Title: "Food and nutrition security in Nepal"

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The number of undernourished people in the world is estimated to be increased to 815 million in 2016, up from 777 million in 2015 but still down from about 900 million in the year 2000. Similarly, while the prevalence of undernourishment is projected to have increased to an estimated 11 percent in 2016, this is still well below the level of a decade ago. Nonetheless, the recent increase is a cause for great concern and poses a significant challenge for international commitments to end hunger by 2030.

The 2030 SDG Agenda call on all countries and stakeholders to work together to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030. A multi-sectoral approach which connects nutritional outcome, agricultural productivity and household income is needed to address the issue. Such an approach must highlight the interconnectedness between agriculture and nutrition and the need to consider food diversity as an important aspect of food security. Multi-sectorial approach also needs to consider the agri-food systems as a whole instead of focusing on individual food components.

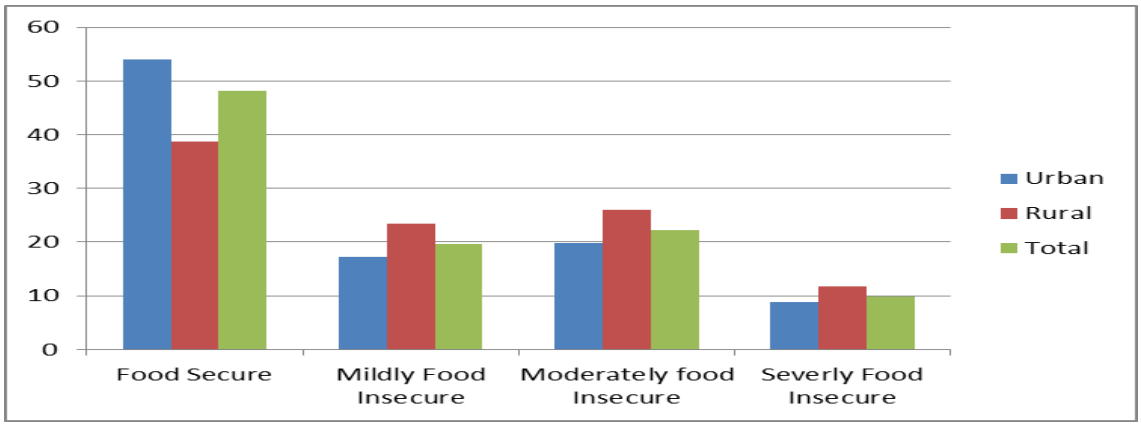
Among countries in the SAARC region, prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) is highest for Afghanistan at 23%, followed by Sri Lanka at 22% for 2014-16. The estimate is lowest for Nepal at 8.1%. The proportion in Bangladesh and India are similar and in the range 14-15% with these two populous countries accounting for most of the absolute number of under-nourished in the region (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017).

Likewise, among countries in the SAARC region, prevalence of stunting is the highest for Pakistan at 45%, followed by Afghanistan at 40.9%, India at 38.4%, Nepal at 37.1%, Bangladesh at 36.1%, Bhutan at 33.6% and Sri Lanka at 14.7% for 2014-16. Prevalance of wasting is the highest for Srilanka at 21.4%, followed by India at 21%, Bangladesh at 14.3%, Nepal at 11.3%, Pakistan at 10.5%, Maldives at 10.2%, Afghanistan at 9.5% and Bhutan at 5.9%. Similarly, prevalence of underweight is the highest for both Afghanistan and Bangladesh at 32.9% , followed by Pakistan at 31.6%, Nepal at 30.1%, India at 29.4%, Srilanka at 26.3%, Maldives at 17.8% and Bhutan at 12.8% (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2017).

Despite Nepal has no worse food and nutrition security situation among SAARC countries, it is realized that the nutritional status of women and children, especially the vulnerable groups (infant, children, pregnant and lactating mothers) is still very poor. Nepal has a very high rate of child malnutrition, 36% and 27% of children under five are

stunted and underweight, respectively. About 17% women of reproductive age have chronic energy deficiency (Body Mass Index less than 18.5) and 41% of those populations are anemic (NDHS, 2016). Similarly, women and children also suffer from some of the world's highest levels of vitamin and mineral deficiencies which can be emphasized by the fact that Vitamin A deficiency is the cause of deaths of approximately 6,900 children in Nepal each year. One in five (21%) children is born with low birth weight in Nepal reflecting malnutrition in the womb. Consequently 2 to 10 times the risk of death and also at higher risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in adulthood. Iodine deficiency in pregnancy causes more than 200,000 babies a year in Nepal to be born mentally impaired and IQs that are 10 to 15 points lower than those not deficient. About 2-3 % of GDP (US$ 250 to 375

Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 2016 has shown that the national household food security is only 48.2% whereas in rural areas the percentage is only about 38.8%. The severely food insecure households are about 10% (Figure 1). Geographically, the mountain region is suffering more from food insecurity where the percentage of food secure households is 38.4% compared to *terai* where the statistics is about 51% (Figure 2). Furthermore, the severely food insecure households in mountain region are about 13.8% compared to 9.2% of *terai* region. Development Region wise the food secure households are lowest in Mid-Western region (only 27.7%) and percentage of severely food insecure households in that region is highest (about 16.9%) (Figure 3). State wise (Figure 4) the Karnali Province has lowest level of food security (food secure



households are only 22.5%) and the severely food insecure households are about 17.5% (NDHS, 2016).

Biography

I am Bal Gopal Pokheral ,born in Sarlahi in a midium class faimly in 1990 and finished university degree in 2017 then after I joining in social organization(Green and Rural development Nepal,NGO) as district program coordinator but lated promoted to regional coordinator as well as started to teach in Saptagandaki Multiple college as a Lecture .

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