

Factors governing food security



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Farmer's
Say

It is not easy in this column to avoid discussing food matters because most farming is about food production.

Farmers as producers play a vital role in the availability of food. However, food may still be unavailable to a farming household because of other reasons such as lack of fuel to cook the food.

Many low paid people in urban areas fail to get enough food because it is too expensive.

Ideally for a family to be food secure, there should be easy access to enough, safe, and nutritious food for normal growth and development, and an active and healthy life.

When all the conditions mentioned here are missing, then we get into the position of

food insecurity. When farmers fail to get fertilizers or when there is too little or too much rain, food production becomes difficult which results in food insecurity.

For people who buy their food such as those in urban areas there is a risk of chronic food insecurity when people are unable to buy enough food for extended periods due to limited income and can only buy high calorie foodstuffs such as posho and rice. Food insecurity threatens people's lives and livelihoods.

Some people don't buy high protein foodstuffs such as beans and meat because they don't have enough fuel (charcoal, firewood, gas, paraffin or electricity)

Conflict is another big driver of food insecurity. Civil unrest which causes displacement of communities from their homes and normal sources of income subjects people to reliance on charitable food donations.

Such food must be prepared in hygienic conditions including the availability of clean water. Yet refugee conditions often cannot provide all the necessary welfare. In areas of conflict it becomes difficult for farmers to obtain seeds and fertilizers.

Food security includes the availability of seeds for crops and fodder for livestock.

Even when the crops are harvested it becomes hard for the farmers to take their harvests to markets. Transport between food producing areas and food markets becomes difficult. Many refugees are disillusioned and cannot devote sufficient energy to farming because they lack permanent land ownership.

Food security includes the availability of seeds for crops and fodder for livestock. When improved seeds are too expensive the farmers tend to plant any available other seeds and end up with reduced production.

Due to prolonged drought there may not be sufficient grass and water for livestock to feed well resulting in scarcity of items such as milk, eggs, and other livestock products.

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