

Climate change aggravates global hunger: UN

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Hunger is on the increase across the globe once again after a decade of declines, a UN report said Friday, thanks in part to climate change aggravating severe weather and conflicts.

The slowdown in global growth in recent years, which led to a collapse in the prices of numerous commodities, also had a [negative impact](#) on the ability of people in many countries to feed themselves, it said.

Some 815 million people, or 11 percent of the world's population, were chronically undernourished in 2016, according to the annual UN [report](#), The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World.

"The increase—38 million more people than the previous year—is largely due to the proliferation of violent conflicts and [climate](#)-related shocks," said the report.

It said [severe weather](#), "in part linked to climate change", reduced the availability of [food](#) in many countries and contributed to a rise in food insecurity.

Scientists are loath to attribute any particular weather event to climate change, but believe the increase in temperature is increasing the severity of storms and droughts.

But the report also points to a link between climate change and conflict.

It "singles out conflict—increasingly compounded by climate change—as one of the key drivers behind the resurgence of hunger and many forms of malnutrition" said a joint statement by the UN agencies which drafted the report.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) prepared the report.

"The concurrence of conflict and climate-related natural disasters is likely to increase with climate change, as climate change not only magnifies problems of [food insecurity](#) and nutrition, but can also contribute to a further downward spiral into conflict, protracted crisis and continued fragility," said the report.

It listed nine conflict and climate related shocks associated with food crises in 2016, including in Syria and South Sudan, where over 53 million people were considered to be "food insecure".

The report also noted that slowdown in global growth has had a negative impact on people's ability to get enough to eat.

"Economic slowdowns in countries highly dependent on oil and other primary commodity export revenues have also had an impact on food availability and/or reduced people's ability to access food," said the report.

The UN agencies found that malnutrition had slowed the growth of 155 million children under the age of five, which also has an impacted on long-term health and educational attainment.

Nearly 52 million were affected by wasting—being underweight for

their height.

The report also found at the same time an increase in overweight young children, to 41 million.

"These trends are a consequence not only of [conflict](#) and [climate change](#) but also of sweeping changes in dietary habits as well as economic slowdowns," said the report.

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