



Food Crisis Amid Covid-19

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Why in News

According to the **United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP)**, the **number of people facing acute food insecurity** could nearly **double to 265 million in 2020** due to the **economic fallout of Covid-19**.

Acute food insecurity is any **manifestation of food insecurity at a specific point in time of a severity** that threatens lives, livelihoods or both, regardless of the causes, context or duration.

Key Points

- **Global Report on Food Crisis 2020**
 - This report was highlighted to show **links between conflict and rising levels of acute food insecurity**.
 - **135 million people** in 55 countries experienced acute food insecurity in **2019** nearly 60% of whom **lived in conflict or instability**.
 - **Yemen will see the world's worst food and malnutrition crisis in 2020** as the number of acutely food-insecure people there is "expected to exceed 17 million".
 - The report is produced by the **Global Network against Food Crises**, an international alliance working to address the root causes of extreme hunger.
- **Covid-19 Effect**
 - An **additional 130 million** are on the edge of starvation prompted by Coronavirus. Added with 135 million, the number rises to 265 million in 2020.
 - **Reasons:** The impact of **lost tourism revenues, falling remittances, unemployment, under-employment, shutdown of many factories and travel and other restrictions** linked to the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Suggestions**

- Swift and unimpeded humanitarian access to vulnerable communities.
- To set up a network of logistics hubs to keep worldwide humanitarian supply chains moving.
- Strengthening food security systems.

UN World Food Programme

- World Food Programme (WFP) is the leading humanitarian organization saving lives and changing lives, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.
- The WFP was **established in 1963** by the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) and the United Nations General Assembly.

India's Step in Ensuring Food Security

- The Union Agriculture Minister participated in an Extraordinary virtual meeting of **G-20** Agriculture Ministers to address the issue of Covid-19 impacts on food security, safety and nutrition.
 - The G-20 Agriculture Ministers virtual meeting was **organized** through video conferencing **by the Saudi Presidency**.
 - The G-20 nations resolved to have **international cooperation** in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, to avoid food wastages and losses, **maintain the continuity of the food supply value chain** across borders.
 - They also resolved to work together for food security and nutrition, share best practices and lessons learnt, promote research, responsible investments, innovations and reforms that will improve the sustainability and resilience of agriculture and food systems.
 - Agreed **to develop science based international guidelines on stricter safety and hygienic measures for zoonosis control**.
- The **Government of India has exempted all agriculture operations during the lockdown period** and ensured continued availability of essential agriculture produce and supply, while adhering to protocol of social distancing, health and hygiene.

Source: PIB