



# FOOD SECURITY

## UNDERNOURISHMENT

### ► ABOUT BIG FACTS

Big Facts is a resource of the most up-to-date and robust facts relevant to the nexus of climate change, agriculture and food security. It is intended to provide a credible and reliable platform for fact checking amid the range of claims that appear in reports, advocacy materials and other sources. Full sources are supplied for all facts and figures and all content has gone through a process of peer review.

Big Facts is also an open-access resource. We encourage everyone to download, use and share the facts and graphic images. We believe that by sharing knowledge we can aid the type of interdisciplinary understanding and collaboration necessary for meeting the challenges posed to agriculture and food security in the face of climate change.

The Big Facts project is led by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS). CCAFS is a strategic partnership of CGIAR and Future Earth, led by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). CCAFS brings together the world's best researchers in agricultural science, development research, climate science and Earth System science, to identify and address the most important interactions, synergies and tradeoffs between climate change, agriculture and food security.

We are well aware that this field is progressing rapidly, and that science is always open for re-evaluation. We welcome your suggestions for improvements, updates and corrections at [ccafs@cgiar.org](mailto:ccafs@cgiar.org).

#### Acknowledgments

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## UNDERNOURISHMENT AND OBESITY

### ► FACTS

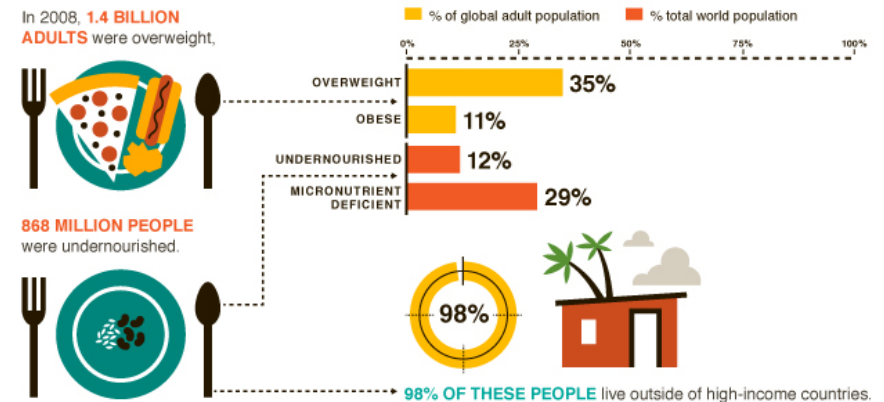
Assessing precisely the current status of global food security is extremely challenging. However, the big picture is clear: About 2 billion people are food insecure because they fall short of one or several of FAO's dimensions of food security (Wheeler and von Braun 2013 p. 509).

Globally, 842 million people are chronically undernourished, while almost 2 billion suffer from micronutrient deficiencies (FAO 2013).

Micronutrient deficiencies ('hidden hunger') occur when diets fail to provide sufficient amounts of micronutrients such as iodine, iron, zinc and vitamin A. Micronutrient deficiencies increase morbidity and mortality, impair cognitive development, reduce learning ability and productivity, and reduce work capacity in populations as a result of higher rates of illness and disability—resulting in a tragic loss of human potential. Overcoming micronutrient malnutrition is essential for development (FAO 2012).

Some 65% of the world's population lives in countries where overweight and obesity kills more people than do factors related to underweight. Globally, more than 40 million children under the age of five were overweight in 2010. Once considered problems of only high-income countries, overweight and obesity are now on the rise in low- and middle-income countries, particularly in urban settings (WHO 2012).

The world is increasingly faced with a double burden of malnutrition, whereby undernutrition, especially among children, coexists with overweight and diet-related chronic diseases and micronutrient malnutrition. The reason for this coexistence is that being overweight is not necessarily a matter of eating too much food, but of eating food that is not nutritious, and poor consumers may have less access to good nutrition (FAO 2012).



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### ► SOURCES & FURTHER READINGS

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