Ensuring Food and Nutrition Security

Why in news?

The Hunger Hotspots Outlook (2022-23) that was released recently has issued warnings on acute food insecurity.

What is the Hunger Hotspots Outlook?

> *The United Nations' (UN) Hunger report defines hunger as "periods when populations are experiencing severe food insecurity."*

- The report is released by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).
- Hunger Hotspots are areas likely to see acute food insecurity increasing during the outlook period.
- They are selected through a consensus-based process involving WFP and FAO field and technical teams, alongside specialized analysts.
- The report is part of a series of analytical products produced under the **Global Network against Food Crises**.
- One in every 10 people in the world are suffering from chronic hunger.
- The report has warned that acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate further in 19 countries (hunger hotspots) from October 2022 to January 2023.

> *According to the 2022 Global Hunger Index, 44 countries are suffering with serious or alarming levels of hunger.*

- **Reasons for food insecurity -** Climate extremes such as floods, tropical storms and droughts remain critical drivers in many parts of the globe.
- Persistently high global prices of food, fuel and fertilizer linked to the crisis in Ukraine continue to drive high domestic prices.
- Limited access with insecurity, administrative and bureaucratic impediments, physical barriers to reach to people facing acute hunger, etc. adds to the issue.

How to meet the promise of ending hunger by 2030?

> *The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2 targets to end hunger by 2030.*

Better production

- During 2021-22, India recorded $49.6 billion in total agriculture exports, a 20% increase from 2020-21.
- However, recent climate shocks have raised concerns about India's wheat and rice production over the next year.
- **Need for increased production**
- India is a primary exporter of agriculture and allied products, marine products, plantations, and textile and allied products.
- India is a provider of humanitarian food aid, notably to Afghanistan, during the crisis in Ukraine.
- By 2030, India's population is expected to rise to 1.5 billion.

Better nutrition

- The World Food Day (October 16) is a reminder to 'Leave No One Behind'.
- The upcoming G20 presidency for India provides an opportunity to bring food and nutrition security to the very centre of a resilient and equitable future.

Better environment

- The degradation of soil by excessive use of chemicals, non-judicious water use, and declining nutritional value of food products need urgent attention.
- Millets have received renewed attention as crops that are good for nutrition, health, and the planet.

Better life

- The path to a better life resides in transforming food systems, making them more resilient and sustainable.

What steps are taken to ensure food and nutrition security?

Somalia is the world's hungriest country as of 2022.

- **Schemes for improved food production**
  - Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana- Promotes organic farming
  - Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana- Focuses on more crops per drop for improved water use
  - Soil Health Management- Fosters Integrated Nutrient Management under the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture.
- **Schemes for improving food access**- Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman Yojana (PM POSHAN Scheme) and take-home rations.
- **Schemes for ensuring nutrition security**- It includes National Food Security Act, 2013 that anchors Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), PM POSHAN scheme (earlier known as Mid-Day Meals scheme) and Integrated Child Development Services

(ICDS).

An International Monetary Fund paper asserted that extreme poverty was maintained below 1% in 2020 due to Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY).

References

1. https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/food-day-as-a-reminder-to-leave-no-one-behind/article66017453.ece
2. https://reliefweb.int/report/world/hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity-october-2022-january-2023-outlook
3. https://www.fao.org/newsroom/detail/global-report-on-food-crises-acute-food-insecurity-hits-new-highs/en#:~:text=The%20Global%20Report%20on%20Food,international%20humanitarian%20and%20development%20partners.
4. https://www.trocaire.org/news/world-food-day-2022-how-can-we-help-solve-hunger-in-the-world/

Quick facts

The Global Report on Food Crises

- It is the flagship publication of the Global Network and is facilitated by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN).
- The Report is the result of a consensus-based analytical process involving 17 international humanitarian and development partners.

The Global Network

- It was founded by the European Union, FAO and WFP in 2016.
- It is an alliance of humanitarian and development actors working together to prevent, prepare for and respond to food crises and support the Sustainable Development Goal to End Hunger (SDG 2).

Millets

- Millets are climate-smart crops that
    - Are drought-resistant
    - Are hardier than other cereals
    - Are more resilient to changes in climate
    - Grow in infertile soil
    - Require less water to cultivate (as much as 70% less than rice)
    - Require less energy to process (around 40% less than wheat)

    - Require fewer inputs
    - Can revive soil health
    - Ensures that agrobiodiversity is preserved
- It includes Ragi, Jowar ,Bajra and Minor millets (Proso millet, foxtail millet, little millet, barnyard millet and kodo millet)
- **India** is the **world's leading producer of millets**, producing around 41% of total production in 2020.
- India has led the global conversation on reviving millet production at the United Nations General Assembly, where it appealed to declare **2023 as the International Year of Millets**.
- To enhance the area, production and productivity of millets, the government is implementing a **Sub-Mission on Nutri-Cereals (Millets)** as a part of the National Food Security Mission.
- The International Fund for Agricultural Development's (IFAD's) Tejaswini programme with Government of Madhya Pradesh showed that growing millets meant a nearly 10 times increase in income.

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