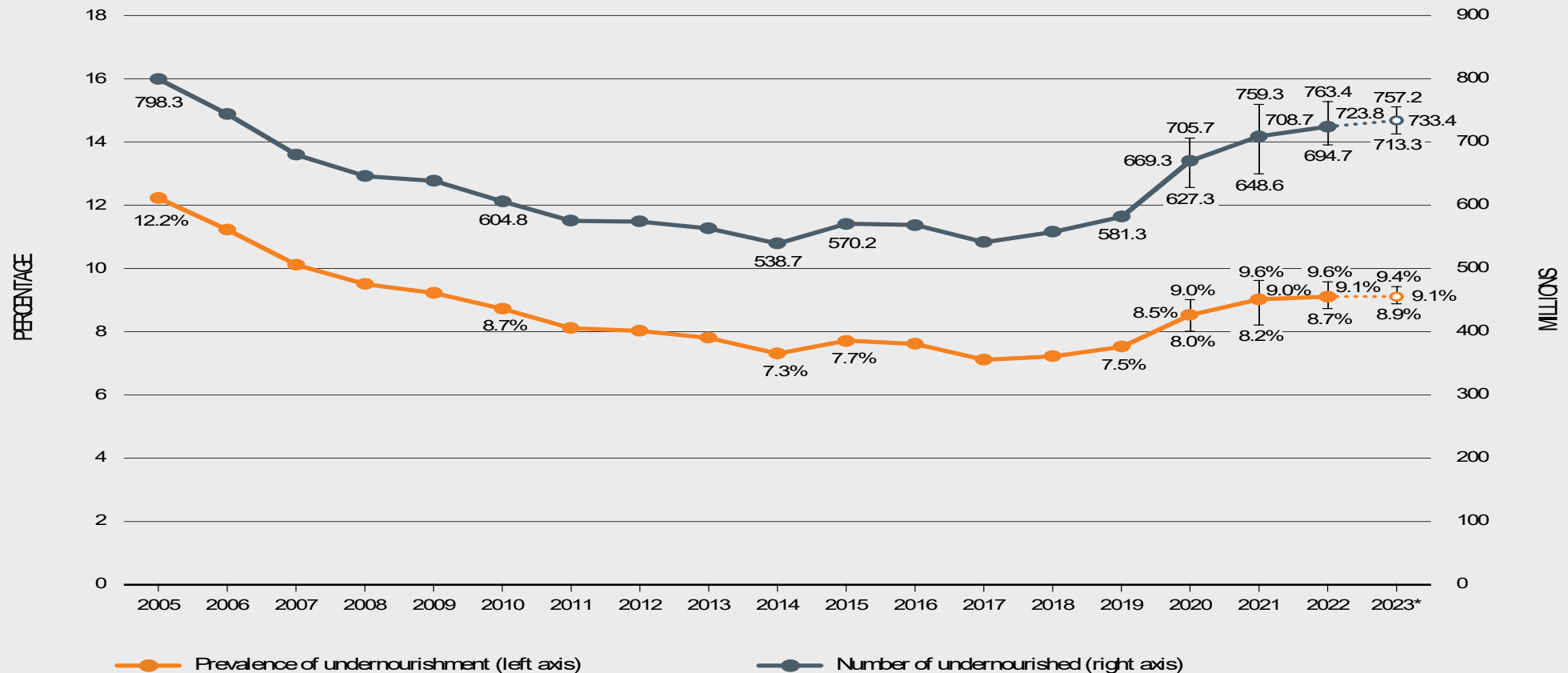
*children  
are  
overweight*

**88 PERCENT**

*of countries  
face a serious burden of  
either two or three forms of  
malnutrition*

# alarming recent trends in Global Hunger & FNS ...

**FIGURE 1** GLOBAL HUNGER ROSE SHARPLY FROM 2019 TO 2021 AND PERSISTED AT THE SAME LEVEL TO 2023



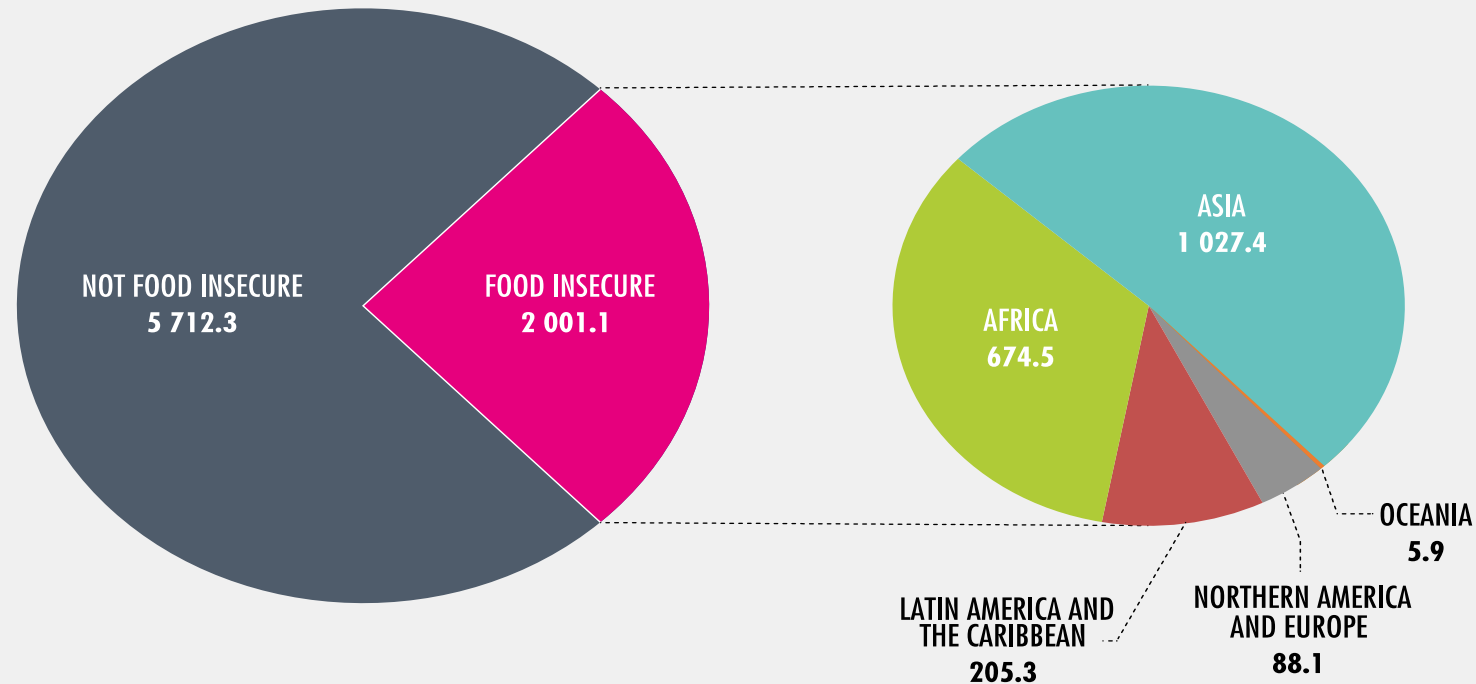
NOTES: Bars show lower and upper bounds of the estimated range. \* Projections based on nowcasts for 2023 are illustrated by dotted lines.  
SOURCE: FAO. 2024. *FAOSTAT: Suite of Food Security Indicators*. [Accessed on 24 July 2024]. <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>.  
Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

Source: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2024). *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms*. Rome.

# ...with Africa and Asia sharing most of the burden...

**FIGURE 8**  
**OVER HALF OF THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY MODERATE OR SEVERE FOOD INSECURITY**  
**IN THE WORLD LIVE IN ASIA AND MORE THAN ONE-THIRD LIVE IN AFRICA**

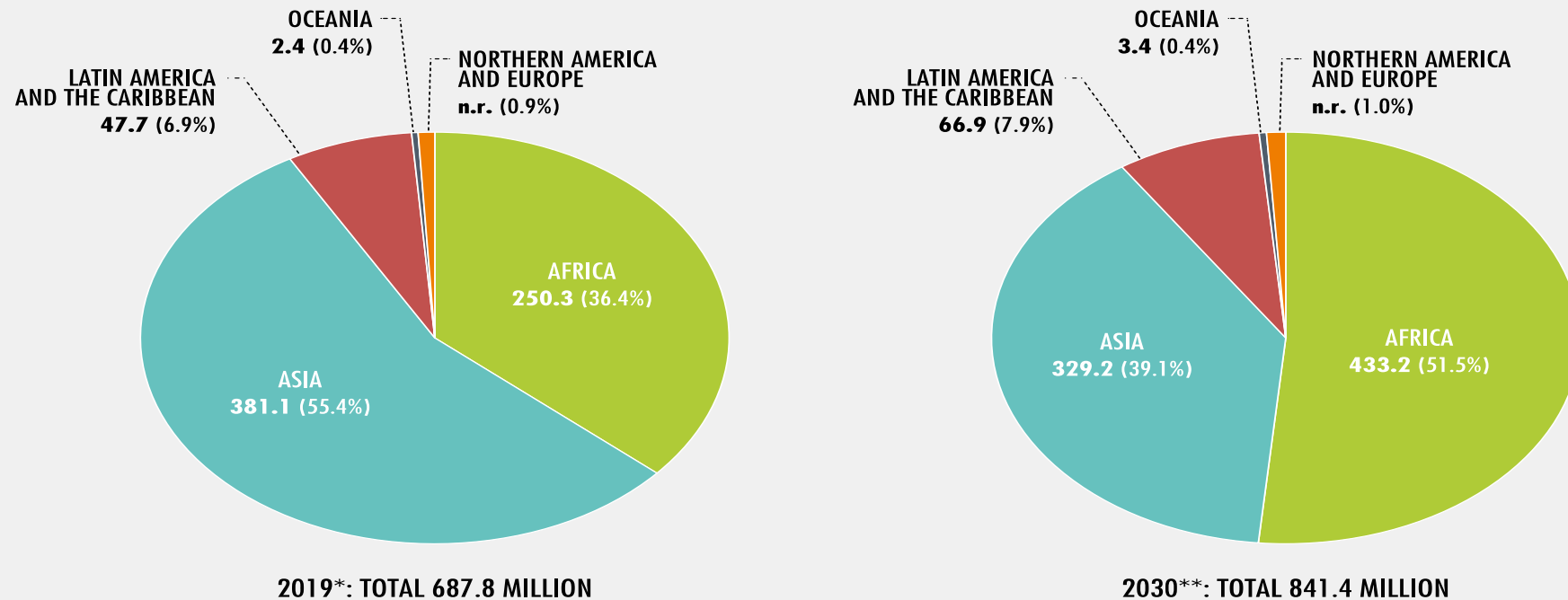
**TOTAL WORLD POPULATION (2019): 7 713 MILLION**



NOTES: Number of food insecure/not food insecure people in millions.  
SOURCE: FAO.

# ....and SSA the region with most undernourished people by 2030....

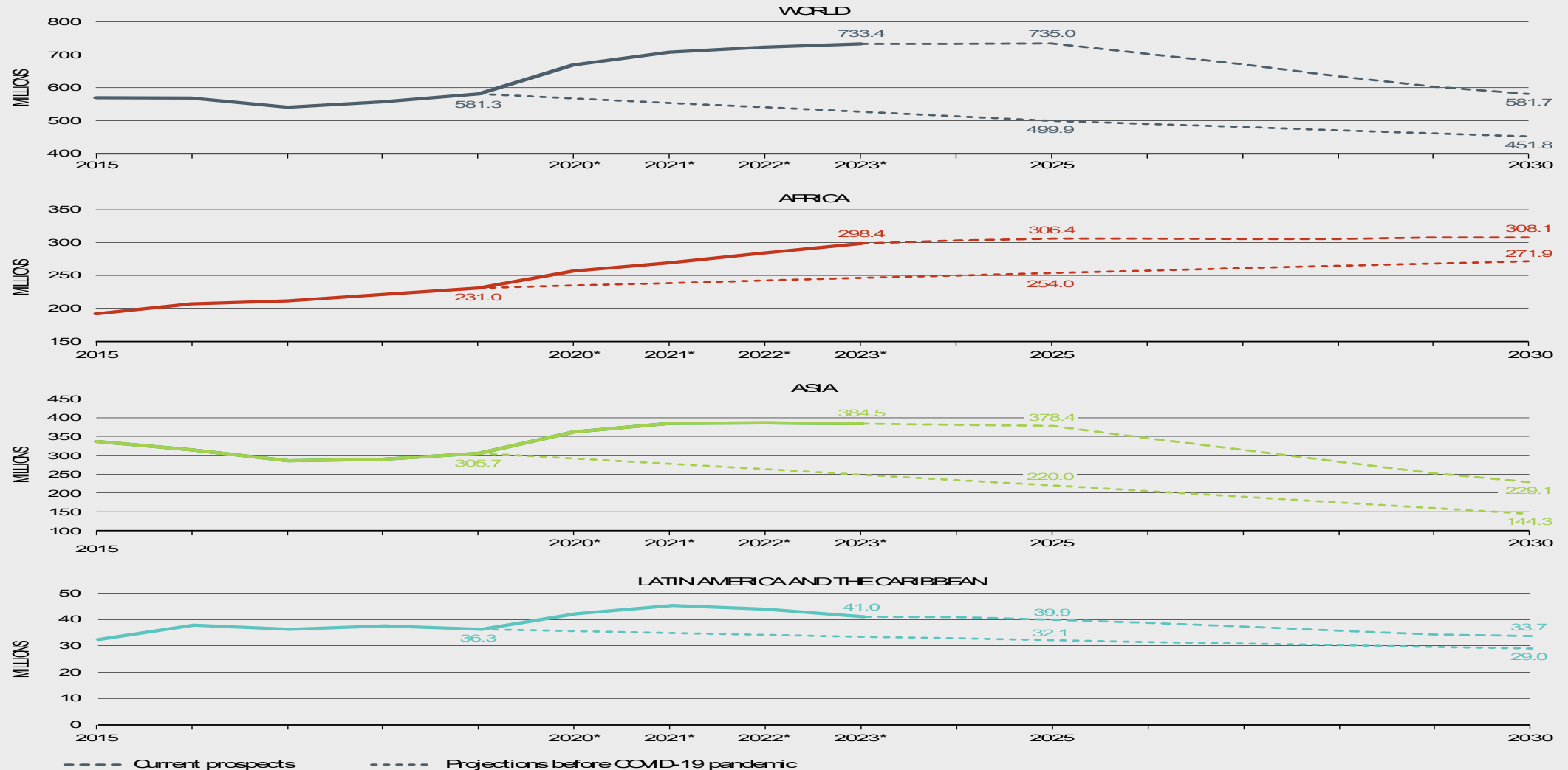
**FIGURE 5**  
IF RECENT TRENDS PERSIST, THE DISTRIBUTION OF HUNGER IN THE WORLD WILL CHANGE SUBSTANTIALLY, MAKING AFRICA THE REGION WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED IN 2030



NOTES: Number of undernourished people in millions. \* Projected values. \*\* Projections to 2030 do not consider the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. n.r. = not reported, as the prevalence is less than 2.5 percent.  
SOURCE: FAO.

# ....and we are far off track to zero hunger target by 2030...

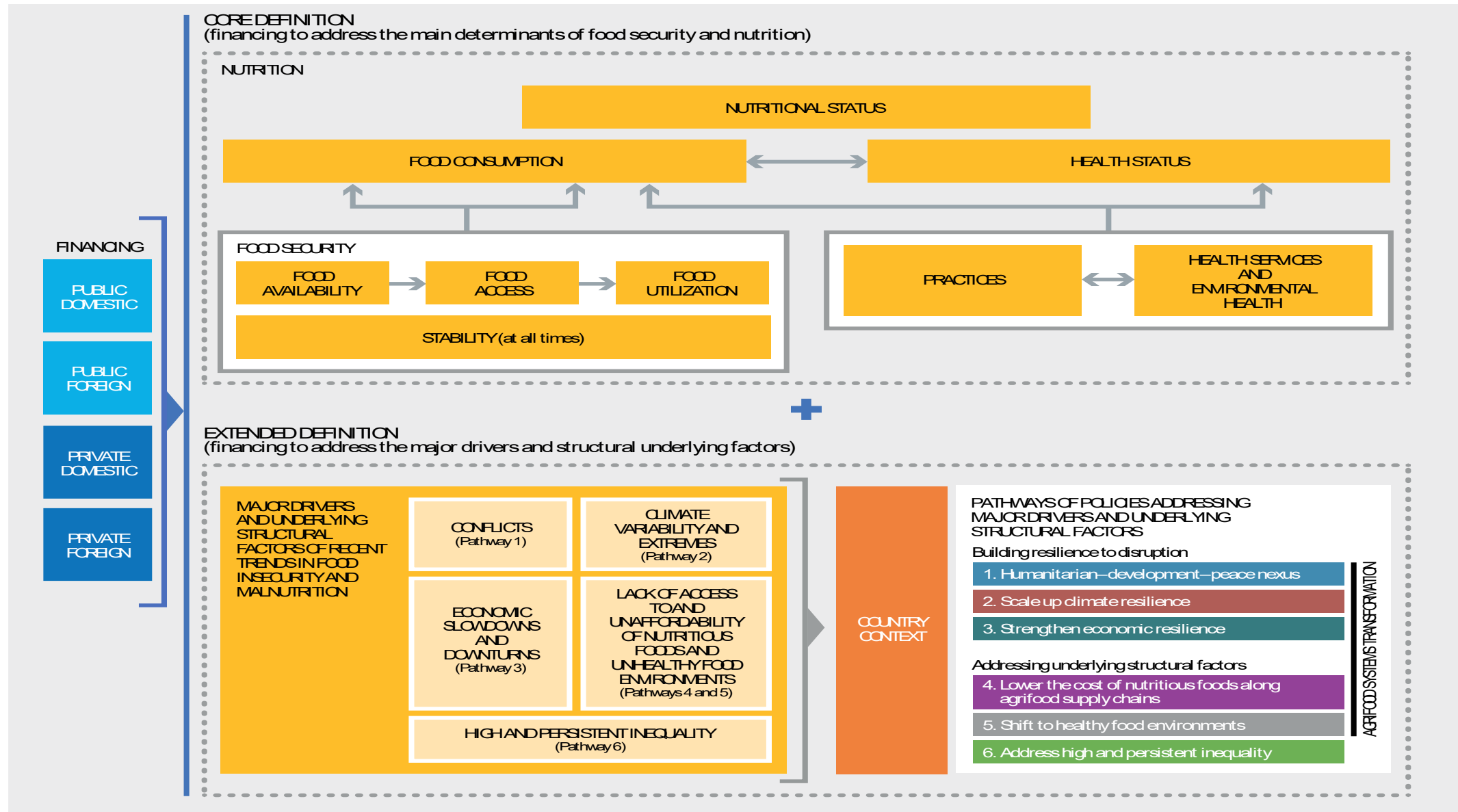
**FIGURE 3** PROJECTED NUMBERS OF UNDERNOURISHED INDICATE THAT THE WORLD IS FAR OFF TRACK TO ACHIEVE ZERO HUNGER BY 2030



Source: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2024). *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms*. Rome.



# ....thus an urgent need to re-define financing for FNS..

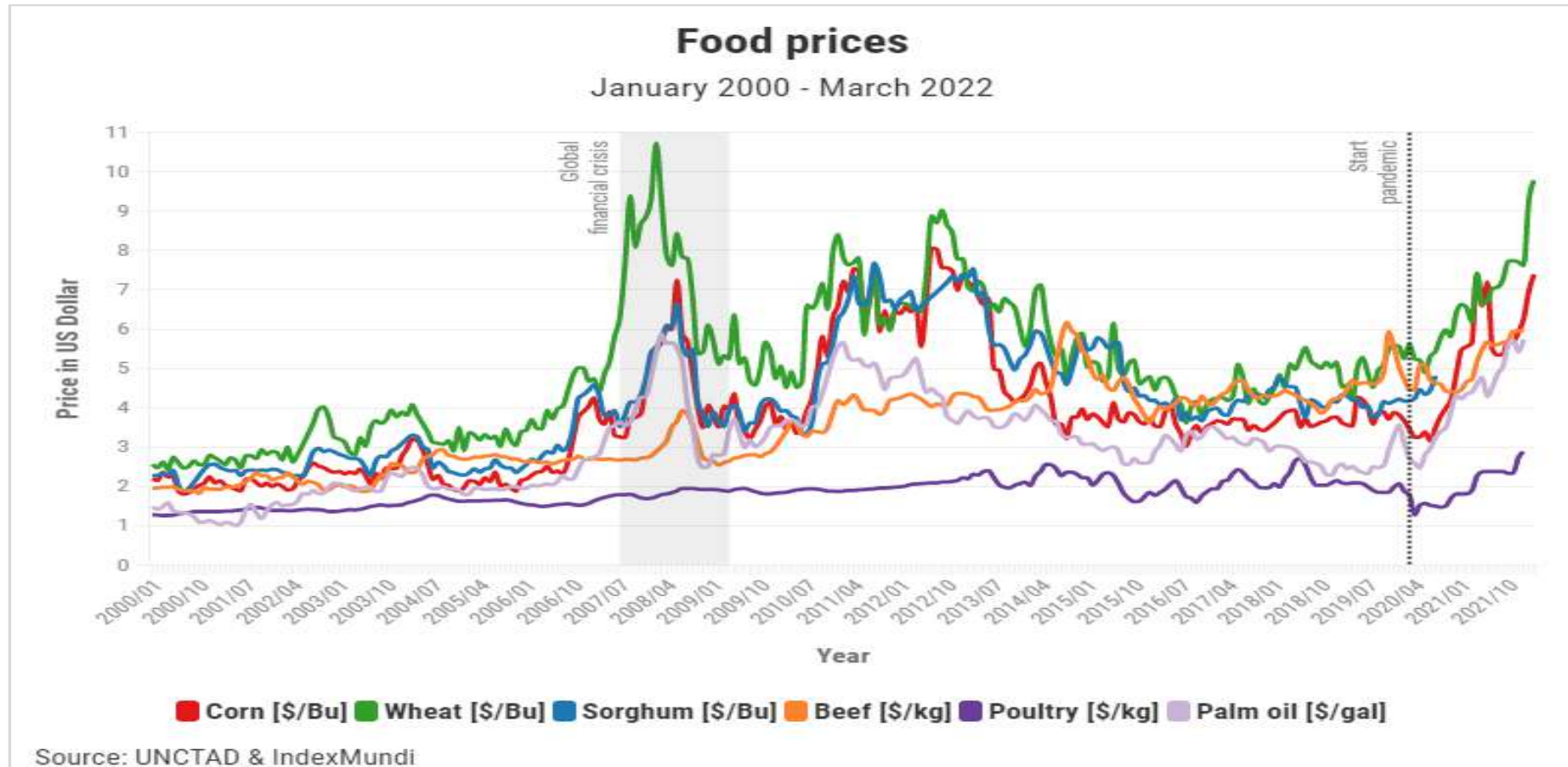


Source: FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO (2024). *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms*. Rome.

....and  
COVID-19  
had a major  
impact on  
FNS..

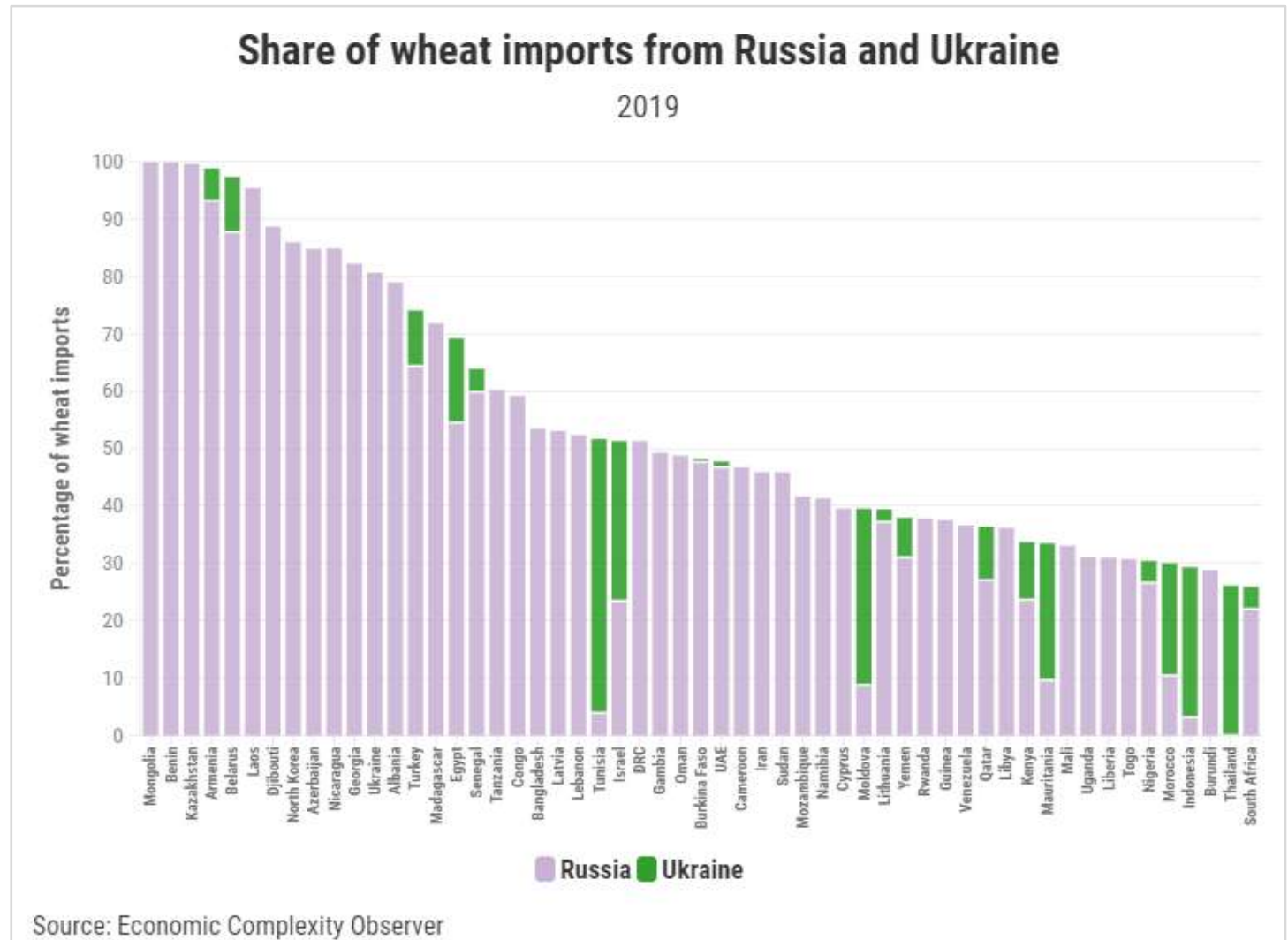
- The pandemic led to a **major disruption to food supply chains** triggered by the global health crisis...
- ...and also resulted in **lower incomes and higher prices of some food items**
- ..in Latin America, the number of people requiring food assistance has almost tripled in 2020 (UN, 2020).
- Major impact on the **landscape of development finance** too (OECD 2021, World Bank 2020, Cassimon & Mavrotas 2021), which deteriorated further the current alarming situation on FNS in the Global South.

# food prices in the last 2 decades.....and post-COVID-19



**Figure 7:** Prices in US Dollar for various food items, from January 2000 until March 2022 (IndexMundi, 2022; UNCTAD, 2022).

...and the invasion of Russia to Ukraine and the ongoing war have a huge impact too...



**Figure 9:** Share of wheat imports from Russia and Ukraine for countries for which this share is above 25% of the total import value (Simoes & Hidalgo, 2022).

## FNS & the link to institutions...

- While FNS may be the result of bad governance, the reverse is also true (Boyd & Holly Wang 2011; Pereira & Ruysenaar 2012).
- Indeed...food insecurity could be a channel leading to a breakdown of law and order which reduces government effectiveness (Brinkman & Hendrix 2011).
- It is also notable that some countries in SSA (e.g., Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Comoros, Central Africa Republic, Eritrea, Libya, Somalia etc.) with high numbers of undernourished populations are also at the bottom of government effectiveness index (Duho et al. 2020).

# The complexity of the factors affecting FNS...

- FNS outcomes in a country are the result of a variety of factors - **food availability, access, stability and utilization**, and their major determinants, such as **trade regimes and geopolitics**.
- FNS also arises from **social and gender inequalities in the distribution of resources** and in **people's access to natural resources, inputs, credit, social protection, social capital, information and extension services**.
- E.g. supporting **maternal and child health and nutrition interventions** should not be limited to health aspects but build on an **understanding of the local context** and **integrate agriculture, women, water, sanitation and hygiene and education-related sectors for FNS policies to orient FSN programming** – Fadare et al. (2019a,b) and Amare et al. (2021).

**linking FNS to  
governance &  
development  
finance  
even more  
complex...**

- the pathway of impacts is not necessarily clear....
- ... and this makes it difficult to delve deeper into the interdependencies of the above nexus.
- See e.g. Dhahri & Omri (RWE, 2020), Slimane et al. (2013), Ogunniyi et al. (World Development, 2020).



## Recent research on the FNS-finance-governance nexus

- More recent (and ongoing work) improves on earlier work by linking together **different types of capital flows** and **various governance indicators** to delve deeper into their impact on **FNS** in **SSA countries** (Cassimon, Fadare & Mavrotas 2021, 2022, 2023; Fadare, Mavrotas, Cassimon & Aderemi 2025).



## Recent research on the FNS-finance-governance nexus (cont.)

- Cassimon, Fadare & Mavrotas in a series of recent papers have tried to fill this gap by contributing to this literature in a number of ways.
- They built on relatively recent research in this area by Ogunniyi et al. (2020, WD) and Dhahri & Omri (2020, RWE) to examine the impact of institutional quality and capital flows on food and nutrition security.
- In Cassimon, Fadare & Mavrotas (2021, RDF) the authors estimate a series of panel data models using data for 25 SSA countries and disaggregated foreign capital flows in various types along with a series of governance indicators in order to examine the impact of development finance on food and nutrition security in the region.

# Recent research on the FNS-finance-governance nexus (cont.)

- In another recent study by the same authors (Cassimon, Fadare & Mavrotas, published in *PLoS ONE*, 2022) they estimate a series of dynamic panel data models to examine the impact of institutional quality and capital flows on food security, nutrition security and undernourishment this time, by using panel data for 25 SSA countries over the period 1996 to 2018.
- One of the key contributions of this research is the use of **both aggregate and disaggregated capital flows** to examine the impact on both food and nutrition security, a dimension that has been surprisingly neglected in most of the relevant literature.
- They combine this with the **interaction of various types of capital flows with an institutional quality index** they constructed from various governance indicators to examine the impact of institutions on the overall nexus.
- Another important contribution of that study was to consider **not only the impact on food and nutrition security but also on undernourishment**.
- Their findings clearly demonstrate the **importance of a heterogeneity approach** in development finance and reflect on earlier work regarding the role of institutional quality in the overall nexus between external capital flows and various measures of food and nutrition security which leads to an interesting variation in the results obtained, depending on the type of capital flows and the interaction with the governance indicators.
- This is certainly a very promising area for further future research so more insights can be added on the above important nexus which has surprisingly not received the attention it deserves for many years.

## Recent research on the FNS-finance-governance nexus (cont.)

- In another paper published in *Sustainability* (2023) the authors examined the impact of **food aid** and **governance quality** (the latter disaggregated in different components) on both **food and nutrition security** in the SSA region and for a sample of 25 countries over the period 1996 to 2018.
- They also used different food and nutrition security outcome measures, which include the average value of food production (AVFP), average dietary energy supply adequacy (ADESA), and prevalence of undernourishment. Finally, they combine the above with the use of both aggregated and disaggregated governance indicators.
- They find evidence of a robust relationship between food aid, governance quality, and food and nutrition security outcomes by employing the GMM estimator. In particular, **they find that food aid increases AVFP and ADESA while it reduces undernourishment.**
- Among the various governance quality indicators they have employed, **the control of corruption and political stability show a significant relationship with the measured outcomes.** However, the composite governance index and food aid jointly have no significant effect on AVFP, but they significantly increase ADESA and reduce undernourishment across the various empirical models they have employed in the empirical analysis.

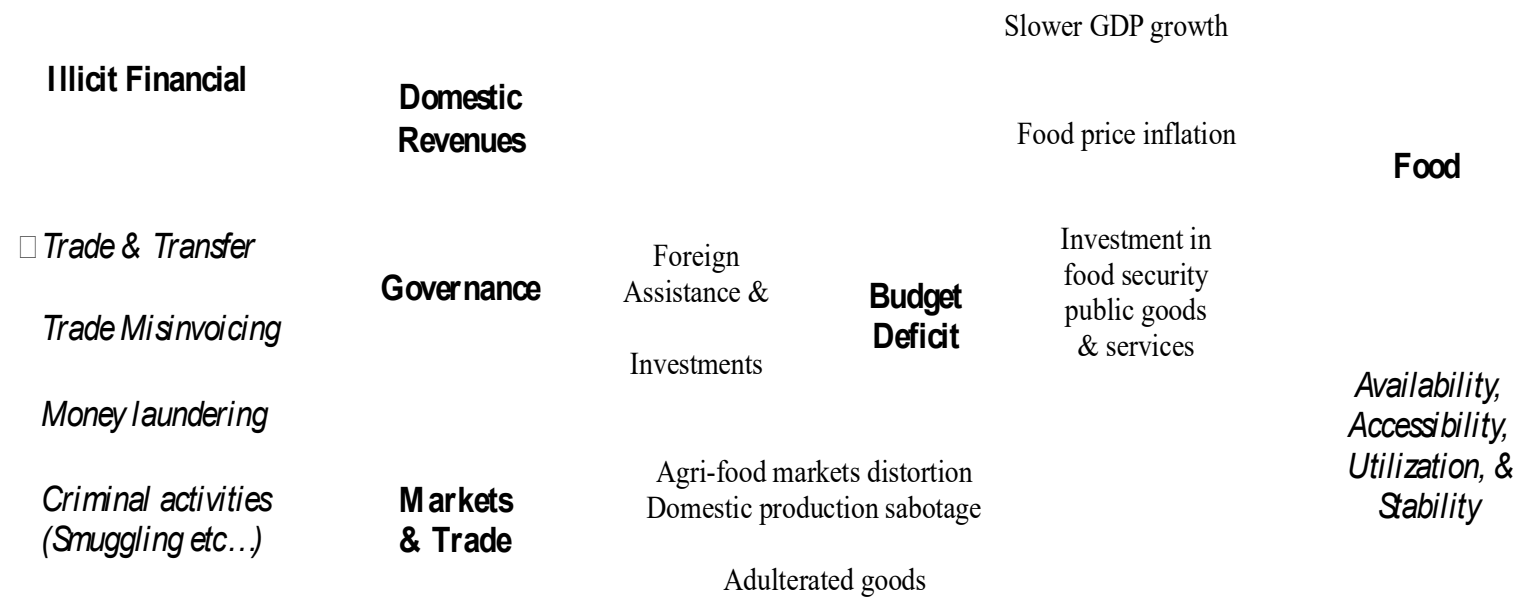
# Linking IFFs to FNS..

- Reducing substantially **Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs)** is quite central in the context of 2030 Agenda and the SDG target 16.4, and IFFs have also received a lot of attention recently by high-level bodies such as the G7 and the G20 (Musselli & Burgi-Bonanomi, 2020; Addison et al., 2018; Reuter, 2017; Brandt, 2020; Johannesen et al., 2020).
- Turning to the Africa region, it is a rather stylized fact that **IFFs significantly divert resources away from Africa**, thus hindering economic growth and development.
- Indeed, **between 2010 and 2019, Africa lost an estimated \$35.4 billion annually due to IFFs, with some estimates placing the figure as high as \$50 billion annually** (GFI, 2021).
- Although empirical studies examining the link between IFFs and food security are relatively scarce, policymakers and international organizations widely acknowledge the potential impact of IFFs on food security outcomes in Africa (UNCTAD & UNODC, 2023).

## Linking IFFs to FNS..(cont.)

- Against this background, Fadare, Mavrotas, Cassimon & Aderemi (2025 forthcoming) examine **the impact of IFFs on food security in Africa and the moderating role of control of corruption**, using data from 35 African countries, covering the period from 2009 to 2018.
- Results from the System GMM Estimator show that **IFFs significantly reduce food production**, measured by the food production index, **and increase food variability**, measured by per capita food supply variability.
- Specifically, a 1% increase in IFFs lower food production by a 1.85-percentage point and heighten food supply variability by a 6.12-percentage point.
- Additionally, they find that higher control of corruption exacerbates the negative effects of IFFs on food security outcomes contrary to expectations.
- This finding suggests that the fight against corruption in Africa is less effective in translating to food security benefits for the people. While curbing IFFs is paramount, anti-corruption fight must also be seen to be effective through its positive impact on development outcomes in Africa.

# Linking IFFs to FNS..(cont.)



**Fig. 2:** Conceptual framework linking illicit financial flows, governance, and food security.

**Note:** Direct pathways in blue, indirect pathways in grey.


Source: Fadare, Mavrotas, Cassimon & Aderemi (2025, forthcoming)

# Towards a Political Economy Approach (PEA) to FNS

The above research is also of relevance to applying in future work a PEA to policy support related to FNS that broadens the operational view beyond technical solutions to include **the role of stakeholders, power, ideas, institutions and processes** that shape policy formulation and implementation....

- ...since such analysis can inform policy dialogue about:
  - a country's overall **FNS challenges and outcomes,**
  - highlight **asymmetries of power,**
  - and can contribute to **framing political dialogue in ways that are more inclusive.**

## PEA for FNS: Further insights

- The global food crisis of 2008 & the recent pandemic have **re-focused attention on the political economy dimensions of FNS....**
  - “When politics is in command... how do efficiency issues stay on the agenda? When markets are in command, which seems to be the main policy advice from the donor community to poor countries, how do distributional and welfare issues stay on the agenda?” (Timmer 2010).
  - “A government’s inability to design and implement cost-effective policies and programs to deal with the nutrition problem is often attributed to ‘politics’, and this calls for the need to peek inside the black box of the political economy of food and nutrition”(Pinstrup-Andersen 1993).
  - The **current alarming situation on FNS calls for further PEA to FNS...and a new multidisciplinary research agenda...**
- 



To  
conclude.....

- Recent (as well as current) alarming developments in food prices and food systems are expected to **shift focus and attention on FNS issues in the coming years...**
- Recent work on the overall **interface between FNS, development finance (including IFFs) and governance quality a new promising area for further future work...**
- This also calls for an **urgent need to adopt a PEA** to delve deeper into FNS issues in addition to existing approaches ...
- At the same time, **delving deeper into the regionalism-FNS nexus is equally important...a surprising neglected area...**
- ...also crucial to think innovatively and creatively regarding **global governance issues** and those related to international development policy, including **sustainable food policies** and **food security in the Global South ....**
- .... and constructively interact with other disciplines, in a **multidisciplinary framework**, in order to address complex sustainable development policy issues at the global, regional and country level ....
- ...since **cultivating world-class multidisciplinary research communities is a priority area in order to promote transformations for a sustainable future.**

# Selected references on recently published research by the speaker on the topic

- Ogunniyi AI., Mavrotas G., Olagunju KO., Fadare O., Adedoyin R. (2020). Governance quality, remittances and their implications for food and nutrition security in Sub-Saharan Africa. *World Development*;127:104752.
- Cassimon D., Fadare O., Mavrotas G. (2021). Development finance, governance quality and their impact on food and nutrition security in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Review of Development Finance*;11(2):1-7.
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- Fadare O., Mavrotas G., Akerele D., Oyeyemi M. (2019). Micronutrient-rich food consumption, intra-household food allocation and child stunting in rural Nigeria. *Public Health Nutrition*; 22(3):444-54.
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- Cassimon, D., Fadare O., Mavrotas G. (2022). The combined effect of institutional quality and capital flows on food and nutrition security and undernourishment in Sub-Saharan Africa. *PLoS ONE*; 17 .
- Amare M., Arndt C., Mahrt K., Mavrotas G. (2022). Polygynous family structure and child undernutrition in Nigeria. *Journal of Development Studies*, 57(10): 1640-1661.
- Fadare, O., Mavrotas G., Cassimon D., Aderemi, T. (2025, forthcoming). Food security implications of illicit financial flows and governance quality in Africa.

Contact details: Prof. George Mavrotas, Institute of Development Policy, University of Antwerp, Email:  
George.Mavrotas@uantwerpen.be



THANK YOU!