
*Promises and pitfalls of the humanitarian-
development-peace nexus approach in
response to food security crises*

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19 March 2025



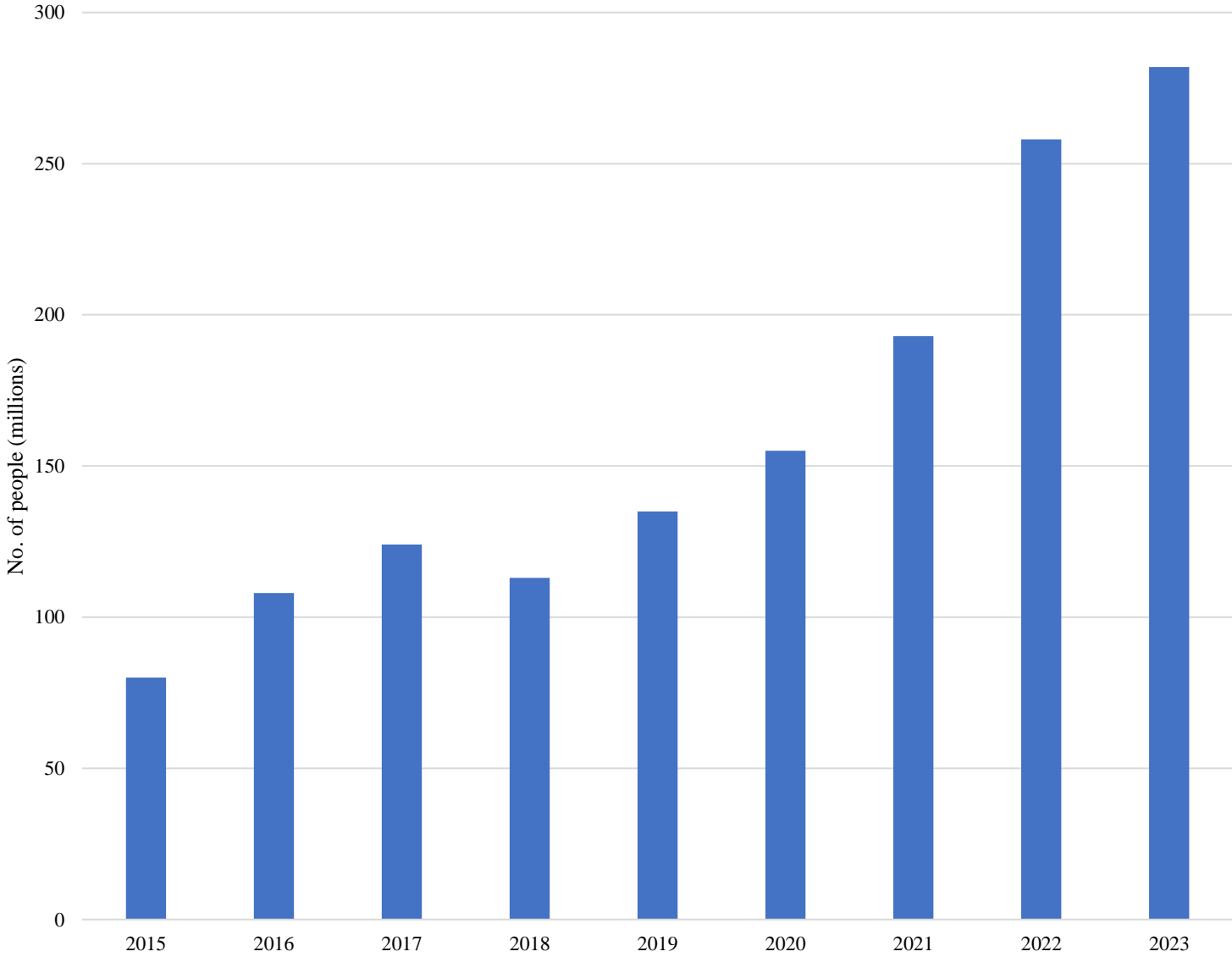
Drivers of food insecurity in 2023

Conflict/insecurity: 135M

Economic shocks: 75M

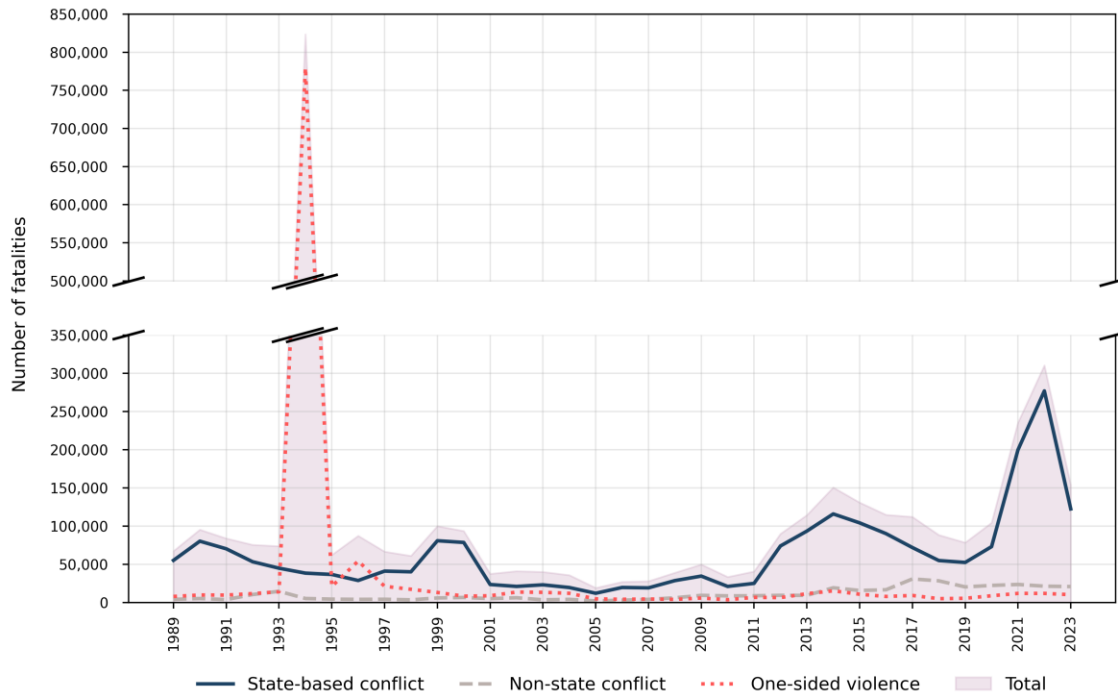
Weather extremes: 72M

Food Insecurity: Number of people in crisis or worse



Violent Conflict

Fatalities by type of violence (1989-2023)



Based on UCDP 24.1 data

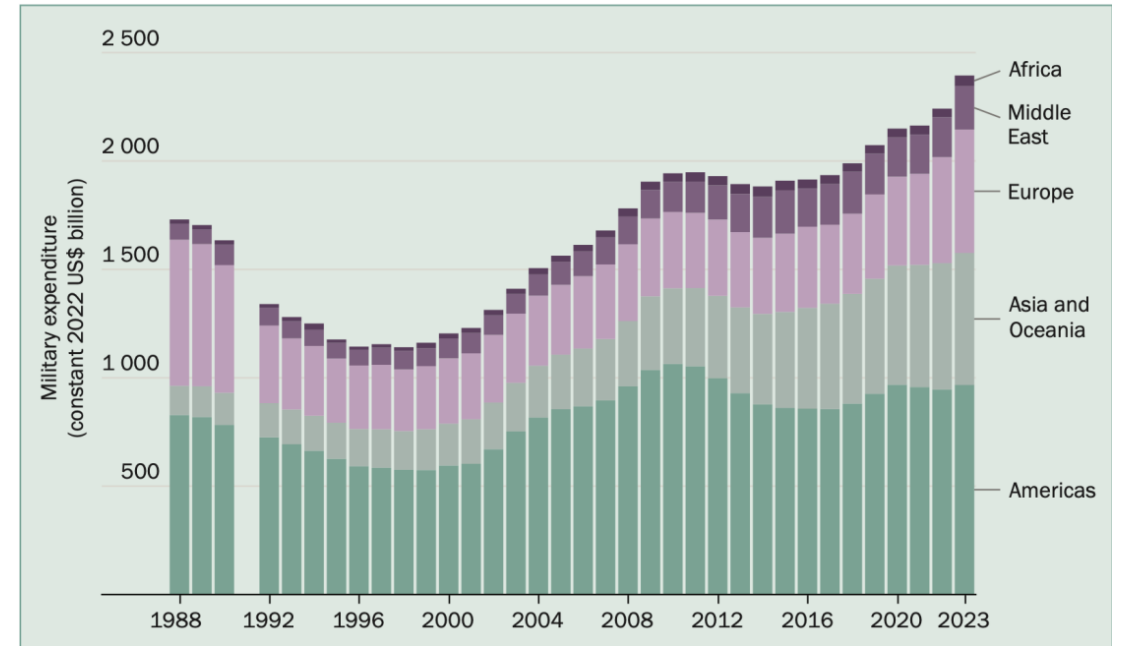
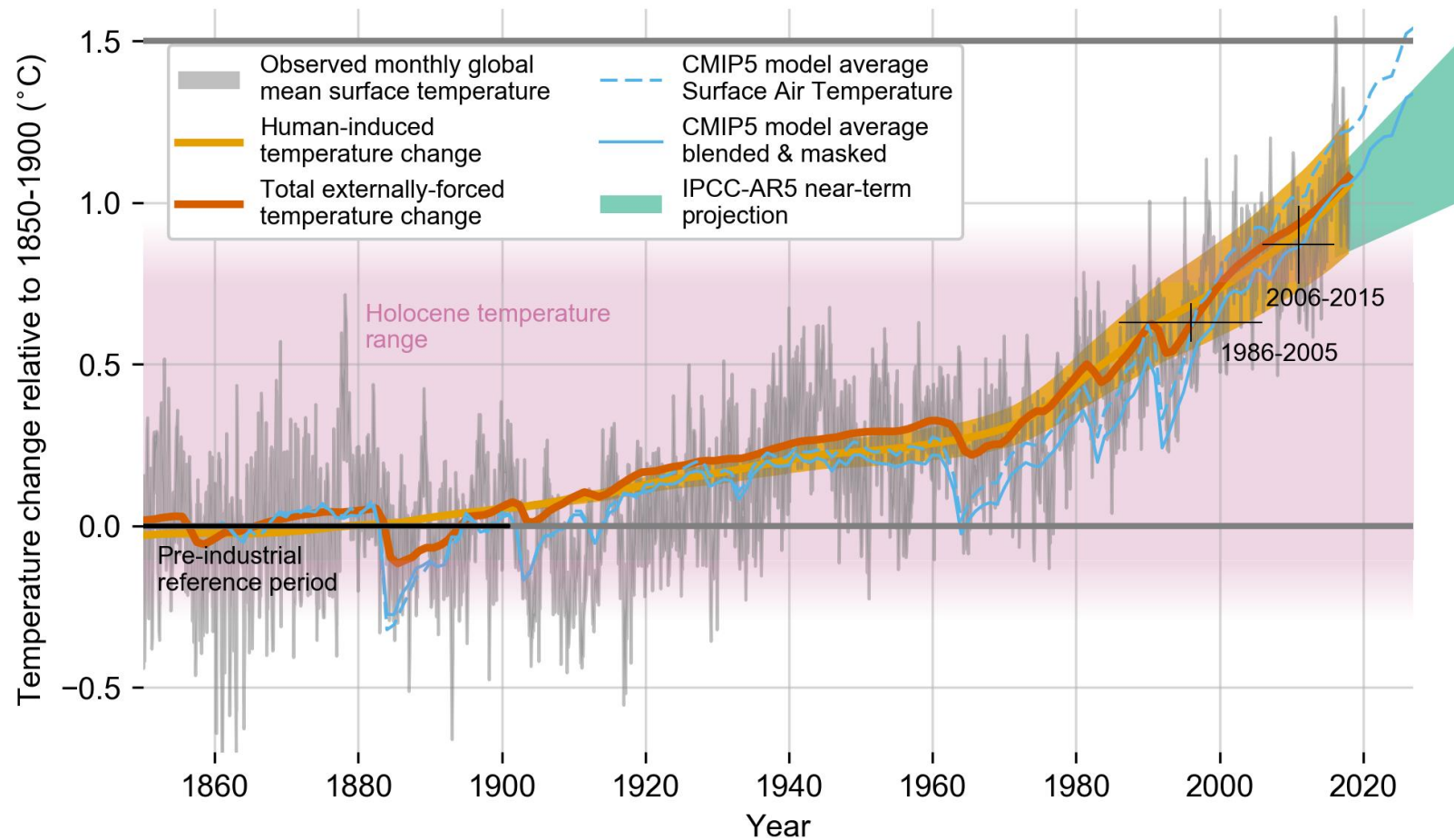


Figure 1. World military expenditure, by region, 1988–2023

Climate change



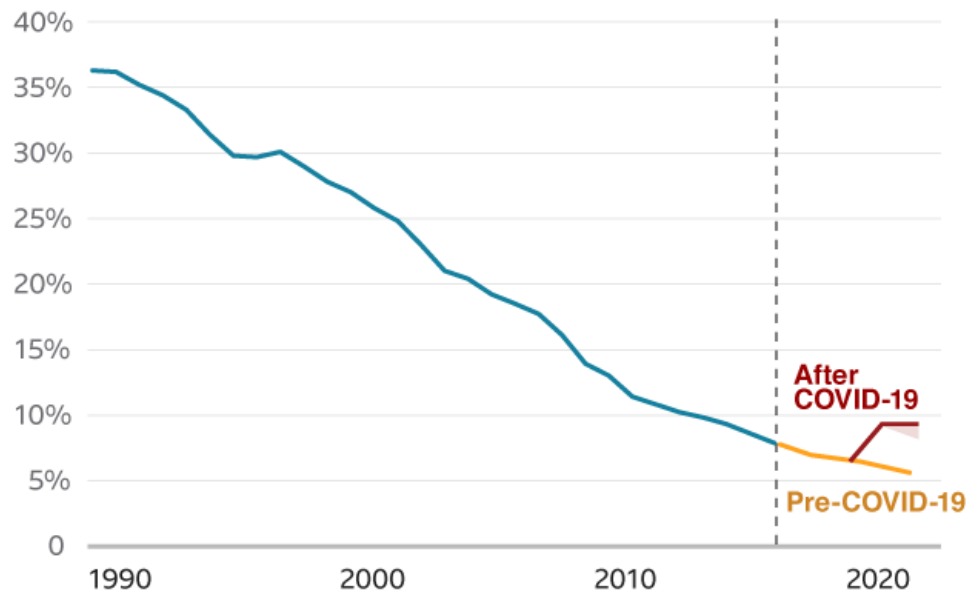
IPCC: Evolution of global mean surface temperature (GMST) over the period of instrumental observations



Economic crises

Extreme poverty rising for the first time in 20 years

Poverty rates (%) and number of poor people (millions) living on less than \$1.90/day



Source: World Bank, PovcalNet

BBC

Global food prices soar

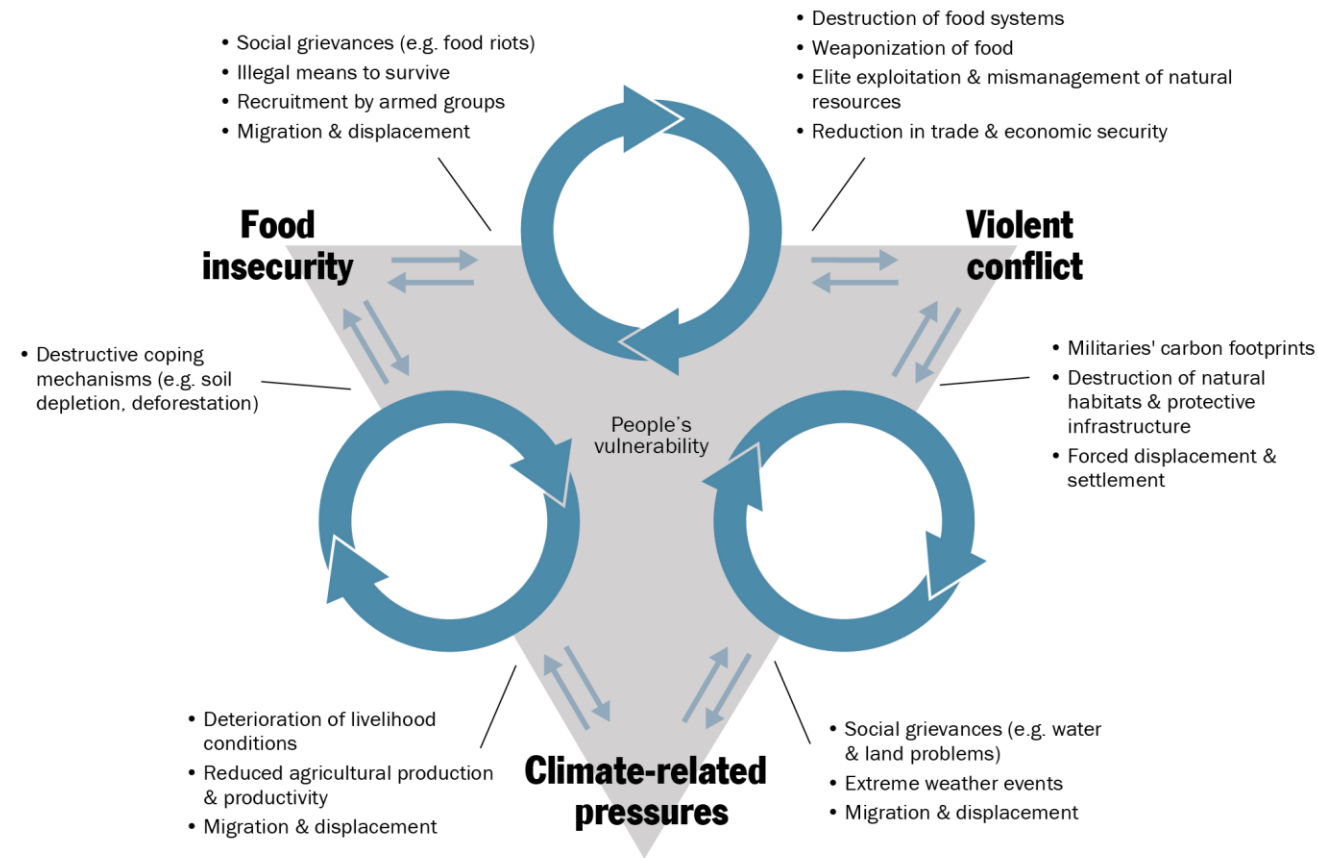
FAO monthly food price index year-on-year change (%)



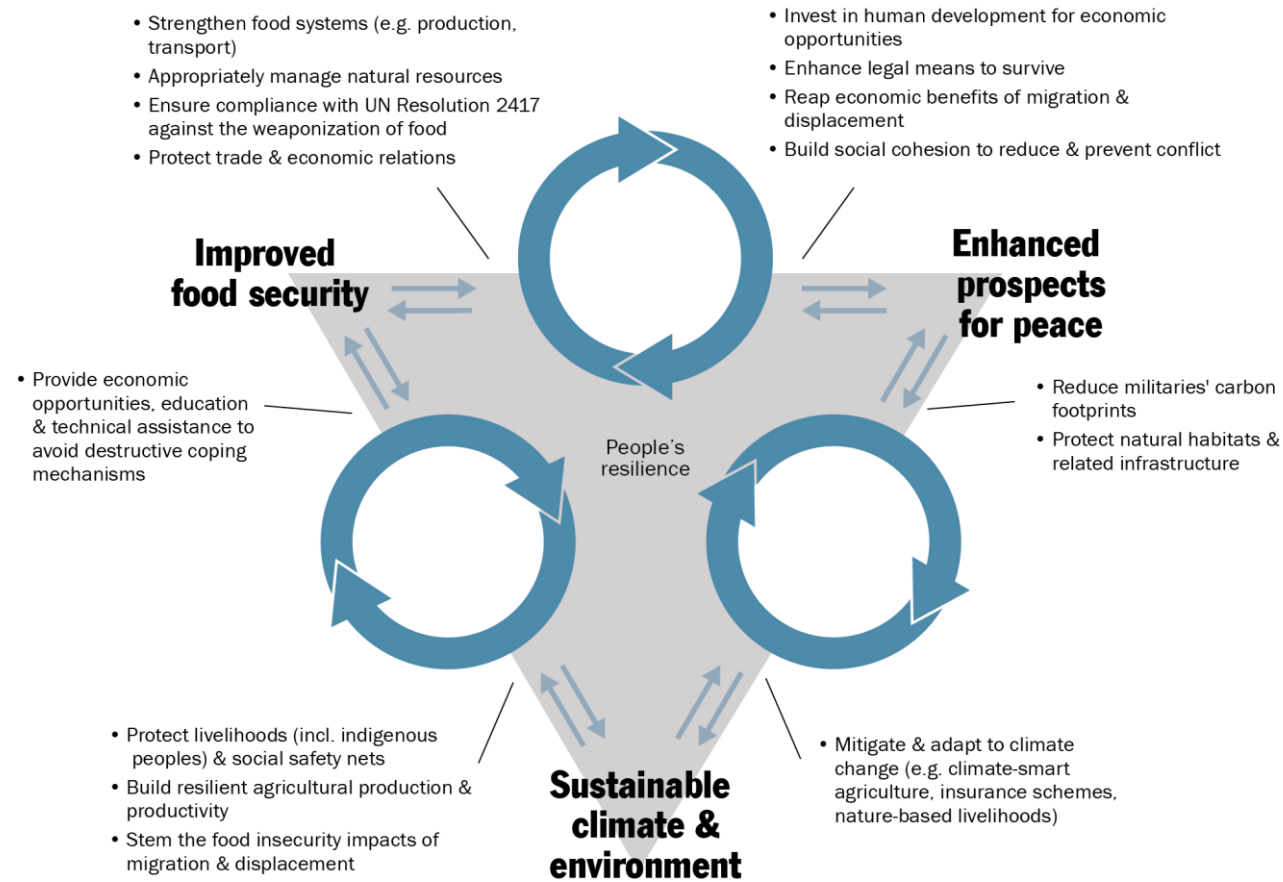
Source: FAO
© FT



Vicious circles: pathways between food insecurity, conflict, and climate and environment-related pressures



Vicious circles: pathways between food insecurity, conflict, and climate and environment-related pressures



Entry points of food security programs with positive feedback loops between food, climate and peace



Livelihood support/ incentives

Programmes that support sustainable livelihood strategies by increasing climate-resilient agricultural productivity



Natural resource management

Programmes that rehabilitate and improve equitable access to relevant natural resources



Food price

Climate-sensitive measures to reduce food price volatility



Social cohesion

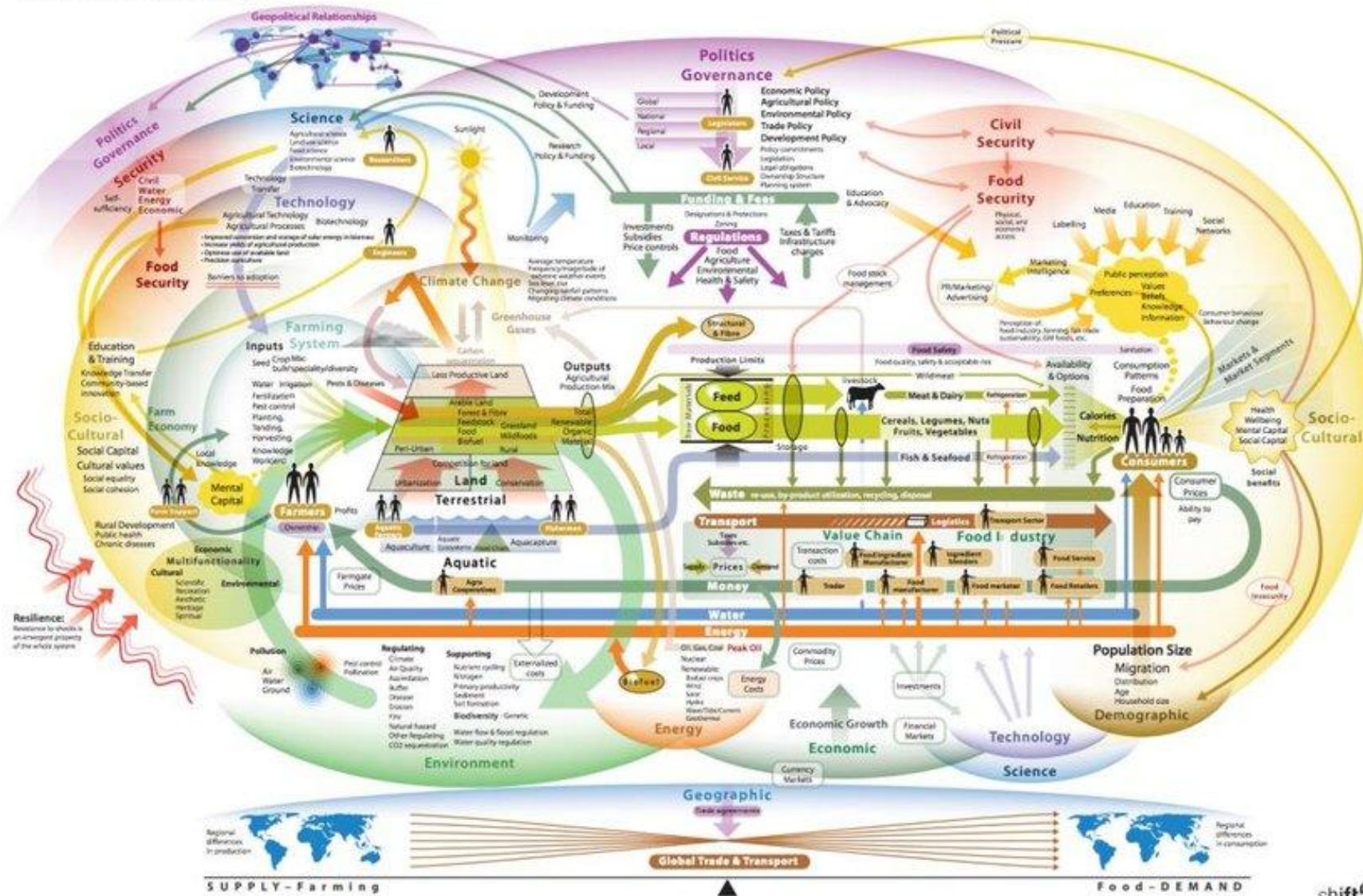
Climate-sensitive programmes that use equitable and inclusive processes of food assistance to build social cohesion at the community level



State-Citizen links

Climate-sensitive programmes that include food security in basic and inclusive social service delivery and use it as a tool to build institutional capacity, accountability and legitimacy to improve state-citizen links

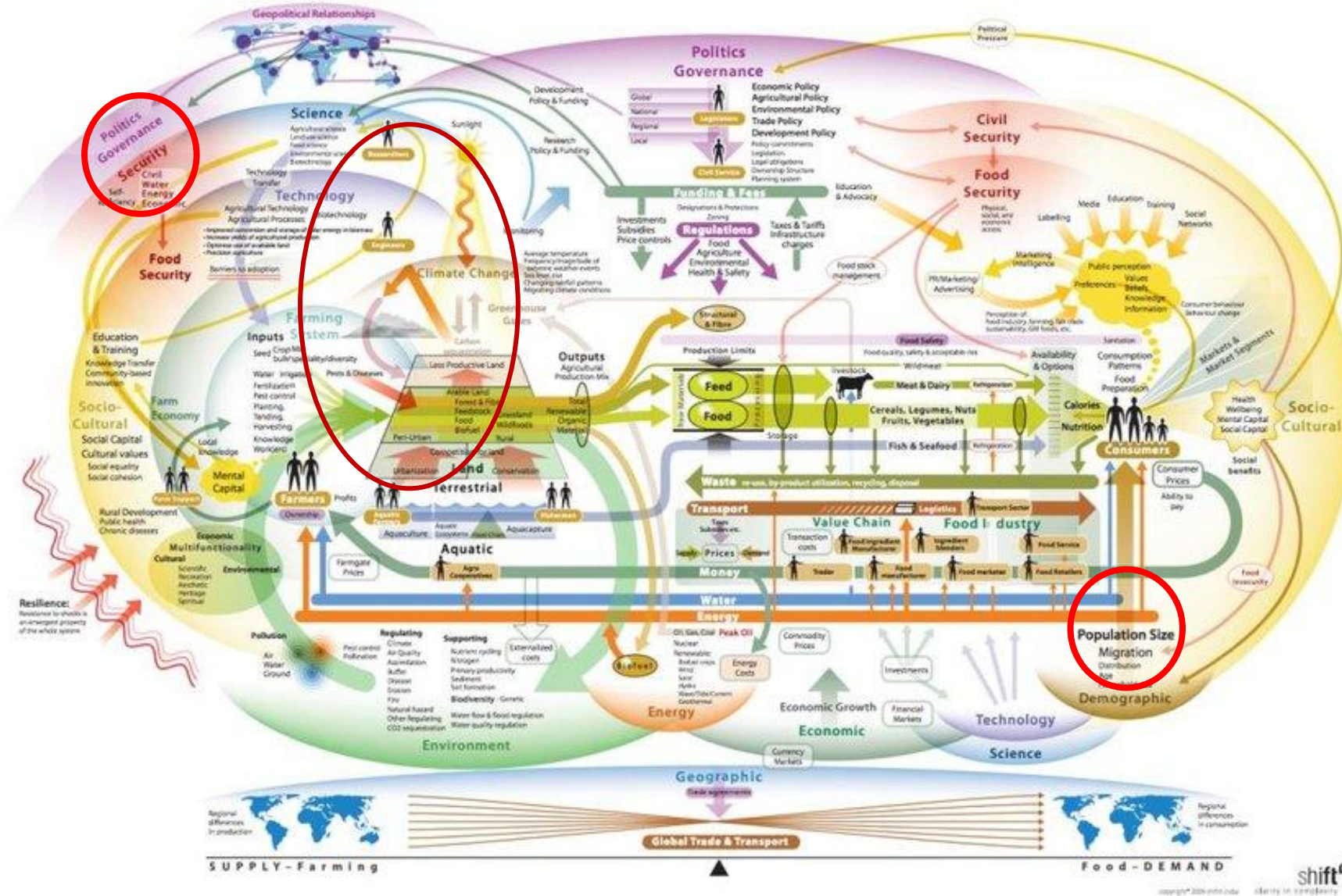
Global Food System Map



Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331311296_Setting_priorities_to_address_the_research_gaps_between_agricultural_systems_analysis_and_food_security_outcomes_in_low_and_middle-income_countries/figures?lo=1

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Partnerships: Who?

- National govt./ministries
- National-level NGOs
- Local govt.
- Local-level NGOs
- UN organizations or International NGOs



Partnerships: Why & for what?

Pool	resources (skills, expertise and financial);
Exchange	knowledge and learning;
Avoid	duplication or contradiction;
Share out	roles based on strengths;
Implement	jointly, monitor, report, conduct needs assessments;
Work	simultaneously across sectors (humanitarian, development and peacebuilding) on complementary dimensions (climate, food, peace) for greater effectiveness/deeper impact;
Reach	more communities/programme beneficiaries; and



Perceived barriers to integrated approaches

Competition, ownership

- **Issues:** Gender, climate, water, etc.
- **Level:** Sectoral, regional, global projects
- **Ministries:** German ministry of foreign affairs Auswärtiges Amt (AA) & BMZ; Sweden MFA –SIDA - FBA

Silos, processes, complexity

- Working **across sectors** (silos) is not rewarded, takes time, resources, personal initiative and personal relationships between people.
- **Internal procedures** are complex and lengthy.
- The **size and complexity of projects** is perceived as a barrier.

Project logic

- strong **project logic** a potential barrier to integrated, area-based approaches.
- Current **thinking, monitoring and indicator development** perceived as encouraging the 'delivery of certain numbers' rather than the delivery of an integrated approach.

Partnering

- Working with partners is a heavy up-front investment, takes **time, resources and personal initiative**.
- **Staff rotation** (particularly in conflict and fragile countries) might slow relationship-building between partners.
- Different organizations use **different indicators, have different structures, processes and corporate instructions**.

Peace is political

- Perception that a focus on peace means working at the **political** level which is not always possible in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.
- Recognition that even the term 'peace' can be **sensitive**.

Measurement challenges

- Monitoring potential peace dividends stops with the **project cycle**.
- **Remote measuring** in fragile and conflict-affected contexts is difficult.
- Many questions remain:
 - What **level** to measure?
 - How does a potential reduction of violence at the **individual** level translate into a reduction of violence at the **community** level?
 - How to measure peace when conflict contexts **change** constantly?

Too many issues and processes

- Perception that too many issues are being integrated at the same time (**gender, youth, disability, climate, political economy**, etc.).
- Perception that there is **too little time for implementation and producing peace impacts**, given upfront processes take very long.

Too little resources

- Bringing in peace and conflict advice for intentional 'peace positive programming' (beyond conflict-sensitivity analysis) requires extra time at the design stage of a project. **Deadlines are tight and budget cycles short.**
- Too little time to make use of all tools available to design projects for impact.
- Little to no money to institutionalize social cohesion dimensions or have them evaluated for future evidence-based programming.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

