

JUNE 2026

POLICY PAPER

# AFRICA

## Different Approaches to Food Security in an Era of Climate Change, Rising Geo-Political Tensions, and Global Trade Fragmentation

---

ISABELLE TSAKOK

*Africa today remains far from food secure. Chronic malnutrition, widespread anemia among women of childbearing age, stunting and wasting among young children, pervasive underemployment in both rural and urban areas, and a youth bulge frustrated by high unemployment are key features of a continent that is seriously off track with respect to the SDG deadline: only 6% of SDGs have been implemented (Mo Ibrahim Forum, 2025).*

*Despite this dismal progress, Africa can still achieve “The Africa We Want” under Agenda 2063. Africans aspire to a continent characterized by shared prosperity and well-being (see Annex 1). What should the leadership do? In a world marked by instability and repeated climate-related shocks, the Mo Ibrahim Forum (2025) calls for a critical assessment of the current “business-as-usual” approach and a decisive shift in direction.*

*Specifically, according to the Mo Ibrahim Forum, a highly indebted Africa must prioritize governance, the rule of law, and security. Key policy actions include promoting a positive incentive system to attract private investment, both domestic and foreign; mobilizing substantial domestic financial resources currently lost through billions in illicit financial flows; implementing the AfCFTA; and investing in infrastructure (both hardware and software, including human capital) required to support an inclusive and sustainable development path. Given that higher productivity and more resilient agriculture are essential for improved food security in a continent still heavily dependent on agriculture, sustained investment in the sector—leveraging the AfCFTA—can transform Africa’s food security prospects.*

**ISABELLE TSAKOK**

---

## INTRODUCTION

Global crises have intensified, overlapped, and spread since the COVID-19 pandemic. These developments add to the ongoing challenge of climate change—an existential threat to us all, especially to the 2.3 billion (2024) poor and vulnerable people who suffer from moderate and severe food insecurity (FAO et al., 2025). Beyond the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events triggered by climate change, crises include wars and rising geopolitical tensions (e.g., the Russia–Ukraine War; the Israel– Hamas War; conflicts in Yemen and Sudan; and trade- and power-driven tensions between the United States and China, as well as between the United States and its long-time allies, and between the United States and Israel on one side and Iran on the other).

In a world experiencing turmoil and trade fragmentation, strengthening food security for both countries and households have never been more important. What is the current status of food security, and what approaches are being pursued across Africa, north and south of the Sahara?

At the outset, the paper clarifies the concept of food security adopted here. Food security is achieved when “all peoples, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996). It is referred to as the holistic concept of food security (FSH), as it requires that the four dimensions—availability, access, utilization and stability—are satisfied simultaneously. This is the concept of food security that comes closest to what societies ultimately seek.

It differs significantly from the other widely used concepts: food self-sufficiency (FSS) and food sovereignty (FSY). The latter are political-economy concepts that tend to prioritize nationalism, trade protectionism, and a generalized distrust of multinationals. In more recent years, the policy focus has often shifted from FSS to FSY without substantial changes in policy instruments. By contrast, FSH does not prescribe how a country should achieve food security, instead, it defines the outcome to be achieved.

This policy paper first reviews the overall state of food security/insecurity, chronic hunger, and malnutrition in Africa since the pandemic, highlighting both areas of progress and regression. Section II focuses on the situation in North Africa. It first sets out an overview, then considers in greater detail two countries that exemplify the key issues of the region identified in the overview. Similarly, Section III focuses on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), starting with an overview followed by a more detailed discussion of a major regional economic community (REC), such as ECOWAS, which has diverse agro-ecological zones and is home to a mixture of low- and middle-income countries, including both oil-exporting and oil-importing countries.<sup>1</sup> The conclusion characterizes the prevailing state of food security in Africa and suggests a way forward.

---

1. In September 2023, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, split from ECOWAS to form a separate Confederation of Sahelian States (AES). This paper includes them in the discussion.

## I. OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY IN AFRICA SINCE THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

**Despite recent progress, widespread food insecurity still stalks Africa:** Despite global progress since 2021, food insecurity is on the rise in Africa. The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity rose from about 57% (2023) to nearly 59% (2024), an increase of nearly 41 million (m) people in one year. This means that an estimated 893 m (2024) people were moderately or severely food insecure, of whom 337 m were severely food insecure. The number of people unable to afford a healthy diet also rose in Africa from 864 m (2019) to just over one billion in 2024 (from 64% to 66% of the population). The prevalence of undernourishment (PoU)<sup>2</sup> in Africa exceeded 20% in 2024. This means that more than one in five people suffered from chronic hunger, equivalent to nearly 307 m.

As in most of the world (except in Northern America and Europe), food insecurity was higher in Africa's rural areas, where it also worsened. Food insecurity worsened in urban areas as well, but remained virtually constant in peri-urban areas. As elsewhere in the world, food insecurity among women is higher than among men. Hunger is on the rise in all sub-regions of Africa except Eastern Africa. Notable PoU increases are observed in Middle Africa at 30.2%; in Northern Africa, where it increased from 7.8% (2022) to 10.7% (2024); in Southern Africa, where PoU stood at 11.4%; and in Western Africa at 16.5%.

The number of people suffering from chronic undernourishment has increased by 113 m since 2015, when the 2030 Agenda<sup>3</sup> was launched by the United Nations. Africa's worsening hunger situation contrasts with improvements in Asia (excluding Western Asia) and Latin America (excluding the Caribbean). For 2025-2030, it is projected that 512 m people worldwide will be hungry, around 60% of whom will likely be in Africa (FAO et al., 2025).

**Major contributing causes to this worsening chronic hunger situation:** Global food price inflation rose to 13.5% (2023) due to the shocks inflicted by the pandemic, followed in quick succession by:

- Supply chain bottlenecks and dislocations (e.g., the Ever Given container ship causing the 6-day Suez Canal blockage in March 2021)
- Labor shortages leading to port congestion, as food either remained in warehouses or rotted
- Fiscal support and expansionary monetary policies were launched during the lockdowns to assist pandemic-stricken consumers, thereby raising demand
- Wars (e.g., Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, which led to export blockages of wheat and sunflower products;<sup>4</sup> the Hamas-Israel war in October 2023)
- Extreme weather events (e.g., heatwaves and droughts in Asia, Europe, the United States and Latin America. Droughts in Latin America reduced production and exports of soybeans and corn; droughts in the United States reduced wheat exports; heatwaves in Europe led to lower wheat production, and India banned its exports to protect its domestic consumers; the Derna Dam collapse following catastrophic floods in Libya in September 2023; the Lahaina wildfires in Hawaii in August 2023; cyclone Freddy over Mozambique and Madagascar in March 2023)

2. PoU measures the percentage of population with insufficient dietary intake for an active life. This measure does not take into account the quality of the caloric intake.

3. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was the United Nations' global action plan for ending poverty and protecting the planet and ensuring peace and prosperity for all by 2030.

4. Russia and Ukraine account for 30 % of wheat exports and 75% of sunflower oil exports.

- Price increases in natural gas (2021) and therefore in fertilizers, which in turn increased production costs and/or decreased yields and output.

Thus, these multiple factors together created a “perfect storm” of reduced and dislocated supplies on the one hand, facing increased inelastic demand for basic food on the other hand, especially from poor households who typically spend a high proportion of their incomes on food—around 60%. Prices of widely consumed commodities, such as cereals, grains, and vegetable oils, spiked. Food inflation was particularly high in low-income countries—reaching 30% in May 2023—with many of these countries located in Africa.<sup>5</sup>

## II. THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY APPROACHES AND FOOD SECURITY IN NORTH AFRICA OVER THE LAST DECADE

**Overview:** North Africa is a region composed of both lower- and upper-middle-income countries.<sup>6</sup> Two countries are classified as lower-middle-income:—Morocco with GNI per capita (2024) at \$3,840 and Tunisia at \$3,880. The other three are upper-middle-income countries, two of which are oil exporters: Algeria, with GNI per capita of \$5,370; Libya at \$6,890; and Egypt at \$6,430.

For the three non-oil-exporting countries, agriculture and irrigation remain very important for water withdrawals (accounting for around 75-80% of total use), food security, employment, and poverty reduction. The relative contribution of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (2024) to GDP in these economies is as follows: Morocco at around 10.6 %; Tunisia at 9.7%; and Egypt at 13.7%. For the two oil-exporting countries, the relative contribution is: Algeria at around 14% of GDP, and Libya at around 2.4%.

The main agro-climatic zones of North Africa are Mediterranean, semi-arid, arid, and hyper-arid. Within this water-scarce environment, the relative contribution of agriculture to total employment remains significant, varying across countries as follows: 30% (2023) in Morocco; 13% in Tunisia; 19% in Egypt; 9% in Algeria; and 9% in Libya. Algeria and Libya are major oil-exporting countries, while Egypt and Tunisia have more diversified economies, with gas and oil making only a minor contribution to their GDP, and Morocco is entirely oil-import dependent.

Irrigation is important in these countries, accounting for nearly 100 % of agriculture in Egypt. In other countries, irrigated and rainfed agriculture coexist, although rainfed agriculture still dominates, with irrigation accounting for around 19-20% in Morocco, 10-15% in Algeria, 12-13% in Tunisia, and about 12% in Libya.

North Africa also has significant mineral wealth. The key minerals are: (i) phosphates (Morocco, Tunisia), with Morocco holding the dominant share of global phosphate rock reserves; (ii) iron ore, found in Algeria and Mauritania (the latter classified as sub-Saharan Africa by the World Bank); and (iii) manganese and large deposits of oil and gas reserves in Algeria, Libya, and, to a lesser extent, Egypt.

5. According to the World Bank country income classification for FY 2026, 25-27 countries in Africa are listed as low-income countries (LICs). Their GNI per capita is \$1,135 or less. These include Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, DR Congo, Eritrea, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, Togo, and Uganda. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/understanding-country-income--world-bank-group-income-classifica>

6. World Bank country income classification for FY 2026: low income: less than \$1,135; lower-middle-income: \$1,136-\$ 4,495; upper-middle-income: \$4, 496-\$13, 935; high income: \$13, 936 +

While the exploitation of these minerals makes a major contribution to GDP, averaging 5-15%, their contribution to total employment is small—around 0.5-2.0% (2020-25). In a region with growing populations, increasing urbanization, a youth bulge, and high youth unemployment at around 20-25%, this low contribution is problematic.

Within the current crisis-prone global environment and associated challenges (see above), what is the state of food security and food security approaches in North Africa? This section discusses the situation in two very different economies, Tunisia and Algeria. Though different, they share many structural features with other North African countries. Therefore, analyzing their situations helps identify key issues that need to be addressed in a climate change-constrained world in North Africa in the years ahead.

## Food Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Policies and Food Security in Tunisia

**Decades-long adherence to FSS policies financially costly:** As in other North African countries, Tunisia gives priority to attaining high levels of food self-sufficiency (FSS) as the way to achieving food security. Accordingly, Tunisia equates not having to import basic staples as the full achievement of food security. To enforce this priority, FSS policies have intervened extensively in the agrifood sector combining minimum producer price supports implemented by marketing boards, with trade protection through high tariffs and quotas and selected input subsidies (e.g., improved seeds, energy, and irrigation water). Minimum price supports accounted for over 30% of total budgetary support for agriculture by the 2010s or so; and for over 20-25% of budgetary transfers on agricultural inputs. Over 50% of market expenditures on milk products was paid for by government. Tariff protection on agrifood products at nearly 25% (with a maximum at 36%) exceeded the average levels for other commodities which averaged 17%. For animal and milk products, as well as for fruits and vegetables, tariff rates were even higher—they averaged 32%. In addition to these producer support measures, the GOT has also provided consumption subsidies on key food products which cost over 3% of GDP in 2012. (World Bank Group (WBG), May 2014) However, despite decades of pursuing FSS through these various measures, food self-sufficiency ratios (SSRs)<sup>7</sup> of selected basic food commodities have been well below 50%: for cereals (including soft wheat) at roughly 42% (2011-13); for starchy staples at 18% (2025); and vegetable oils at 14% (1960s-2001).<sup>8</sup> In contrast, the SSRs for milk and dairy products have been high, averaging 170% by the early 2020s, the very high trade protection contributing to this high rate.

**FSS policies costly and inequitable:** Tunisian agriculture is labor abundant, but land- and water-scarce. However, the commodities that have been promoted for FSS reasons run counter to Tunisia's comparative and competitive advantage. Domestic resource cost coefficients (DRCs,<sup>9</sup> estimated for 2000, 2004, 2008) show that Tunisia is not competitive in soft wheat, barley, bovine beef (different breeds), and milk (different kinds). For example, soft wheat is land- and water-intensive but uses much less labor than products that are competitive, e.g., arboriculture (in particular, olives and their processing, citrus, peaches) and vegetables (in particular, tomatoes). Non-competitive products which involve about 39% of total production contributed to 52% of the growth of agriculture; whereas competitive products which involve about 46% of total production contributed to 46% of agricultural growth. In fact, Tunisia has been unable to fulfill the quota it has with the EU, e.g., on citrus, and olive oil. (WBG, May 2014). By prioritizing non-competitive products and inevitably incurring resource losses, Tunisia has undermined the growth potential of agriculture, a serious

7. Self-sufficiency ratio (SSR) = (Domestic production)/(Domestic production + Imports – Exports). SSR is often expressed as %.

8. Another estimate of SSR for 2016-22: 36% for cereal food needs, 58 % for durum wheat, 8% for soft wheat, and 40% for barley (Jouilli, September 2023).

9. For any given product, its DRC is a ratio of the social cost of production (production valued at social prices) to the cost of production at domestic factor prices. Interpretation: when the DRC is above 1, the production is non-competitive, when below 1, competitive.

drag on overall economic growth which became increasingly apparent from the late 1990s on. The efficiency costs, borne by the entire economy, are estimated at roughly 0.8 % of GDP. (WBG, May 2014) The priority commodities favored the irrigated and better endowed northern coastal regions at the expense of the poorer, rainfed, semi-arid to super-arid interior regions with oases,<sup>10</sup> thus sharpening the dualism in agriculture, which is stark as shown in agricultural land distribution. An estimated 54% of farms are less than 5 ha, while 75% of farmers own smaller than 10 ha farms. However, 3% of farmers own farms larger than 50 ha which occupy 34 % of agricultural land, while 75% of small farms occupy about 25% of the land. (Jouilli, Sept 2023)

**Tunisia under continuing climate change:** Tunisia has a water crisis. Under climate change, Tunisia is projected to become even more water scarce than it already is. At 399-420 m<sup>3</sup> of water per person/year, Tunisia is already below the absolute water stress level of 500 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year. By 2050, demand for water may outstrip supply by 28% according to some scenarios. Demand for water is rising due to population growth, urban growth, and increasing irrigation needs. The bulk of Tunisian agriculture is semi-arid and arid as the humid to sub-humid north constitutes less than one fifth (about 18%) of total.<sup>11</sup> Agriculture is already the main user of water –about 80% of renewable water resources, with drinking water at 14%, industry at 3%, and tourism at 1%. (Jouilli, Sept 2023) In all climate change scenarios, water quality and storage capacity of dams decrease while the incidence of water-borne diseases rises. Agricultural losses are expected in the main commodity systems, such as cereals, livestock, olives, dates, and oasis. Not only more severe weather events (e.g., droughts, and floods) are projected to increase, there will be other losses of land and life through saltwater intrusions due to sea level rise and catastrophic floods. Under these daunting natural conditions, agricultural value added will fall 15% by 2030, and 29% by 2050, unless concerted actions at adaptation are urgently taken. (WBG, Nov. 2023)

**Poverty, malnutrition, and Tunisia's decades-long social safety net:** The official poverty rate at national level declined from 20.5% (2010) to 15.2% (2015) but rose to 16.6% (2021). At the upper middle-income poverty line of \$ 8.30/person/day at 2017 PPP,<sup>12</sup> the rate went down from 23.7% (2015) to 20.7 % (2021). Furthermore, at lower middle-income poverty line of \$ 4.20/person/day (in 2021 PPP), the rate decreased from 2.8% (2015) to 2.4 (2021). These different rates of poverty at different poverty levels show the extent of vulnerability among the population as the dollar poverty levels rise; and that poverty rates declined. These poverty problems show up in double burden of malnutrition and the weak health status of women of child-bearing age, infants and young children (1-5 years). Thus: (Global Nutrition Report, 2026)

- An estimated 32% of women (15-49 years old) have anemia,
- 7.5% of infants have low weight at birth, no progress from the past,
- 8.4% of young children are stunted (low height for age), though there has been some progress,<sup>13</sup>
- 2.1% of children are wasted (low weight for height), although further progress “on course” is expected, and
- 17.2% of children over 5 years of age are overweight.

10. The interior of Tunisia has 200 oases covering over approximately 40,000–41, 710 ha of productive land, and supporting about 10% of the population. Total population is estimated at around 12 m (2024).

11. Tunisia's three agro-climatic zones are: (1) the humid to sub-humid cooler Mediterranean north, receiving between 400 and 1,500 mm rain per year; (2) the semi-arid central steppe zone, receiving between 150 and 300 mm rain per year; and (3) the arid southern zone which has oases, receiving less than 150 mm rain per year, down to less than 50 mm per year in the far south.

12. PPP in economics stands for Purchasing Power Parity. It is a metric used to compare economic productivity and standards of living between countries by adjusting for differences in the cost of living and price levels.

13. Stunting during the first 1,000 days of life seriously impairs cognitive ability and productivity later in life.

A distinguishing feature of poverty incidence is its substantial variation by region, and between urban and rural. Thus, poverty rates (2021) were lower in the coastal areas of Grand Tunis at 4.7%, North-East at 15.2%, Center-East at 13.2; whereas in the other regions of the Center-West, the poverty rate was 37%, and the North-West at 22.5%. Rural poverty rates were almost 25 % (2021) whereas urban rates were much lower, at almost 13%. The Gini Index of Inequality rose from 32.8 (2015) to 33.7 (2021). (World Bank, Oct 2025) These substantial variations in rates depending on region or locality shows that the impact of Tunisian policies has not been inclusive. Certain groups and regions have been favored at the expense of other groups and regions. Another distinguishing feature of Tunisian policy in its dealing with poverty and vulnerability through a comprehensive social protection system,<sup>14</sup> since GOT has not succeeded in promoting inclusive high economic growth and high employment, especially among youth (15-24 years)—unemployment averaged 36% (2025) and women—averaged 21% (2025). Tunisia's social safety net spending is substantial: on subsidies to 7.1% of GDP (2024) and on social promotion and security programs 1.8% of GDP (2024). AMEN is the social security program targeted to the poor and vulnerable households. It provides monthly cash transfers to 10% of the poorest households; family allowance for children up to 18 years old, and access to free medical care. (WBG, fall 2025) During the pandemic, it effectively enabled poor households to absorb the shock of lockdowns and other supply disruptions. The importance that Tunisia attaches to improving its health care system as a major component of its social safety net was shown through the recent Tunisia Health System Strengthening Project (WBG, May 2025)

## FSS Policies and Food Security in Algeria

**Selective comparison of structural features between Algeria, Tunisia and other North African neighbors:** Algeria shares many structural features with its North African neighbors. The major one is water scarcity, which has become an existential threat. At around 300-400 m<sup>3</sup> of water per person per year (2025), water availability is already below the absolute water stress threshold of 500 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year.

Algeria has two main agro-climatic zones: the Mediterranean north,<sup>15</sup> which receives most of the rainfall—around 400-800 mm/year—and the desert, which covers 80% of the country. As in other North African countries, agriculture consumes the lion's share of water resources. However, it faces increasing competition for water due to population and urban growth, as well as from industry. The irrigated component, which occupies around 13% of utilized agricultural area (UAA), relies mainly (about 52%) on groundwater. (Mezouane et al., January 2026).

While demand for water has been increasing, average temperatures and rates of evapotranspiration have also risen, and rainfall, while becoming more volatile, has declined.<sup>16</sup> At a time when Algeria is seeking to diversify its economy towards more non-hydrocarbon sectors, agriculture is likely to become relatively more important.<sup>17</sup>

14. This system has two major components: (1) a contributory component that is composed of a pension system, medical insurance, disability support, family allowance, and maternity support; and (2) a non-contributory component is largely a cash transfer program, and free, subsidized access to health care. The two components together cover 80% of the population. The AMEN social program offers services aimed at improving the wellbeing of the poorest households.

15. The coastal strip of the Mediterranean north of Algeria—50-100 km wide—represents only 12.6% of the entire Algerian territory. 9/10 of the Algerian population lives in this coastal strip.

16. Average rainfall averaged 87 mm annually (2005-2009); 90 mm (2010-14); 80 mm (2015-2019); and 60 mm (2020-2024) (WBG, fall 2025).

17. Algeria, with a population of around 47 million (2025), primarily urban (around 75%), is the largest country in Africa. Algeria spans 238 million hectares, 80% of which is desert. Useful agricultural area (UAA) is land used for all farming purposes (crops, pastures, vineyards) whereas arable land is land covered by temporary annual crops. UAA accounts for only 3.5-4% of Algeria's total land area, only about 8.5 m ha. Around 3.16% of the total land area is arable. 12-15% of UAA is irrigated land. For 2025, these amount to around 1.3 m ha (2025). The GOA's goal is to increase this area to 2 m ha.

The major structural difference between Algeria and Tunisia is that hydrocarbons (oil and gas) dominate Algeria's economy: directly accounting for 25-30% of GDP, and indirectly, through related sectors, up to 60% of GDP; 90-97% of export revenues; and 40-60% of Government of Algeria (GOA) revenues. In contrast, agriculture contributes much less—around 14% of GDP and 9-10% of total employment.

**Algeria under continuing climate change:** As elsewhere in North Africa, Algeria has already suffered—and is projected to continue to suffer—from extreme weather events associated with climate change. Between 1954 and 2022, extreme temperatures, catastrophic floods, destructive earthquakes, and forest fires have increased. The GOA has estimated that since around the early 2000s, Algeria has spent an average of \$255 m<sup>18</sup> per year to address these disasters, 70% of which was allocated to floods.

Algeria's rainfall is among the lowest in the Mediterranean basin: since 1900, it has decreased by 40% in the west, 30% in the center, and 20% in the east. Soil erosion and desertification remain constant threats. Losses due to coastal erosion and sea-level rise have amounted to \$313 m per year, or 0.2% of GDP. A 2010 GOA study shows that Algeria lost 17 m ha due to desertification, mainly in overgrazed areas. These areas, dominated by vast moving dunes, are also prone to sandstorms, threatening oases.

More frequent and more extreme weather events are projected, alongside continued sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion into aquifers, and increasing siltation of reservoirs (GOA, GFDRR et al., 2023). Under these dire circumstances, the internal displacement of desert populations and their livestock is expected to increase, placing additional pressure on already densely populated urban areas.

**Continued pursuit of FSS, renamed FSY, to achieve food security despite increasing water scarcity:** As in other North African countries, Algeria has prioritized FSS as the main pathway to achieving food security. FSS has been pursued for decades, including in cereals (durum and soft wheat, barley), vegetable oils (sunflower, rapeseed, olive oil) and sugar (sugar beet and sugar cane). The GOA intervenes through minimum purchase prices for these key crops and subsidizes fuel and energy for mechanized cultivation.

Despite prioritizing self-sufficiency in these commodities for decades, Algeria has continued to import large amounts of basic commodities in which it has no comparative or competitive advantage (except for durum wheat). Imported soft wheat accounts for about 80% of total domestic consumption (2025), and Algeria regularly ranks among the top five importers of soft wheat.<sup>19</sup>

Algeria plans to achieve self-sufficiency not only in durum wheat,<sup>20</sup> in which it has a comparative advantage, but also in other basic commodities, including barley, corn, sunflower seeds, rapeseed, and sugar crops (both beets and cane)—all crops in which it lacks comparative advantage given its extreme and increasing water scarcity. To increase agricultural productivity and reach self-sufficiency in these commodities, the GOA plans to expand cultivation in desert areas to reach one m ha (Miller, October 2024).

The GOA also plans to modernize agriculture by investing in “scientific research, digitalization, and sustainable investment, forming the cornerstone of its national strategy for food security.”

18. This sum is equivalent to 545 billion dinars over the period 2004-2019.

19. The top five importers of soft wheat (2025) are: Egypt, Indonesia, the EU, China, Algeria/Nigeria/Turkey.

20. The GOT plans to stop all imports of durum wheat in 2026. However, it is reported in January 2026, that the Algerian State agency, Office Algérien Interprofessionnel des Céréales (OAI), has issued an international tender to purchase 50,000 m tons. Durum wheat has averaged 20-25% of all wheat imports.

It has been noted that cereal yields, at around 15 quintals<sup>21</sup> per ha, remain well below those in comparable climates, where yields average about 35 quintals (CIHEAM, October 27-28, 2025).

The GOA plans to use more of its increasingly scarce water resources to produce basic commodities in which it has not achieved self-sufficiency. It increased its agriculture budget for 2026 by 4% as part of a continued effort to boost domestic production and reduce imports, especially of cereals (Milling, November 2025).

**Poverty, malnutrition, and food security in Algeria:** Extreme poverty, as measured at the internationally comparable level of \$1.90 per person per day (2021 PPP) is very low—around 0.3%—in Algeria. However, the poverty headcount for an upper-middle-income country at the national level is substantial, at around 23% (2020s). The latest poverty headcount according to the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)<sup>22</sup> is around 1.4%, with a higher vulnerability estimate of about 3.6% of the population.<sup>23</sup>

Poverty and vulnerability are lower in urban areas (MPI at around 0.6% (2018-2019)) compared to rural areas (MPI at around 3.6% (2018-2019)), and lower in the better-watered urban coastal north than in the rural interior desert regions. Another major factor is the high youth unemployment (15-24 years old), at around 30%, while overall unemployment stands at around 12%. Women's unemployment rate is also high, at around 20%, although their labor force participation rate is low, at around 14-17% compared to over 66% for men. Highly educated women face an even higher unemployment rate of around 25%.

The extent of malnutrition is reflected in the fragile health status of selected sub-groups: (i) 33% anemia among women of childbearing age (15-49 years old); (ii) 7.3% of infants have low weight at birth; (iii) 9.8% of young children (0-5 years old) are stunted (low height for age), representing some progress; (iv) 2.7% of children between 0-5 years of age are wasted (low weight for height); and (v) 12.8% of young children (0-5 years old) are overweight (Global Nutrition Report for Algeria, 2021).

**Algeria's extensive social safety net to assist the poor and vulnerable, promote social peace, and support FSS:** Over the last decades, growth has been driven primarily by capital accumulation and an expanding labor force, with limited contribution from productivity improvements (World Bank, October 2025). Within this growth environment, the GOA has relied heavily on public transfers and subsidies to keep the prices of widely consumed commodities low and affordable.

These include: (i) food price subsidies on cereals, milk, sugar, and cooking oils; (ii) fuel and energy subsidies (gasoline, electricity, and natural gas); and (iii) water, including desalinated water, and other utilities. In addition, the GOA provides unemployment benefits, student scholarships, and family allowances; supports public wage increases; and subsidizes rural and social housing programs. These social transfers are estimated to account for around 37% of public spending (2025) (Nacer, Maghreb Emergent, August 23, 2025).

21. A quintal = 100 kgs; 1 metric ton=10 quintals.

22. The MPI includes not only monetary poverty but also other dimensions such as health, education, and living standards). It is a measure used by agencies, including the UNDP and the Oxford Poverty and Development Initiative.

23. Algeria's population was estimated at around 47 million in 2025, with 75% urban and 25% rural. Thus 3.6% of this total is approximately 1.7 million.

### III. THE STATE OF FOOD SECURITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (SSA) OVER THE LAST DECADE OR SO

**Overview:** SSA is vast, diverse, and has enormous potential. It constitutes about 80% of the African continent, spans four time zones, and accounts for roughly 15% of Earth's land surface. It is also mineral-rich. Thus, West Africa has its gold belts; Central Africa is oil-rich and hosts the copper-cobalt belt running through the DRC and Zambia; East Africa has titanium, gold, rare earths, lithium, and other battery materials; and Southern Africa is endowed with platinum group metals (PGMs), gold, diamonds, lithium, and battery minerals.<sup>24</sup> Africa holds many of the minerals critical for the energy transition required by climate change.

The direct contribution of this mineral wealth to GDP is significant, ranging from 5-20% (depending on the country). These minerals are also major sources of export earnings (50-90%) and government revenues. Unfortunately, their contribution to total employment is minuscule in comparison, ranging from 1-5% in most regions, and somewhat higher at about 3-8% in Southern Africa. In a continent with a pronounced youth bulge and high unemployment, this limited contribution is problematic.

The 48-49 countries<sup>25</sup> of SSA are diverse in terms of income per capita and agro-climatic zones. Per capita annual incomes (2024) range from low levels—such as in Burundi at \$200, Madagascar and the Central African Republic at \$510, The Gambia at \$800, Ethiopia at \$1,100, and Rwanda at \$1,040—to high income levels, such as Seychelles at \$17,460, with the majority falling into middle-income category, both lower and upper.

Lower-middle-income countries include Benin at \$1,430, Ghana at \$2,310, Côte d'Ivoire at \$2,530, and Nigeria at \$1,700 in West Africa; and in East Africa, Kenya at \$2,090, Tanzania at \$1,210, and Uganda at \$1,020. Upper-middle-income countries include South Africa at \$6,110, Botswana at \$7,750, Gabon at \$7,790, and Mauritius at \$12,970 (WDI, Atlas method).

Demographically, Africa is the world's most dynamic region. Its population of around 1.25 billion (2025) is estimated to have grown by about 2.26% in 2025, with projections of 1.7-2.0 % annual growth until 2050. It has the youngest population in the world, with around 60-70% of its population under 30 years old (2025). By 2030, young people in SSA are projected to constitute 42% of the world's youth. Over 60% of SSA's population is under 25 years old (2025).

Africa's youth bulge can be a major boost to productivity and growth—often referred to as the youth dividend—or a major source of socio-economic instability if large numbers remain out of employment, education, or training (NEET). Up to 12 million youth are expected to enter the labor market each year over the next three decades, yet only about 3 million formal wage jobs are created annually (World Bank Group, January 2026). High youth unemployment inevitably undermines the food security of young people and of the families that support them.

SSA spans seven agro-climatic zones, ranging from desert, through semi-arid and dry sub-humid,

24. Africa's mineral wealth is wide ranging. For the gold belts of Western Africa, the countries are Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Guinea. Guinea is one of the world's top producers of bauxite. Nigeria, Ghana and Mali have rapidly emerging lithium projects. Central Africa also has reserves of the critical minerals coltan and tantalum.

25. The actual number of countries included in SSA varies according to the institutions classifying the countries. The World Bank has 48 countries; the Encyclopedia Britannica has 49; the UNDP has 46, as it excludes Djibouti, Sudan, Somalia, and the Western Sahara.

to hot and humid, and Mediterranean.<sup>26</sup> Roughly 70% of SSA is classified as arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid zones, and about 50% of the African population lives in these dry areas. With climate change, rainfall is projected to decline and become more volatile, alongside an increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events.

Already, water scarcity, repeated droughts, and inadequate water infrastructure for households and agricultural production are major challenges in SSA. For example, girls and women walk long distances carrying water, spending some 40 billion hours per year (Sorge, August 2024). This repetitive and physically demanding task crowds out opportunities for education and training, a major concern given the youth bulge.

Agriculture's relative contribution to GDP averages 35%, yet it receives only around 4% of total government expenditure—far below the 10% target set by the Maputo (2003) and Malabo (2014) Declarations on agriculture and rural development. Insufficient public investment has contributed to the inadequacy of water distribution systems.

Thus, although Africa is generously endowed with major international water basins<sup>27</sup> and has an irrigated potential of 42.5 m ha, irrigated agriculture accounts for only 3-5% of total agricultural land in SSA, unlike the situation in North Africa (Tsakok, April 2025). In addition, SSA has abundant groundwater resources that remain largely untapped, leaving one third of African countries water-insecure (Sorge, August 2024). Groundwater irrigation accounts for only 1% of irrigated agriculture in Africa, compared to 14% in Asia (Srivastava et al., August 2024).

According to WaterAid and the British Geological Survey, most African countries have sufficient groundwater reserves to withstand at least five years of drought, and in some cases to sustain needs for more than 50 years (Greene, March 2022). Yet, due to a lack of investment, access to piped potable water remains unavailable to large segments of the population, for example in Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria.

## **Within the current crisis-prone global environment and associated challenges, what is the state of food security in SSA?**

**Poverty, undernutrition, and food insecurity are widespread in SSA—why?** No country in SSA is free from extreme poverty, except perhaps Seychelles,<sup>28</sup> the only high-income country in the region where extreme poverty is negligible, largely due to strong social transfer programs. SSA has the highest extreme poverty level—with roughly 44% (2025) at \$2.17 (2017 PPP)—of any region in the world.

According to the Multidimensional Poverty Index, an estimated 52% of the population is deprived in terms of health, education, and basic living standards combined. Young children clearly reflect the harsh impact of such poverty. An estimated 30-31% of children under 5 years of age are stunted

26. The seven agro-climatic zones from dry to wet are: (1) arid zones with less than 200mm rain per year includes the Sahara, Kalahari, Namid and the Horn of Africa; (2) semi-arid zones with 200-700 mm rain per year, including pastoral areas just south of the Sahara, in Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa; (3) dry Savana or north Sudanian zone with 700-1300 mm rain per year; (4) moist savanna or south Sudanian/ Guinean savanna zone with more than 1300 mm rain per year; (5) humid or tropical rainforest zone located along the West African coast and throughout the Congo basin; (6) highland mountain zone found in Eastern Africa (Ethiopian Highlands, Kenya and parts of Central Africa) and (7) coastal/Mediterranean zone at the southern tip of Africa.

27. These are the Congo/Zaire, West African basins and the Nile. Only the Nile in Egypt has a major irrigation system. Most of the irrigation systems are in North Africa.

28. Seychelles is situated in the Indian Ocean, and is made up of 115 islands, with just over 90,000 inhabitants. The Seychelles were first discovered by Vasco de Gama in 1502.

(low height for age), one of the highest levels globally; 7.1% are wasted (low weight for height); 21% are underweight; and 5.3% are overweight.<sup>29</sup> Approximately 30-38% of women of reproductive age (15-49) in SSA are anemic. No country in SSA Africa is on track to meet the WHO targets for reducing anemia among women of reproductive age (Valdez et al., January-December 2024).

The heavy burden of chronic undernutrition not only severely undermines the cognitive development and productivity of this young population in adulthood but also casts a long shadow over the prospects of the next generation. Why is there so much undernutrition in a continent endowed with such vast natural resource wealth?

In the current context of polycrisis, several factors intertwine to slow poverty reduction and even reverse gains made prior to the global shock of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Major factors include:

- **State fragility and violent conflict under a climate change environment:** As of 2024, 18 out of the world's 39 fragile and conflict-affected states (FCS) are in SSA, affecting some 670 million people (IMF, April 2025).<sup>30</sup> These countries are often caught in one or more of the traps identified by Collier: (i) conflict; (ii) mismanaged dependency on natural resources; (iii) weak governance in small states; and (iv) being "landlocked with bad neighbors" (Collier, 2007). He refers to such states as "political black holes." Populations in these contexts are extremely vulnerable to shocks associated with climate change, including the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and cyclones, as well as, in the Horn of Africa, locust infestations—the most recent major episode occurring from 2019 to 2022. SSA has the largest share of people at high risk from extreme weather events—more than one third. Specifically, around 39% of the population is exposed to extreme weather events, and 37% is at high risk. By 2024, 42% of the global extreme poor lived in FCS in SSA (World Bank Group, 2024). Mali, Sudan, and South Sudan have been identified as hunger hotspots (WFP and FAO, 2024).
- **High food inflation, high debt, and continued low overall growth:** Overall, GDP in SSA contracted by 2% in 2020 (WBG, April 2022). This severe pandemic shock inevitably undermined food security. The turmoil triggered by the pandemic created a "perfect storm" of global supply dislocations, compounded by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which led to rising food prices (particularly cereals and edible oils), while commodity prices of fertilizers, oil, and gas also increased. More than half of SSA governments are grappling with external liquidity constraints, facing unsustainable debt burdens, or actively seeking to restructure or reprofile their debt (e.g., Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Somalia, and Zambia). After a brief recovery of around 4% growth in 2021, growth decelerated again in an environment of heightened volatility and uncertainty. Economic recovery remains fragile. In fact, SSA has been stuck in a low-growth trap for over a decade and has struggled to sustain prolonged growth expansions over the past six decades (WBG, April 2024).
- **High structural inequality undermines productivity growth and poverty reduction:** Not only has overall growth remained low, but high structural inequality also undermines the poverty-reducing impact of any growth. SSA exhibits high levels of structural inequality, second only to Latin America and the Caribbean. Such high levels are reflected in Gini coefficients of

29. These percentages translate into around 62 m children who are stunted (2025); 13.8 m who are wasted (2017); and 9.7 m who are overweight (2017). Overweight mainly affects the urban population.

30. The definition of FCS used by the IMF is the same as the one used by the World Bank. Current FCS in sub-Saharan Africa are the following: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Zimbabwe.

income inequality that exceed 50 in much of SSA, with the highest at 63 in South Africa.<sup>31</sup> Gini coefficients of wealth inequality are even higher, and the two are strongly correlated. In SSA (as in LAC), the top 10% own a majority of wealth (UNCTAD, April 2023). Inequality in SSA is highest in Central and Southern Africa.

High structural inequality refers to persistent income differences across individuals, driven largely by circumstances into which people are born and over which they have little or no control, as well as by market and institutional distortions. These differences are not simply the result of individual talents and effort. They include unequal access to income and wealth at birth and during formative years; highly unequal access to basic services such as education and health; disparities in access to market opportunities; inequitable public investment that favors the better-off; and a lack of pro-competition policies that benefit mainly the rich and well connected. This accumulation of structural disadvantages seriously undermines the ability of poorer populations to be healthy, productive, and to access market opportunities to generate income and wealth. Such high inequality has contributed not only to low overall growth, but also to its poor quality. Growth in SSA has been driven largely by the exploitation of natural resource wealth rather than by total factor productivity (TFP) growth and structural transformation. Agricultural productivity has lagged behind other regions for decades, as illustrated by significantly lower cereal yields compared to Asia and Latin America (IFAD & World Bank, 2015). The rate of poverty reduction in SSA has also slowed significantly since 2014, declining from 3.1% annually during 2010-2014 to 1.2% during 2014-2019. This is in stark contrast to the average rate of extreme poverty reduction in the rest of the world, which stood at 9.2% per year over the same period (WBG, April 2024).

**FFS policies in SSA and their contribution to food security:** Many SSA countries have officially adopted FSS as a policy to achieve food security. FSS efforts have intensified following COVID-19 and the resulting disruptions to trade and imports. Given that average yields of basic food crops are well below potential for various reasons (e.g., soil degradation, poor soil fertility, weed competition, lack of improved seeds, pests, and fungal diseases), promoting sustained productivity gains in these crops to improve FSS is urgently needed, especially under the continuing threat of climate change.

The gaps between actual and potential yields are significant, as illustrated below: (i) maize, 1.8-2.2 t/ha versus 18-20 t/ha potential (a gap of roughly 80%); (ii) cassava, 8-12 t/ha versus 40-90 t/ha (a gap of 85%); (iii) millet, 0.6-1.0 t/ha versus 2.5-4.0 t/ha (a gap of 75%); (iv) cocoyams, 5.9-7.0 t/ha versus 15-25 (a gap of 70%); and (v) rice, 2.5-3.5 t/ha versus 6-10 t/ha (a gap of 65%).

The case for reaching self-sufficiency in rice—through the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD)<sup>32</sup>—is particularly important. Many countries, including Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda, are among the 28 members of CARD promoting rice cultivation. The objective is to achieve full rice self-sufficiency by 2030. In the first phase (2008-2018), rice production increased from 14 m tons in 2008 to 28 m tons in 2018. In the second phase, the goal is to double production to 56 m tons.

31. Examples of high Gini coefficients (approximate figures) of income inequality include (0 represents perfect equality, while 100 means one person receives all the income): South Africa: ~63.0 (among the highest globally); Namibia: ~62.6; Zambia: ~62.2; Mozambique: ~61.8; Angola: ~61.4; Rwanda: ~56.6; Botswana: ~56.2; Kenya: ~51.3; Ghana: ~51.1; Côte d'Ivoire: ~51.3; Nigeria: ~52.2; Tanzania: ~48.6; Malawi: ~51.6; Senegal: ~52.2; Niger: ~50.8. (Multiple sources: [Statranker.org](https://www.statranker.org), [World Economics.com](https://www.worldeconomics.com); World Bank; United Nations.)

32. The CARD is an initiative launched by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which partnered with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) in 2008. Since then, many bilateral, multilateral and regional donors, and other research institutions have joined.

Implementation has relied mainly on small-scale irrigation, improved water management, the use of improved NERICA rice varieties,<sup>33</sup> mechanization, and financing for value chain actors. Output expansion was achieved partly through area expansion (23%) and partly through yield increases (19%). However, productivity varies substantially across regions. For example, yields in Northern Africa (mainly Egypt) reach 8.67 t/ha (2023), compared to 2.17 t/ha in Western Africa (2023) and 2.23 t/ha (2023) in Eastern Africa. (Amameishi, Feb 2026). The focus in the second phase is to shift from area expansion to yield increase to ensure sustainability.

Another notable example is wheat production in Ethiopia, which has reached near self-sufficiency through winter irrigation. Both land expansion and yield improvements have contributed to this progress. Driven by “cluster farming” and the use of hybrid seeds, Ethiopian maize yields—averaging around 4.25 t/ha (2020-2025)—are among the highest in SSA, although potential yields are close to 12 t/ha. The highest maize yields are in South Africa, averaging 6-7 t/ha, with nearly 10 t/ha achieved on commercial farms.

These examples of yield increase in major food crops illustrate the substantial potential for productivity gains in SSA, which, if realized, would significantly strengthen food security.

**Social safety nets in SSA and their estimated impact on relieving poverty:** As in North Africa, most SSA countries also have various forms of social safety nets. These include unconditional and conditional cash transfers; labor-intensive public works programs; programs that link cash transfers with training, seed capital, and other agricultural inputs; and the use of digital delivery systems through mobile money payments and social registries.

Social safety net coverage of poor and vulnerable populations tends to be limited, largely because most SSA governments are fiscally constrained. Some of the largest programs depend heavily on external funding. These include:

- **Ethiopia:** One of the largest and the most well-known programs is the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP), launched in 2005 as Ethiopia sought to shift from ad hoc, reactive, emergency assistance to a predictable, multi-year program. It is financed by the Government of Ethiopia (GOE) and a consortium of bilateral and multilateral donors and international organizations.<sup>34</sup> The PSNP primarily targets extremely poor, food-insecure smallholder rural households. It combines cash or food transfers, public works, and asset preservation for beneficiaries (e.g. preventing the need to sell off tools and livestock during lean periods). For households without able-bodied members to participate in public works, the PSNP provides unconditional cash or food transfers. The program aims to strengthen resilience to climate-related shocks, address environmental degradation, and support climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. For example, between 2005 and 2019, PSNP public works increased tree cover by 3.8%, particularly in densely populated areas and on steep slopes (Hirvonen et al., July 2022). By 2020-2025, the rural PSNP covered about 7% of the population, or roughly 8 million people.<sup>35</sup> The urban PSNP, launched in 2016, covered around 604,000 destitute Ethiopians by October 2020 (World Bank, January 14, 2021) and was targeting 1.7 m people by 2025. However, despite these efforts, it remains a continuing challenge for the GOE to provide an adequate safety net for the growing number of poor, largely due to post-COVID conflicts (in Tigray, Amhara, and Oromnia), severe

33. NERICA stands for new rice for Africa. It is a group of high-yielding, drought-resistant and disease-resistant hybrid rice varieties. It is a cross between African and Asian rice varieties. The first variety was developed in 1994 by researchers in WARDA (West Africa Rice Development Association).

34. The GOE, a major stakeholder, is assisted by a multi-donor trust fund which includes Austria, Canada, the European Union, Ireland, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, the United Nations including the WFP, USAID, and the IDA wing of the World Bank.

35. In 2020, the population of Ethiopia was estimated at 115-119 m, 77-80 % rural (about 93 m), with a rural poverty rate of 39%.

droughts, and high food price inflation, among other factors.<sup>36</sup>

- Ghana:** A flagship program in Ghana’s fairly complex social safety net system is the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), launched in 2008 and jointly funded by the Government of Ghana (GOG) and donors.<sup>37</sup> It provides unconditional cash transfers to the extreme poor (e.g., orphans, persons with disabilities, pregnant women or mothers with children under 12 months, and people over 65), and conditional transfers to caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), including children infected by HIV/AIDS. The conditions for continued payments include school enrollment and attendance, birth registration, utilization of ante- and post-natal services, and enrollment in the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS). The targeted coverage for 2020-2025 is over 350,000 extremely poor households, or roughly 1.5 m individuals. A 7th-year evaluation of the program (UNICEF, July 2024), focusing on child welfare (schooling and child labor, health, poverty, and food security) in the Northern and Upper East Regions, found that the program increased consumption and reduced poverty, but not to a significant extent, as most beneficiaries remained in poverty. There was no measurable impact on food security in terms of meal frequency or concerns about food access. Child labor declined somewhat, but many children were still exposed to hazardous conditions and long hours of household chores. There was no significant impact on school enrollment, as schooling remained costly despite free attendance.<sup>38</sup> Health indicators for children were largely unchanged, as access to services—despite NHIS enrollment—remained constrained. Overall, while the program had a positive impact, the fundamental challenges faced by poor children persist. Other social safety net programs in Ghana include: (i) the Labor-Intensive Public Works program (LIPW); (ii) the Ghana School Feeding Program (GSFP); (iii) the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS); (iv) the Education Capitation Grant; and (v) the Productive Inclusion Program (PI).
- Nigeria:** The National Social Safety Net Program (NSSNP), launched in 2017, is a conditional cash transfer program targeted at poor and vulnerable households identified through the National Social Register (NSR) as falling within the first to sixth deciles—below the absolute poverty line of \$2 per day (NASSCO, 2025). In addition to improving the nutrition of targeted households, the program aims to boost school enrollment. Nigeria relies heavily on official development assistance (ODA) to finance its social safety nets. Between 2015 and 2021, ODA expenditures on social safety nets accounted for about 60% of federal spending in this area (World Bank Group, 2025).<sup>39</sup> In 2025, the target was expanded to 19.7 m households. However, as of September/October 2025, the actual number of households that received the first tranche of ₦25,000 (out of three promised installments) was about 8.5 m. The World Bank notes that only 44% of total benefits effectively reach the poor, partly because transfers are fixed per household, rather than per capita, while poorer households tend to be larger (APA News, November 2025).
- Rwanda:** The Government of Rwanda’s (GOR) commitment to providing social safety net protection to the extreme poor is rooted in its 2003 constitution.<sup>40</sup> Its Vision 2050<sup>41</sup> and National Strategy for Transformation 2 (2024-2029) embody Rwanda’s ambition to accelerate high-value growth, create good jobs, eradicate poverty, and support the extreme poor. Within

36. In 2025, Ethiopia obtained another IDA credit injection to co-finance PSNP 6 (World Bank, November 2025).

37. The two donors are the IDA-World Bank and the UK’s development agency, formerly known as DFID.

38. Families still had to pay for food and boarding in school, uniforms, registration fees, books, and school materials.

39. The World Bank is the dominant source of ODA for social safety nets, amounting to over 92% of inflows into the sector (WBG, 2025).

40. Rwanda’s 2003 constitution has been revised several times, most notably in 2015, when presidential term limits were extended to allow a third term and the presidential term was shortened from seven to five years.

41. Originally named Vision 2000 Umurenge Programme.

this overall macro framework, the main objectives of the Social Protection Sector Strategy Plan (SP-SSP) for 2024-2029 are to “protect, promote, and prevent” (Republic of Rwanda, Local Government, 2024). The overall target of reaching 17.7% of the population by 2023/2024 was not achieved; however, coverage expanded from around 8.7% in 2010 to 10% in 2023/2024. A flagship program, the Vision Umurenge program (VUP),<sup>42</sup> has provided support in various ways—for example, increasing assistance to older persons, persons with disabilities, extremely poor mothers and their infants during the first 1000 days, and households affected by shocks. It has also financed projects aimed at reducing disaster risks, including rehabilitating drainage channels for marshlands, establishing terraces and forests, and reintegrating vulnerable children and youth through access to basic services. Rwanda’s social safety nets complement its sustained high growth performance. Between 2015 and 2024, GDP per capita grew at an average rate of 4.6% per year, contributing to a substantial reduction in poverty (measured at the national level) from around 40% in 2017 to about 27% in 2024 (World Bank, Rwanda, October 2025). Its inclusive approach to poverty reduction is a hallmark of its growth strategy, with average GDP per capita growth of around 5% per year from 2006 to 2024 (Cho et al., January 22, 2025).

- **South Africa:** Unlike the above countries, which fund their social safety nets mainly through foreign concessional loans or grants, South Africa’s system is funded primarily through domestic tax revenues. Although it is an upper-middle-income country, South Africa faces extensive poverty, high inequality, and pervasive underemployment, especially among youth. Social grants constitute the largest component of its social protection system and reach, directly or indirectly, about two thirds of the population. Cash transfers cover around 60% of expenditures for households in the lowest decile. These grants reduce poverty by approximately 10 to 38 percentage points, depending on the poverty line used. The post-transfer Gini coefficient of income inequality is reduced by about 6.7% compared to the pre-transfer level. South Africa spends an estimated 3.31% of GDP (2020s) on its social protection programs, which are targeted to different groups depending on their vulnerability (World Bank Group, 2021). These include grants for older persons (60+), war veterans, children, persons with disabilities, and children in foster care. There is also a National Nutrition Program reaching more than nine million students. In addition to these grants, there are also three compulsory contributory funds to support those who are unemployed, injured at work, or affected by accidents.<sup>43</sup> However, only workers in the formal sector can contribute to and benefit from these funds. For the unemployed, additional support is provided through the Expanded Public Works Program and the Community Works Programs.

**ECOWAS – a major REC exemplifying SSA-wide food security challenges:** ECOWAS<sup>44</sup> is home to a large population—around 420-430 m (2020s)—constituting roughly one third of SSA’s population. ECOWAS spans five major agro-ecological zones from north to south:

1. The Saharan desert, with less than 200-300 mm/year of rainfall in the northern belt (e.g., Northern Mali, Northern Niger)
2. The Sahelian semi-arid belt, with around 300-700 mm/year (e.g., Southern Mali, central and south Niger, northern Burkina Faso, northern Senegal)

42. Umurenge (plural: imirenge) means sector or community.

43. These are the Unemployment Insurance Fund; the Compensation Fund; and the Road Accident Fund respectively.

44. ECOWAS consists of Benin, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. However, for the purposes of food security concerns, this paper includes the breakaway states of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, which formed a separate Alliance of Sahel States (later called Confederation of Sahel states) in 2023-2024. The pre-2023 ECOWAS had 15 countries. [https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ECOWAS\\_stock.adobe\\_com\\_scaled.jpeg](https://globalfreedomofexpression.columbia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ECOWAS_stock.adobe_com_scaled.jpeg)

3. The Sudanian savanna belt with around 700-1200 mm/year; (e.g., southern Burkina Faso, southern Mali, north-central Nigeria, northern Ghana, Benin, Togo)
4. The Guinean savanna, a sub-humid belt with around 1200-1500 mm/year (e.g., central Nigeria, Ghana mid-belt, interior Côte d'Ivoire)
5. The humid forest/coastal belt, with around 1500-3000 mm/year (e.g., Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, southwestern and western Ghana, the Guinean coast and southern Nigeria)

This agro-ecologically diverse region supports systems ranging from nomadic pastoralism in the drier north to mixed crop production (subsistence: millet, sorghum, maize; commercial: cotton) and livestock (cattle, sheep, goats), extending to the higher rainfall Sudanian savanna (with many of the same subsistence crops) and the humid forest coastal zone (subsistence: primarily root crops like cocoyams, cassava, and plantains; commercial: cocoa, palm oil, rubber, and rice). The crop and livestock production systems across all five zones are dominated by smallholders.

The Sahel countries<sup>45</sup> of ECOWAS (except Mauritania) are among the least developed in the world. Already water scarce, this belt faces high risks from the extreme weather events associated with climate change. Their extensive poverty—around 31% of the population living below the international extreme poverty line—inevitably increases their fragility and vulnerability to shocks, including political instability.

If farmers and livestock herders do not adapt at scale in the coming decades, climate change is projected to inflict significant economic losses on a region already struggling to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent surge in food price inflation. The main impact channels will include substantial yield losses in rainfed crops and livestock; declines in labor productivity due to heatwaves, including through associated health effects; and damage to infrastructure such as roads and bridges caused by floods (where excess rainfall occurs). These losses do not include the effects of conflicts arising from insurgencies and other forms of political instability, which are themselves, at least in part, intensified by climate-related stresses.

The Sudanian savanna belt of ECOWAS in the Sahel stretches southward to join the wetter Guinean savanna belt, which comprises central portions of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, and Nigeria. In this belt, the contribution of agriculture averages around 29 % of GDP, ranging from 35-45% in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso—where livestock is dominant—to 21-26% in Nigeria, given its oil sector, and 20-30% in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

The share of irrigated land is low—about 5% of cultivated land—including spate irrigation in the drier northern areas; small-scale irrigation using low-cost motor and treadle pumps; and some large-scale, gravity-fed irrigation from dams (e.g., Office du Niger in Mali, Bagré in Burkina Faso). The contribution of agriculture to total employment is much higher, around 65-75% in Mali and Niger; 35% in Nigeria; 40-45 % in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. This high employment share reflects low labor productivity and significant underemployment.

This belt is considered a “climate hot spot,” with temperatures rising at 1.5 times the global average and rainfall becoming more erratic, contributing to land degradation. Woodland and savanna cover declined by around 40% between 1975 and 2013, replaced by bare soil and agricultural expansion. Without widespread adaptation, yields of major food crops such as maize and sorghum are projected to decline further by 20-30% by 2030.

---

45. The Sahel countries are Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger. Mauritania is not a low-income country, but rather a lower-middle-income country with a GNI per capita of USD 2,120 (2024) (WDI). GNI per capita for the low-income countries (2024) is as follows: Burkina Faso: USD 850; Chad: USD 940; Mali: USD 1,030; and Niger: USD 680 (WDI).

As the savanna belt shifts southward by 2050 due to desertification, climate change could displace around 32 m people in West Africa, in addition to the millions already displaced by violent conflict. This belt already experiences extensive poverty. Despite some progress in the pre-COVID period (2000-2018), extreme poverty—measured at \$3.00 per day (2021 PPP)—rose to nearly 35% in Western Africa after the pandemic.<sup>46</sup> At national poverty lines, rates are even higher, particularly post-COVID, with Mali and Niger at 45-49%, and Nigeria at 42%.

Given this widespread poverty, health indicators remain poor. Anemia among women of childbearing age (15-49) is around 52% (2000-2025); child mortality (under 5) stands at 65 per 1,000, compared to a global average of 37 per 1000 (2023); and stunting remains a critical issue, with 35-40% of children affected, particularly in the Sudanian savanna belt (e.g., Niger and Mali).

The forest or coastal belt of ECOWAS shares many features with the above Guinean savanna belt. The following are the main similarities and differences:

- Mainly rainfed, agriculture is an important contributor to GDP (around 20-25%) and to employment (around 40-45%), while irrigated agriculture accounts for only 2-4% of total cultivated land. However, crop composition differs due to higher rainfall. Subsistence crops include cassava, yam, cocoyam, and plantain; commercial crops include pineapple, mango, bananas, and rice (mainly irrigated in inland valleys—bas-fonds); and cash crops include cocoa, coffee, rubber, palm oil, and kola nuts. These cash crops are major contributors to non-oil exports. Livestock includes pigs, small ruminants, and poultry, mainly in peri-urban areas. Main food imports—around 20-25% of total imports—include rice, wheat, and frozen poultry.
- Agricultural production, productivity, and human health are also threatened by climate change. Mean temperatures have already risen by around 0.5-1.1°C since 1970-80 and are projected to increase further by 1.1-1.8°C by 2030 and by around 3-6°C by 2050. These rising temperatures reduce livestock fertility and increase morbidity among populations. Rainfall is expected to decline and become more erratic, with more frequent dry spells during the rainy season. These trends contribute to high rates of deforestation and soil degradation, already driven by extensive agriculture (including slash and burn), small-scale logging, and urbanization (FAO, 05/08/25).
- Rising temperatures and erratic rainfall will shrink the areas suitable for cocoa, a primary cash crop. By 2050, the suitability of cocoa and coffee is expected to shift to higher altitudes, while yields may drop by 15-25% by 2050 if no adaptation is implemented.
- Extreme poverty—at USD 3.00/day (2021 PPP)—is already high at 25-35%, especially after COVID-19. At the national level, poverty rates are significantly higher in every ECOWAS country. For 2024-2025, for example, in Nigeria it is around 40% compared to 22% at the extreme poverty level; in Ghana, around 27% compared to 12%; and in Côte d'Ivoire, 35% compared to 18%. Rural poverty is also higher than urban poverty in every ECOWAS country. Thus, for 2024-2025, in Nigeria it is 52% versus 18%; in Ghana, around 39% versus 11%; and in Côte d'Ivoire, 48% versus 23%. Anemia rates among women of childbearing age (15-49) are high—above 40%—while stunting rates among children under 5 are around 20-28%, although lower than in the savanna belts. If these high rates persist, they will continue to undermine the wellbeing of millions in the next generation, particularly in terms of health and productivity, unless the situation is urgently addressed.

46. The rate for SSA as a whole in 2025 is higher at 45%, with eastern and southern Africa at around 52% (World Bank Blog, September 30, 2025).

- Official unemployment levels are low—for example, around 4% in Nigeria (2025), 2% in Côte d'Ivoire (2025), and 3% in Ghana (2025)—but they mask extensive underemployment, as informal, low-productivity, and precarious jobs predominate in both rural and urban areas. Extensive underemployment is characteristic of subsistence agriculture. ECOWAS remains slightly rural (53% rural versus 47% urban, 2025), but urbanization is occurring rapidly and is the fastest among SSA RECs. Major coastal economies—Nigeria, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire—are already predominantly urban, with urban shares of 55%, 60%, and 54%, respectively (2025). In these expanding urban centers, low official unemployment combined with high underemployment—particularly among youth—poses risks to social stability. If such conditions persist, the realization of the youth dividend remains uncertain.

## CONCLUSION: SUMMARY AND A WAY FORWARD

A quarter into the 21st century, achieving food security for all remains a central challenge for Africa, across low-, lower- and upper-middle-income countries alike. Violent conflict continues to engulf millions. This human disaster is reflected in the deterioration of the Security and Rule of Law score in the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance—over the ten-year period 2014-2023, the score declined to 47.6 (2023),<sup>47</sup> a decrease of 1.6. (2024 Ibrahim Index of African Governance). This represents the most significant deterioration among all index components since 2014.

It is clear that Africa today is far from achieving “The Africa We Want.” Agenda 2063 seeks to build an Africa characterized by “...inclusive growth and sustainable development” (African Union, September 2015). The current situation is therefore a stark wake-up call.

Persistent low productivity growth in agriculture and high inequality in many African countries have contributed significantly to this outcome. Given increasing water scarcity and volatility under climate change, the need to better manage and mobilize both surface and groundwater requires a reorientation of the pursuit of FSS at any cost. Although pursued for decades, the results have been modest at best in terms of both FSS (even when reframed as FSY) and overall food security. Fundamental changes, extending beyond agriculture, are also required.

At the national level, the Mo Ibrahim Forum (2025), Financing the Africa We Want, identifies a promising way forward. Africa must prioritize governance, the rule of law, and security as it: (a) mobilizes its substantial financial resources by putting an end to illicit financial flows<sup>48</sup> that drain the continent of development funds—often exceeding the level of ODA received; (b) raises additional resources by monetizing its substantial natural assets and using them efficiently for the benefit of its people; strengthens its domestic tax systems; redirects sovereign wealth and pension funds towards local and regional investments; and makes better use of remittances; (c) promotes public policies that incentivize greater private investment, both domestic and foreign; (d) shifts the focus from securing additional financial pledges to improving financial management processes, including debt treatment, SDR allocation, and risk management; and (e) accelerates regional integration through the effective implementation of the AfCFTA, which has the potential to transform Africa into the “Africa We Want.”

47. The highest score is 100.

48. These flows were estimated at \$83 billion per year in the period 2000-2016, representing a total of \$ 1.4 trillion, equivalent to 5.3% of Africa's GDP or 11.4% of Africa's total trade for that period. The minerals sector, as well as the machinery and electrical sectors, have the highest levels of mis-invoicing (UNECA, 2024).

## ANNEX 1

### AFRICAN ASPIRATIONS FOR 2063

5. Our united voices paint a picture of what we desire for ourselves, for future generations and the continent.
6. The aspirations reflect our desire for shared prosperity and well-being, for unity and integration, for a continent of free citizens and expanded horizons, where the full potential of women and youth, boys and girls are realized, and with freedom from fear, disease and want.

### AGENDA 2063 The Africa We Want 2

7. Africa is self-confident in its identity, heritage, culture and shared values and as a strong, united and influential partner on the global stage making its contribution to peace, human progress, peaceful co-existence and welfare. In short, a different and better Africa.
8. We are confident that Africa has the capability to realise her full potential in development, culture and peace and to establish flourishing, inclusive and prosperous societies. We thus, commit to act together towards achieving the following aspirations:

#### OUR ASPIRATIONS FOR THE AFRICA WE WANT

1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development
2. An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance
3. An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
4. A peaceful and secure Africa
5. An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics
6. An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
7. Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner

### **ASPIRATION 1. A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development**

Source: AGENDA 2063: The Africa We Want

[https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/Agenda2063\\_Popular\\_Version\\_English.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/Agenda2063_Popular_Version_English.pdf)

## Bibliography

- African Union. Sept. 2015. AGENDA 2063: The Africa We Want. A Shared Strategic Framework for Inclusive and Sustainable Development. FIRST TEN YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2014-2023. [https://archive.uneca.org/sites/default/files/images/agenda\\_2063\\_final\\_revised\\_first\\_ten\\_year\\_implementation\\_plan\\_12\\_10\\_15\\_230216.pdf](https://archive.uneca.org/sites/default/files/images/agenda_2063_final_revised_first_ten_year_implementation_plan_12_10_15_230216.pdf)
- Amameishi, Shinjiro. Feb. 2026. "Food Security and Rice Production Potential in Africa: The Future of the Coalition for African Rice Production (CARD)". JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development. Knowledge Report # 14. [https://www.jica.go.jp/english/jica\\_ri/publication/knowledge/\\_icsFiles/afieldfile/2026/02/27/Knowledge\\_Report\\_No.14\\_en.pdf](https://www.jica.go.jp/english/jica_ri/publication/knowledge/_icsFiles/afieldfile/2026/02/27/Knowledge_Report_No.14_en.pdf)
- APA News, Abuja. Nov 12, 2025. "World Bank says only 44% of social benefits reach poor Nigerians." <https://apanews.net/world-bank-says-only-44-of-social-benefits-reach-poor-nigerians/>
- Cho, Yoon Yong, Silas Udahemuka. Jan 22, 2025. "Bringing Rwanda's social protection practices onto the global stage." World Bank Blog. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/investinpeople/Bringing-Rwanda-s-social-protection-practices-onto-the-global-stage>
- CIHEAM – International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Studies. Algiers, Oct 27-28, 2025. "Modernising Algerian Agriculture: The CIHEAM reaffirms its support". <https://www.ciheam.org/agendas/modernising-algerias-agriculture-ciheam-reaffirms-its-support/#:~:text=A%20member%20of%20the%20CIHEAM,goal:%20strengthening%20national%20food%20sovereignty.>
- Collier, Paul 2007. The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About it. Oxford University Press.
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025. <https://www.fao.org/publications/fao-flagship-publications/the-state-of-food-security-and-nutrition-in-the-world/enhttps://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/4eed749b-81f8-49c9-ba32-f09c66988d54/content/state-food-security-and-nutrition-2025/executive-summary.html#gsc.tab=0>
- World Bank Group. 2021. South Africa: Social Assistance Programs and Systems Review. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0422014b-01cd-5ace-906f-94e8f41380a6/content>
- FAO. 05/08/25. "REDD+Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation". <https://www.fao.org/redd/news/detail/en/c/1741155/>
- Global Nutrition Report. 2021. Algeria: The Burden of Malnutrition at a Glance. <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/africa/northern-africa/algeria/>
- Global Nutrition Report. 2026. Tunisia: Country Nutrition Profile. <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/nutrition-profiles/africa/northern-africa/tunisia/>
- Government of Algeria, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, (GFDRR) and Government of Japan. 2023. Algérie –Diagnostic sur la Gestion des Risques Climatiques et des Catastrophes. Facility administered by the World Bank Group. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/4543aa14-a250-4aba-944e-1d2f29187fd0>
- Greene, Jeff. March 22, 2022. "Most African countries have enough groundwater reserves to face at least five more years of drought." [https://www.wateraid.org/us/media/most-african-countries-have-enough-groundwater-reserves-to-face-at-least-five-years-of?c\\_src=na-23-bau-ppc&c\\_src2=g-gr-sem&gad\\_source=1&gad\\_campaignid=1535059675&gbraid=&gclid=Cj0KCQiA4pvMBhDYARIsAGfgwvyQ7VqLGcfhC0NzomhclXoCDXdOQ2fEzJNUV1MxswuCBhVYIng4xQkaAlkDEALw\\_wcB](https://www.wateraid.org/us/media/most-african-countries-have-enough-groundwater-reserves-to-face-at-least-five-years-of?c_src=na-23-bau-ppc&c_src2=g-gr-sem&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=1535059675&gbraid=&gclid=Cj0KCQiA4pvMBhDYARIsAGfgwvyQ7VqLGcfhC0NzomhclXoCDXdOQ2fEzJNUV1MxswuCBhVYIng4xQkaAlkDEALw_wcB)
- Hirvonen, Kalle, Elia A. Machado, Andrew M. Simmons, Vis Tarraz. July 2022. « More than a safety net: Ethiopia's flagship public works program increases tree cover." Global Environmental Change. Vol. 75. 102459. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959378022000875>

- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) & World Bank (WB). 2015. African Agriculture and Agribusiness Fostering Inclusive Outcomes. <https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/Event/Africa/Investing%20in%20Africa%20Forum/2015/investing-in-africa-forum-african-agriculture-and-agribusiness.pdf>
- International Monetary Fund (IMF) April 2025. Sub-Saharan Africa: Pushed to the Brink: Fragility and Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. Regional Economic Outlook Notes. [https://www.imf.org/-/media/files/publications/reo/afr/2025/april/english/fcsnote.pdf#:~:text=Fragile%20and%20conflict%20affected%20states%20\(FCS\)%20are%20home,in%20the%20region%20faces%20acute%20food%20insecurity.2](https://www.imf.org/-/media/files/publications/reo/afr/2025/april/english/fcsnote.pdf#:~:text=Fragile%20and%20conflict%20affected%20states%20(FCS)%20are%20home,in%20the%20region%20faces%20acute%20food%20insecurity.2)
- Jouilli, Mustapha. Sept. 2023. Olive Oil and Water: Moving Towards Sustainable Agricultural Trade between the EU and Tunisia. Issue Brief # 1. [https://www.tni.org/files/2023-09/MATS\\_Tunisia\\_Final\\_01-09-2023.pdf](https://www.tni.org/files/2023-09/MATS_Tunisia_Final_01-09-2023.pdf)
- Mezouane, Hamza, Dalila Hank and Réda Delli. Jan 2026. Agricultural Water Management Under Water Scarcity in Algeria: Practices and Future Perspectives. [https://openagriculturejournal.com/contents/volumes/V20/e18743315442659/e18743315442659.pdf#:~:text=The%20Total%20Agricultural%20Area%20\(TAA,are%20set%20to%20fallow%20annually](https://openagriculturejournal.com/contents/volumes/V20/e18743315442659/e18743315442659.pdf#:~:text=The%20Total%20Agricultural%20Area%20(TAA,are%20set%20to%20fallow%20annually)
- Miller Magazine. Oct 11, 2024. "Algeria aims at wheat self-sufficiency by 2025". <https://millermagazine.com/blog/algeria-aims-for-wheat-self-sufficiency-by-2025-5896>
- Milling. (Middle East and Africa). Nov 11, 2026. "Algeria boosts 2026 agriculture budget by 4% to drive local production" <https://millingmea.com/algeria-boosts-2026-agriculture-budget-by-4-to-drive-local-production/>
- Mo Ibrahim Foundation. July 2025. Financing the Africa We Want. Forum Report. <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025-forum-report.pdf>
- Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance. 2024. "2024 IIAG: Key Findings". [https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2024-10/2024-iiag-key-findings\\_en.pdf](https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/sites/default/files/2024-10/2024-iiag-key-findings_en.pdf)
- Nacer, Lynda in Maghreb Emergent, 23 Août, 2025. "En 2025, les aides sociales absorbent 5,928 milliards de dinars ». [https://maghrebemergent.news/fr/en-2025-les-aides-sociales-absorbent-5-928-milliards-de-dinars/#google\\_vignette](https://maghrebemergent.news/fr/en-2025-les-aides-sociales-absorbent-5-928-milliards-de-dinars/#google_vignette)
- National Social Safety-Nets Coordinating Office (NASSCO) 2025 "National Cash Transfer Programme. <https://nassp.gov.ng/what-we-do/national-cash-transfer-programme>
- Republic of Rwanda, Ministry of Local Government. 2024. Social Protection Sector Strategic Plan (SP-SSP) 2024-2029. <https://www.minecofin.gov.rw/index.php?eID=dump-File&t=f&f=113402&token=dcf0020be749bda1c818d68fc4a5e7406882aad9#:~:text=With%20the%20introduction%20of%20the,a%20formal%20sector%20in%202008>
- Sorge, Helmus. Aug. 30, 2024. "Rural Africa's drought: Can the World Deliver Water?" Policy Center for the New South. <https://www.policycenter.ma/publications/rural-africas-drought-can-world-deliver-water>
- Srivastava, Bhavya, Ifeanyi N. Edochie, Aparajita Goyal, Andrew Dabalén. August 2024 "Agriculture Production Potential of Groundwater Irrigation in Sub-Saharan Africa" Policy Research Working Paper # 10885. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/6116cc93-9250-47b1-9c42-16b9fc26c6a5/content>
- Tsakok, Isabelle. April 2025. "Achieving Food Security in Africa: What Prospects Lie Ahead? Challenges and Opportunities". Policy Center for the New South. [https://www.policycenter.ma/sites/default/files/2025-04/PP\\_10-25%20%28Isabelle%20Tsakok%29.pdf](https://www.policycenter.ma/sites/default/files/2025-04/PP_10-25%20%28Isabelle%20Tsakok%29.pdf)
- Valdez, Shawn, Melissa Hudso, Mary Lopez. Jan-Dec 2024. "Nutrition and Food Security in Sub-Saharan Africa." Journal of African Development. Vol. 5, Issue 4, pp 25-28. [https://afea-jad.com/article/nutrition-and-food-security-in-sub-saharan-africa-32/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://afea-jad.com/article/nutrition-and-food-security-in-sub-saharan-africa-32/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. April 2023. Wealth Distribution, Income Inequality, and Financial Inclusion: A Panel Data Analysis. Working Paper No. 4. By Patrick N Osakwe, and Olga Solleder. [https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/wp-2023d3-no4\\_en.pdf?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/wp-2023d3-no4_en.pdf?utm_source=chatgpt.com)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) 2024. "African institutional architecture to address illicit financial flows". ECA Policy Brief, # ECA/22/024. <https://repository.uneca.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ac1cea7b-7905-4190-803f-b7776e83a7fe/content>
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). July 2024. Seven-Year Evaluation Report: Focus on Child Labor. Ghana LEAP 1000 Programme <https://www.unicef.org/innocenti/media/9261/file/UNICEF-Innocenti-Ghana-LEAP-Round-Three-Report-2024.pdf>
- World Bank Group. May 2014. Unleashing the Potential of Agriculture to Boost Growth in the Interior Regions. Ch 09 (pp 260-279) in Tunisia: The Unfinished Revolution. [https://www.banquemondiale.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/tunisia\\_report/the\\_unfinished\\_revolution\\_eng\\_chap9.pdf](https://www.banquemondiale.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/tunisia_report/the_unfinished_revolution_eng_chap9.pdf). [https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/tunisia\\_report/tunisia\\_report\\_the\\_unfinished\\_revolution\\_eng\\_synthesis.pdf](https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/MNA/tunisia_report/tunisia_report_the_unfinished_revolution_eng_synthesis.pdf)
- World Bank Group. Jan 24, 2021. "Towards an Inclusive and Empowered Ethiopia: Improving Social Safety Nets to Reduce Urban Poverty." <https://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2021/01/14/towards-an-inclusive-and-empowered-ethiopia-improving-social-safety-nets-to-reduce-urban-poverty#:~:text=As%20of%20October%202020%2C%20the,of%20the%20poorest%20urban%20households>.
- World Bank Group. April 2022. Africa's Pulse: Boosting Resilience – The Future of Social Protection in Africa. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b15e2112-37f6-55fa-9737-46bf5fc66b58/content>
- World Bank Group. June 2022. G5 Sahel Region: Country Climate and Development Report. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/197f07e0-d3ec-48bc-9d52-38d551d5d312/content>
- World Bank Group. Sept 2023. Tunisia: Country, Climate and Development Report. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/fb44f7bf-242f-43fb-9c9b-d0d78900f290/content>
- World Development Indicators, WBG. 2024. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNP.PCAP.CD>
- World Bank Group. April 2024. Africa's Pulse: Tackling Inequality to Revitalize Growth and Reduce Poverty in Africa. Vol. 29. An Analysis of Issues Shaping Africa's Economic Future. Executive Summary & Full Report. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/55ae13f0-6f49-408a-8762-25d99413dca4/content>. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/11e850d1-50ca-4d49-b4bf-f717d3ad47a8/content>
- World Bank Group. 2024. Poverty, Prosperity, and Planet—Pathways out of the Polycrisis—Overview. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/f75dd18d-4e3f-44f9-b455-7f0d8e189609/content>
- World Bank. May 2025. New Project to Boost Tunisia's Health System and Pandemic Response. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2025/05/28/new-project-to-boost-tunisia-s-health-system-and-pandemic-response#:~:text=Washington%2C%20May%2028%2C%202025%20%E2%80%94, and%20upgraded%20hospitals%20and%20labs>.
- World Bank. July 01, 2025. Understanding country income: World Bank Group income classifications for FY 2026 (July 2025-June 2026). By Eric Metreau, Katherine Elizabeth Young, & Shwetha Grace Eapen. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/understanding-country-income--world-bank-group-income-classifica>

- World Bank Blog. Sept. 30, 2025. "Global Poverty Update: New Data and Regional Classifications". <https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/opendata/september-2025-global-poverty-update-from-the-world-bank--new-da#:~:text=This%20upward%20revision%20stems%20primarily,defined%20in%20the%20What's%20New>).
- World Bank Group. Fall 2025. Tunisia Economic Monitor: Strengthening Social Safety Nets for Increased Efficiency and Equity. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099935211252568698/pdf/IDU-355dc59a-9397-4eb4-b360-811cfc74993f.pdf>
- World Bank. October 2025. Rwanda: Macro-Poverty Outlook. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/bae48ff2fetc5a869546775b3f010735-0500062021/related/mpo-rwa.pdf>
- World Bank. Nov 2025. Ethiopia—Project Information Document (PID): Productive Safety Net Project 6 (P511478). <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099111425070037792/pdf/P511478-ba2ad2f0-3dbb-4993-b589-00b84ca54059.pdf>
- World Bank Group. 2025. The State of Social Safety Nets in Nigeria. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099111025101533437/pdf/P176782-07a8cbdf-9344-42dc-856c-72e776196f7a.pdf>
- World Bank. October 2025. Tunisia: Poverty and Equity Brief. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099509004222555951/pdf/IDU-1f085b02-7d1d-42a8-9538-e30cde142acc.pdf>
- World Bank. October 2025. Algeria: Macro Poverty Outlook. <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/65cf93926fdb3ea23b72f277fc249a72-0500042021/related/mpo-dza.pdf>
- World Bank Group. Jan 2026. The World Bank Group in Africa. <https://www.worldbank.org/ext/en/region/afr>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



### ISABELLE TSAKOK

Isabelle Tsakok, development practitioner, policy analyst, researcher, and teacher, is a Senior Fellow at the Policy Center for the New South. She grew up in the Republic of Mauritius, a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. She holds a PHD in Economics from Harvard University, and a BA in Phil/Econ from the London School of Economics. As World Bank staff and consultant, she has focused on agricultural and rural development including on issues of agricultural transformation, food security, and poverty reduction. She has worked in most regions of the developing world, including Africa –North and South of the Sahara; Asia - South, Southeast and East; and Latin America. She has taught courses on agricultural policies and institutions at the World Bank; the School of Agricultural and Rural Department, Renmin University of China; the School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), Columbia University; and the Université Polytechnique Mohamed VI, Morocco. Her publications address issues of methodology of partial equilibrium analysis for assessing agricultural policies and distortions; and of agricultural transformation from smallholder, subsistence to demand-driven commercial farming. Her latest book publication is *Success in Agricultural Transformation: What it Means and What Makes it Happen* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2011).

## ABOUT THE POLICY CENTER FOR THE NEW SOUTH

The Policy Center for the New South (PCNS) is a Moroccan think tank aiming to contribute to the improvement of economic and social public policies that challenge Morocco and the rest of Africa as integral parts of the global South.

The PCNS pleads for an open, accountable and enterprising "new South" that defines its own narratives and mental maps around the Mediterranean and South Atlantic basins, as part of a forward-looking relationship with the rest of the world. Through its analytical endeavours, the think tank aims to support the development of public policies in Africa and to give the floor to experts from the South. This stance is focused on dialogue and partnership, and aims to cultivate African expertise and excellence needed for the accurate analysis of African and global challenges and the suggestion of appropriate solutions.

All opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors.

### Policy Center for the New South

Rabat Campus of Mohammed VI Polytechnic University,  
Rocade Rabat Salé - 11103  
Email : [contact@policycenter.ma](mailto:contact@policycenter.ma)  
Phone : +212 (0) 537 54 04 04  
Fax : +212 (0) 537 71 31 54

[www.policycenter.ma](http://www.policycenter.ma)

