



# Impacts of hunger and malnutrition on population health: Africa

23 April 2020

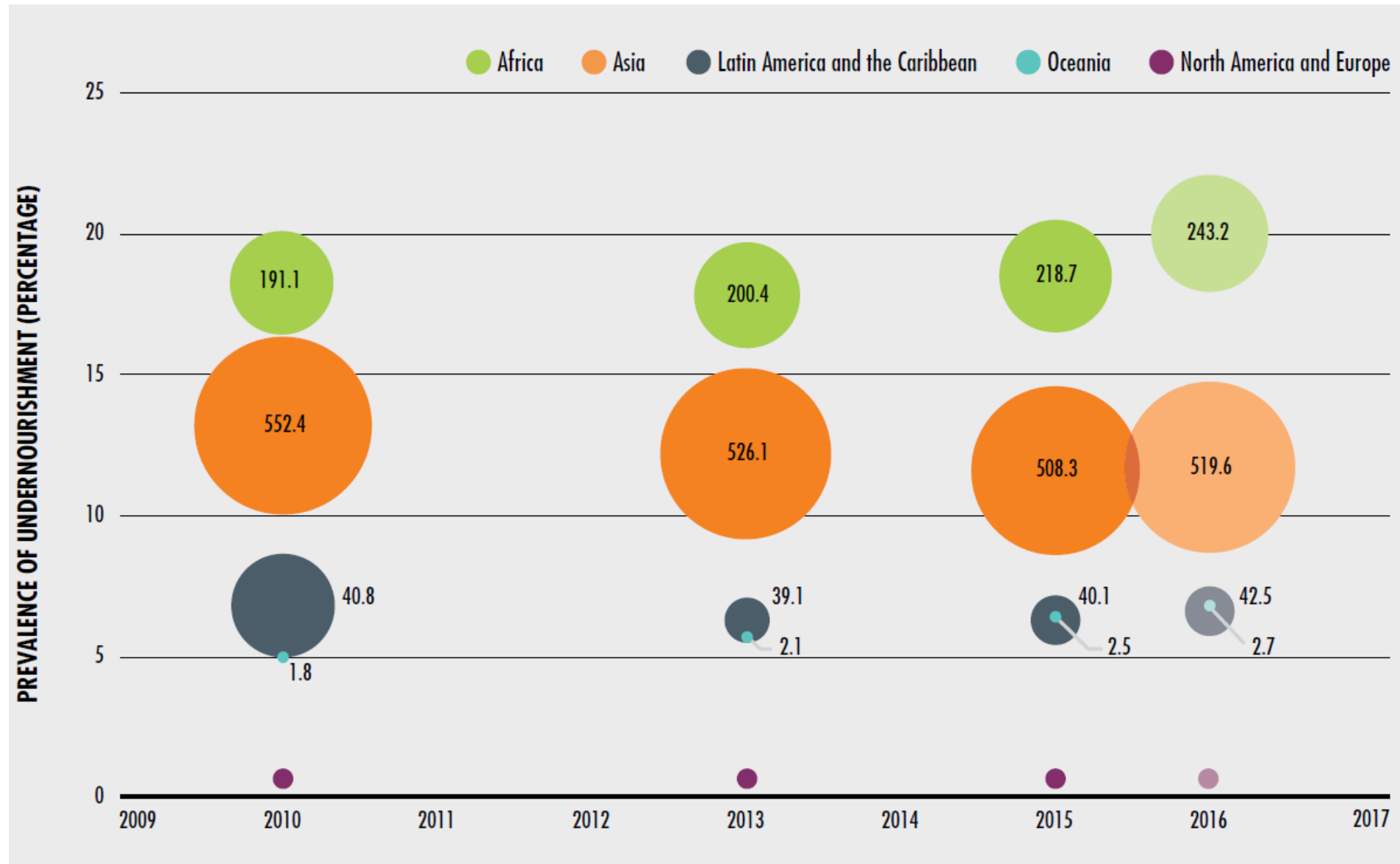
Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America

Namukolo Covic (PhD)

Senior Research Coordinator, IFPRI/A4NH

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

# Many of the global population are still hungry



Source: FAO, 2019

# Slow progress on undernutrition but faster movement towards overweight and obesity

151 million children too short for their age (stunted)

51 million children weigh too little for their height (wasted)

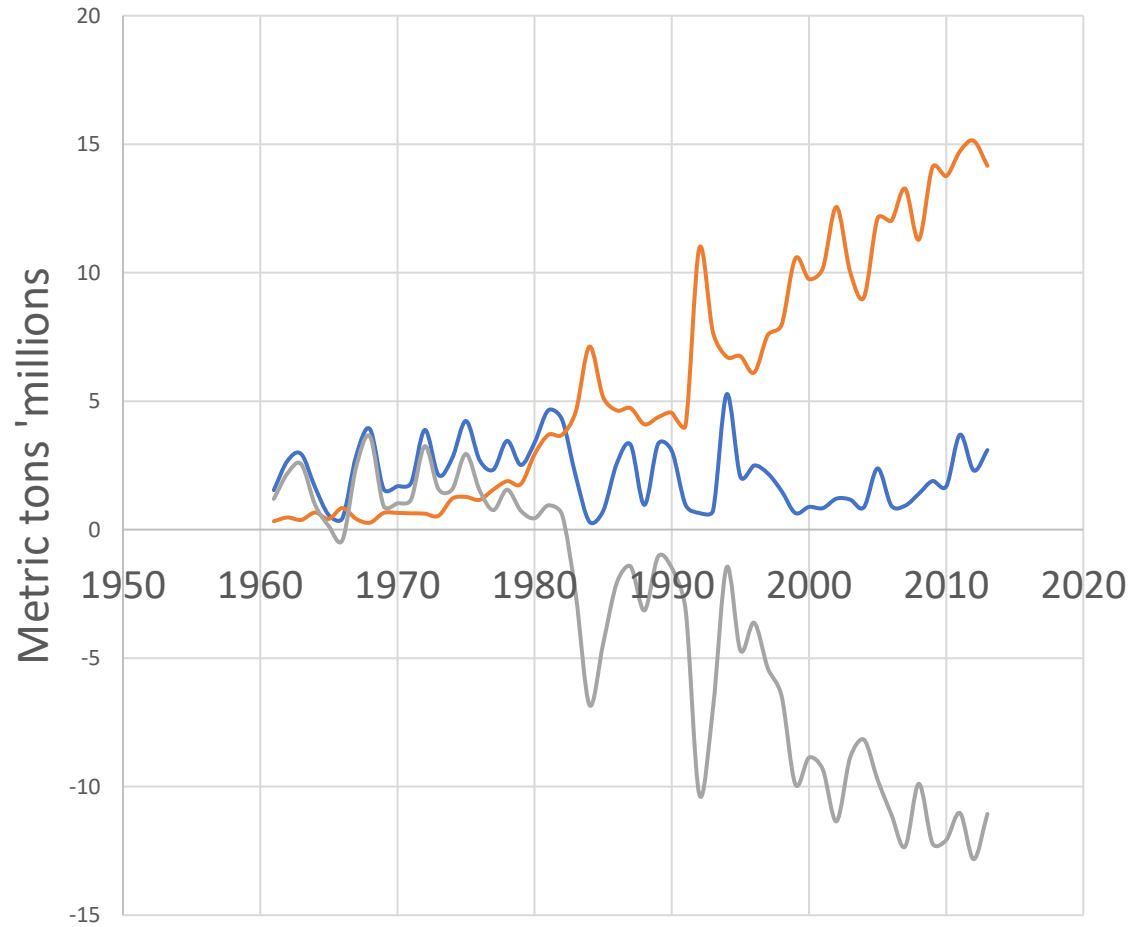
38 million children overweight

2 billion adults are overweight and obese.

124 of 141 countries analyzed having more than one form of malnutrition

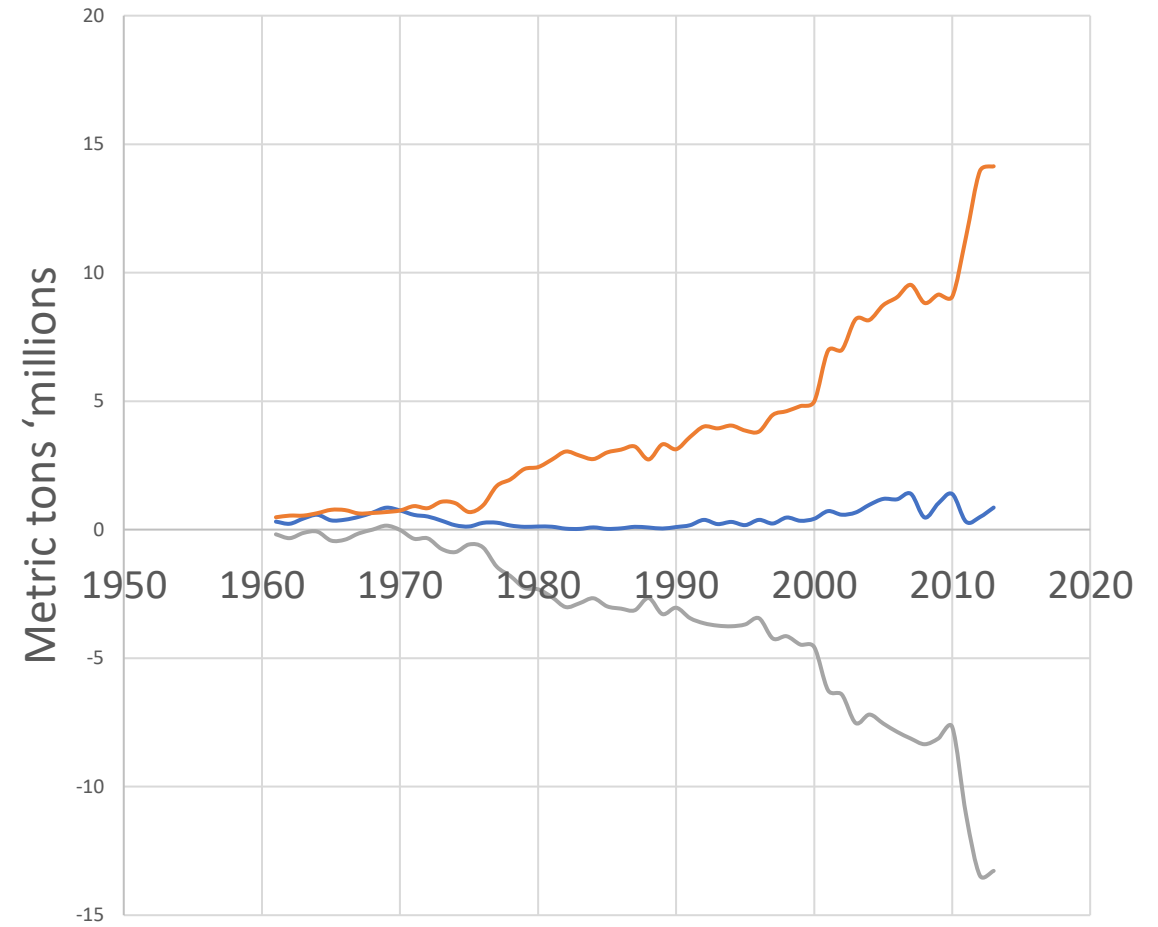
Many suffer from hidden hunger or micronutrient deficiencies

# Africa imports more Maize (A) and Rice (B) than it exports



**A: Maize**

— Export — Import — Difference

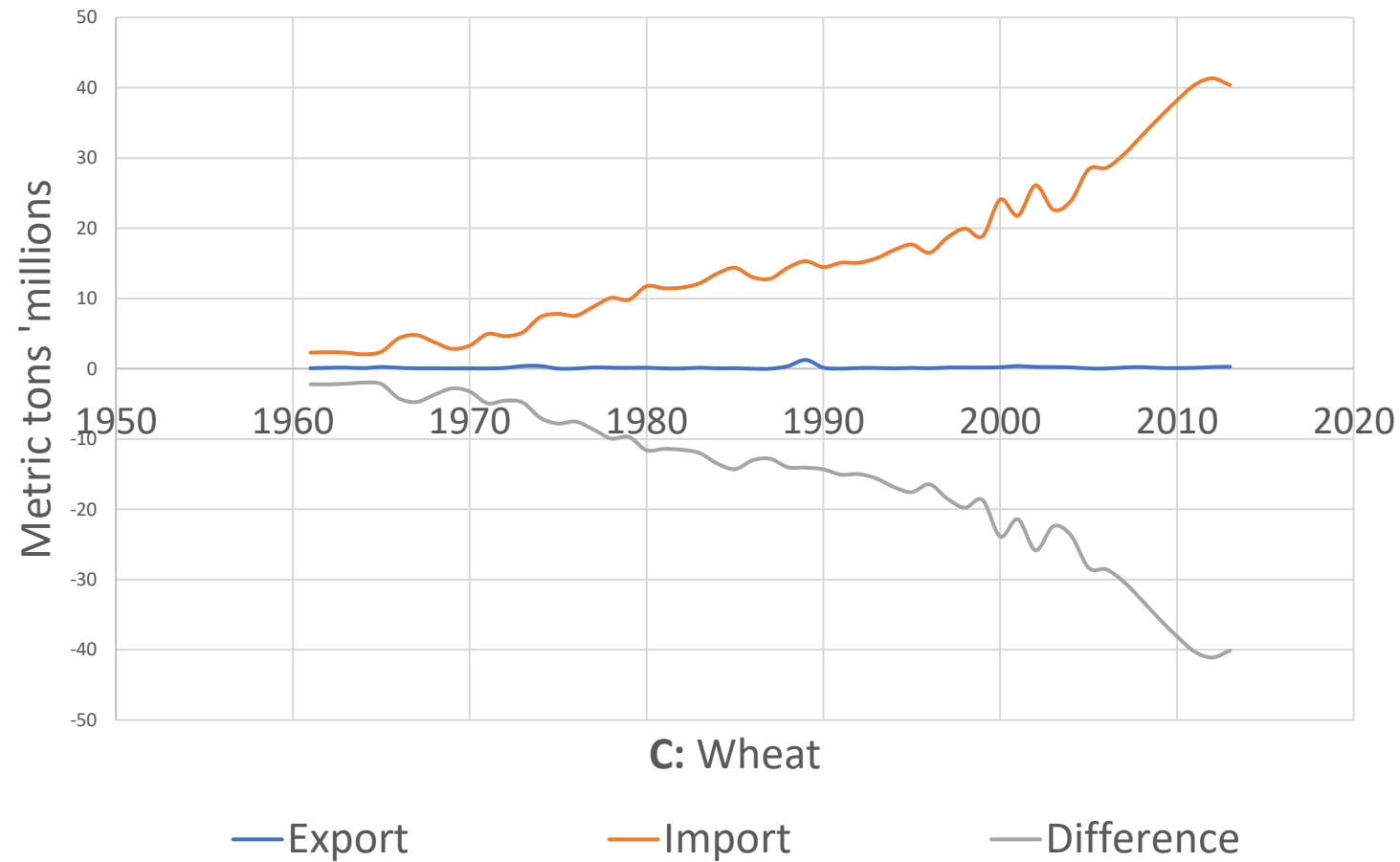


**B: Rice**

— Export — Import — Difference

(B) (Abera et al., 2019; Covic et al., 2019; Karimov et al., 2019) Based on FAOstat data

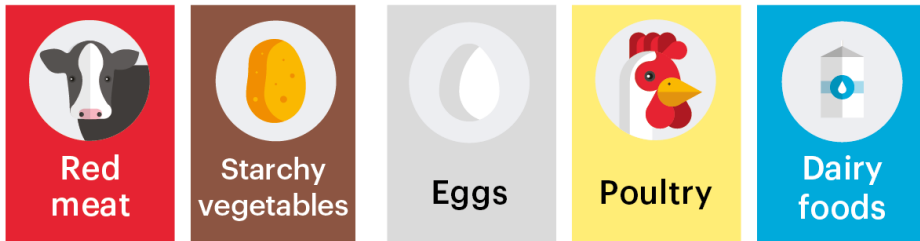
## Africa's balance of trade for Wheat (C)



C. Africa Wheat trade balance, million metric tons

# Current Intakes vs Planetary Health Diet

## Limited intake

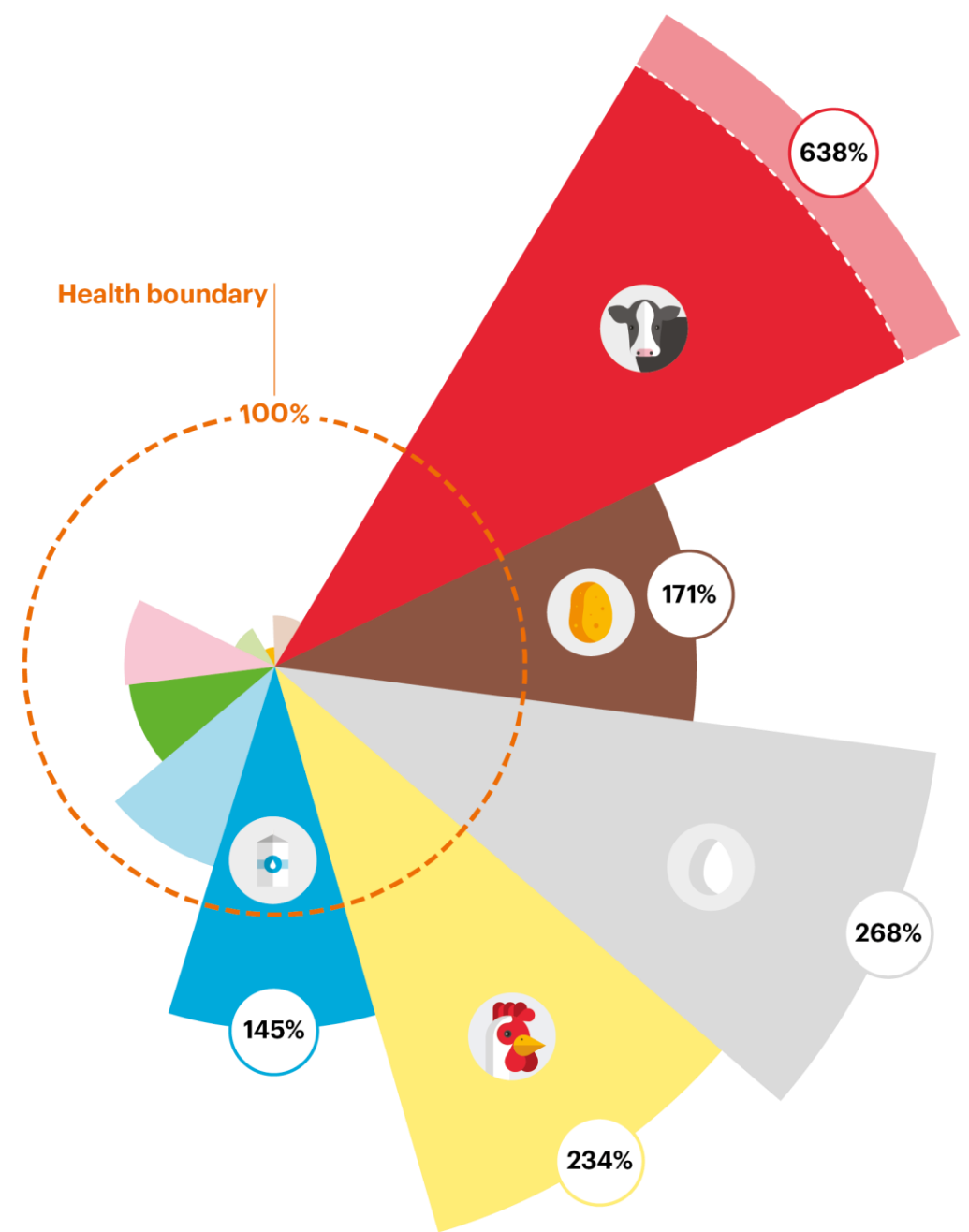


## Optional foods

## Emphasized foods



## North America



Source: EAT Lancet Commission, 2019

# Current Intakes vs Planetary Health Diet

Sub-Saharan Africa

Limited intake

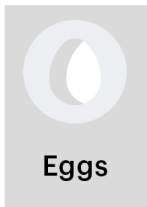


Red meat

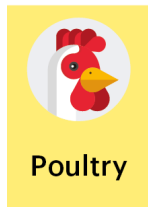


Starchy vegetables

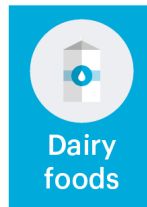
Optional foods



Eggs



Poultry



Dairy foods

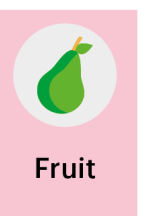
Emphasized foods



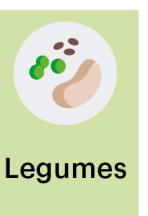
Fish



Vegetables



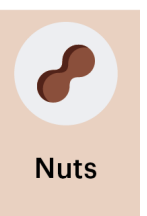
Fruit



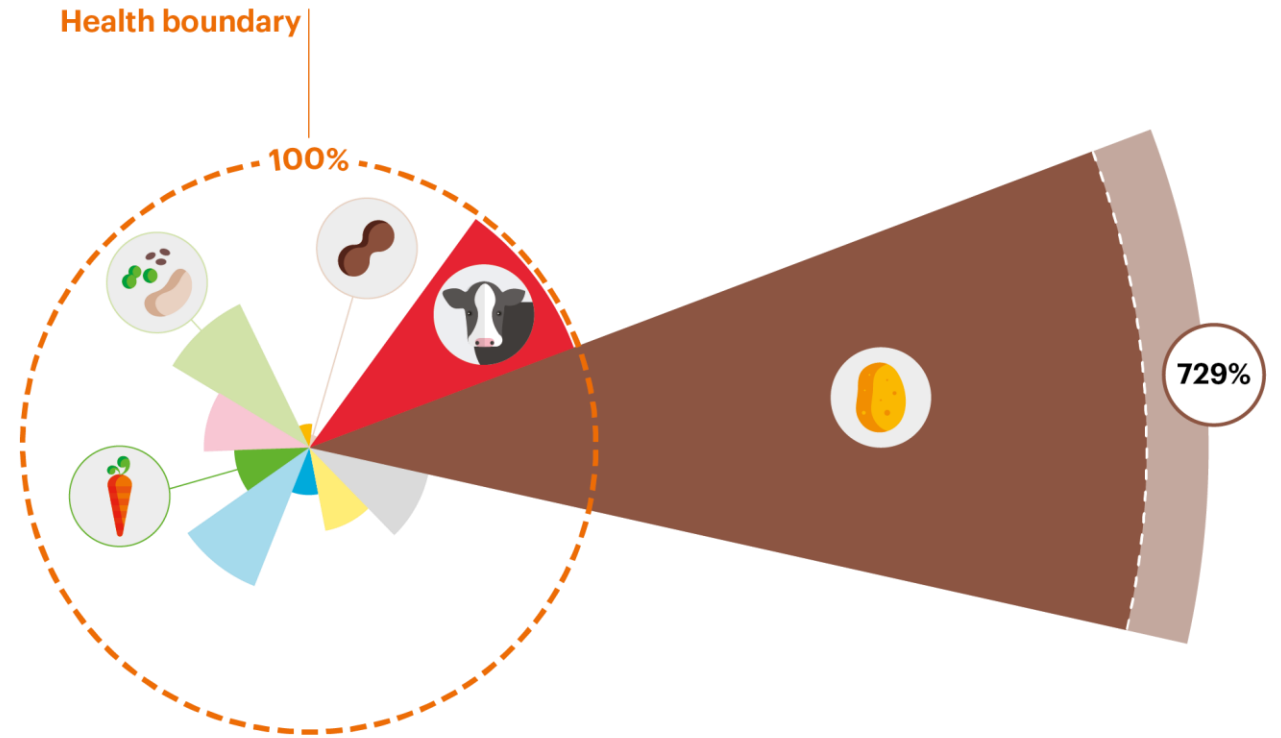
Legumes



Whole grains



Nuts

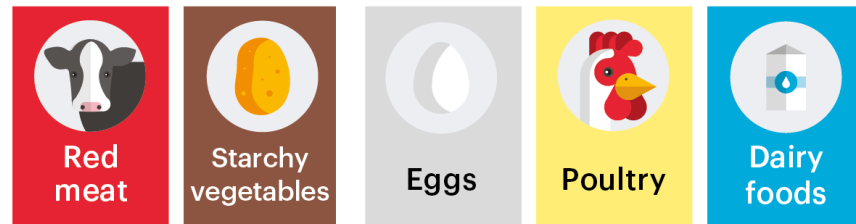


Source: EAT Lancet Commission, 2019

# Current Intakes vs Planetary Health Diet

Limited intake

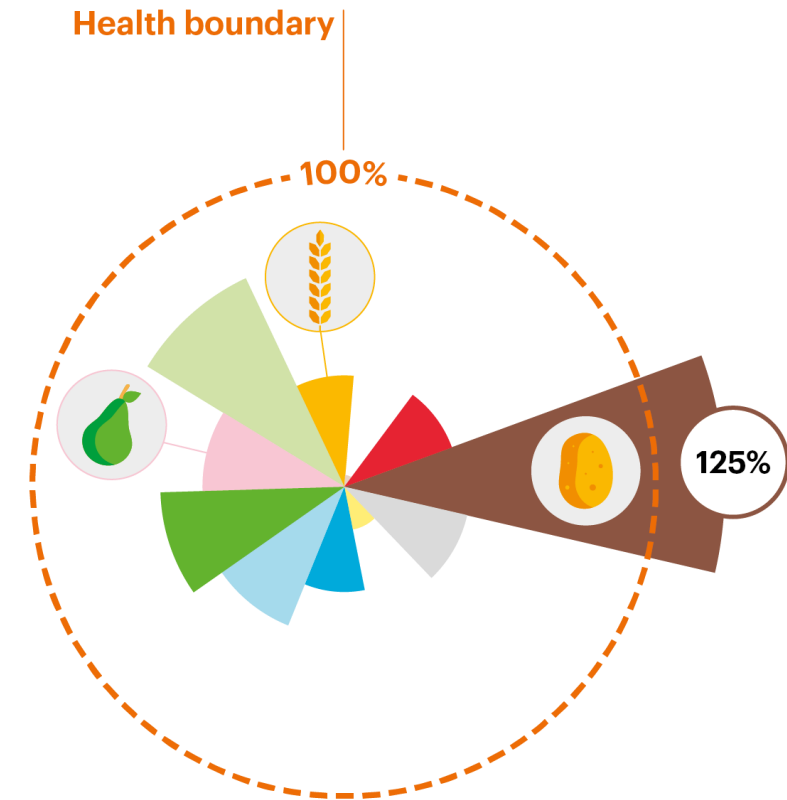
Optional foods



Emphasized foods

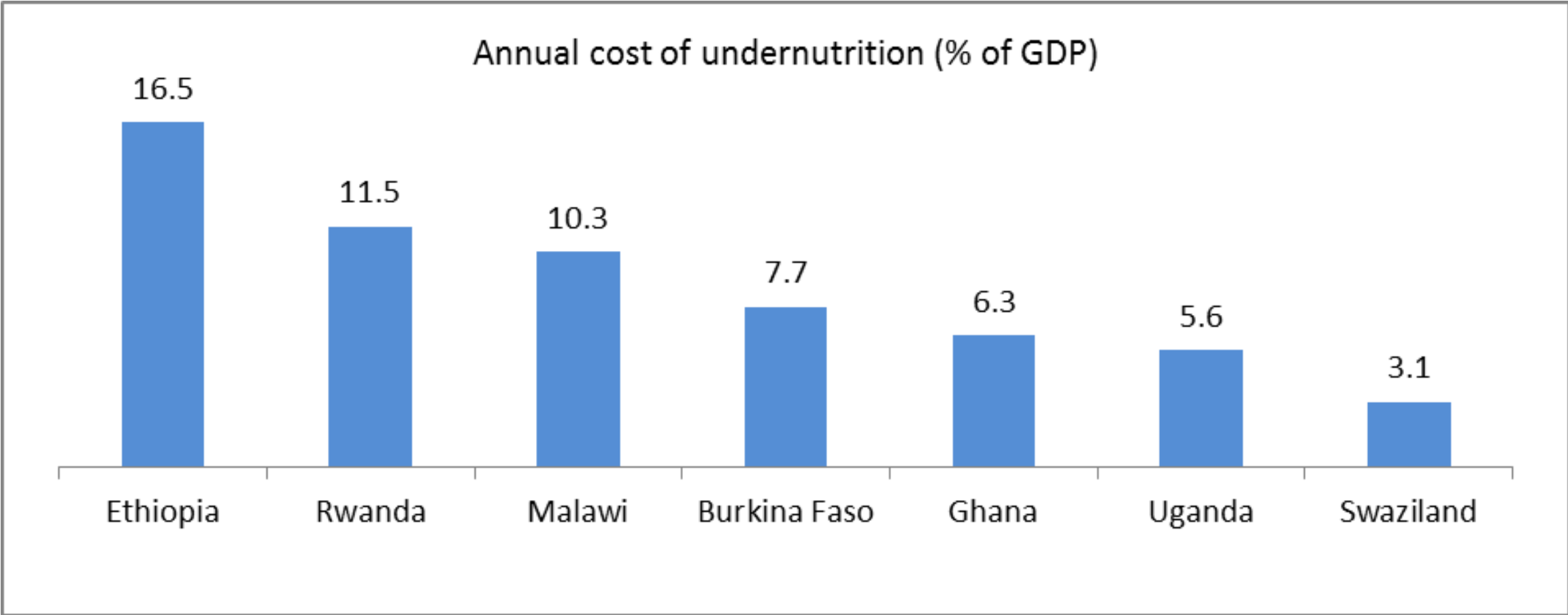


South Asia



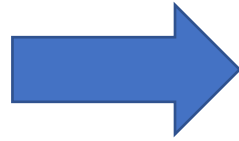


# Undernutrition is very costly to countries



African Union Commission et al. (2014).

# Agriculture production intensification: Crops



Monoculture  
Fertilizer  
Pesticides

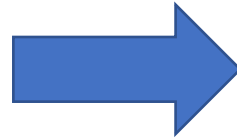


Residues



Inadequate policy, regulatory instruments & surveillance, to manage & mitigate

# Agriculture production intensification: Livestock



Anti-microbials  
Pesticides

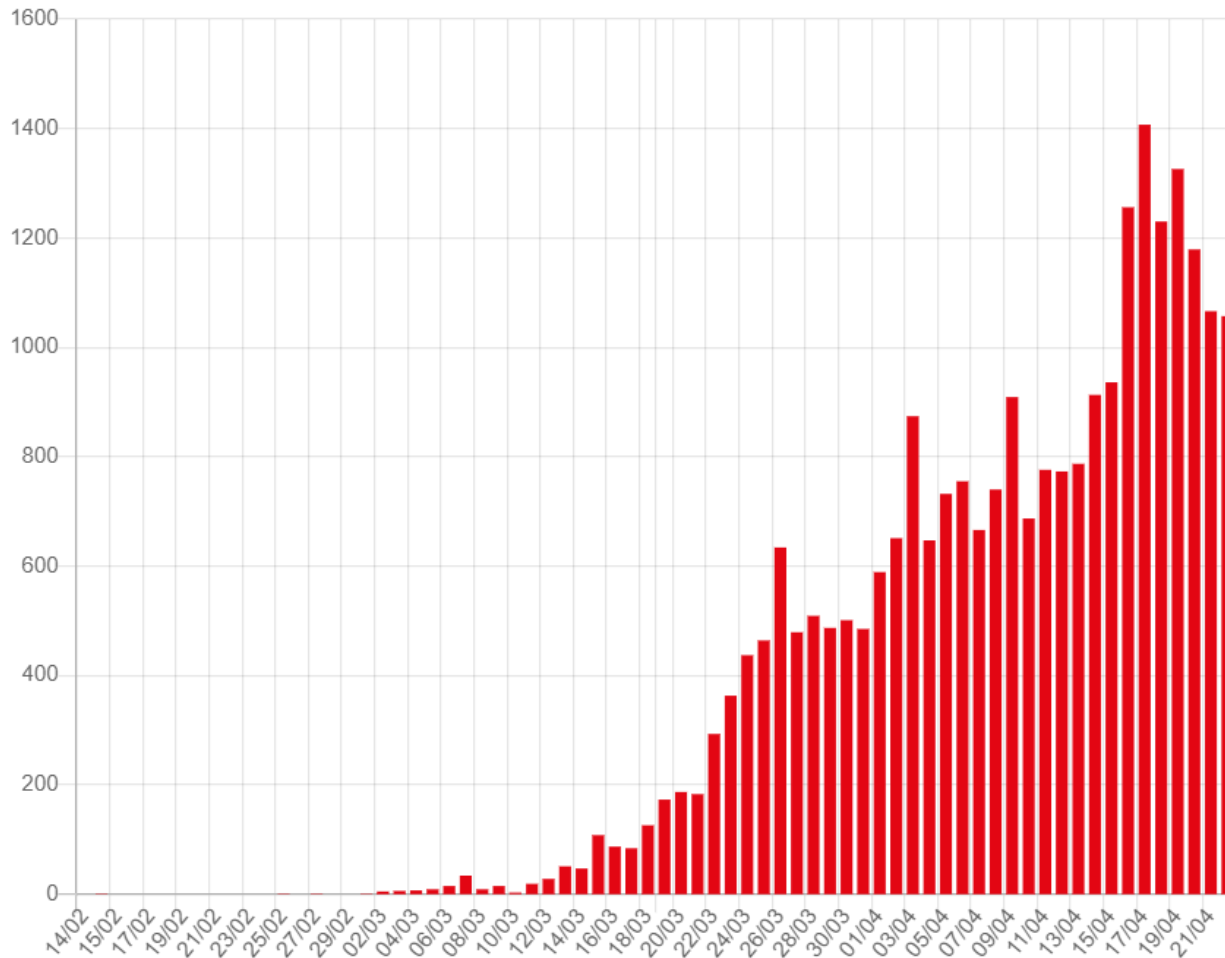


Residues  
Antimicrobial resistance

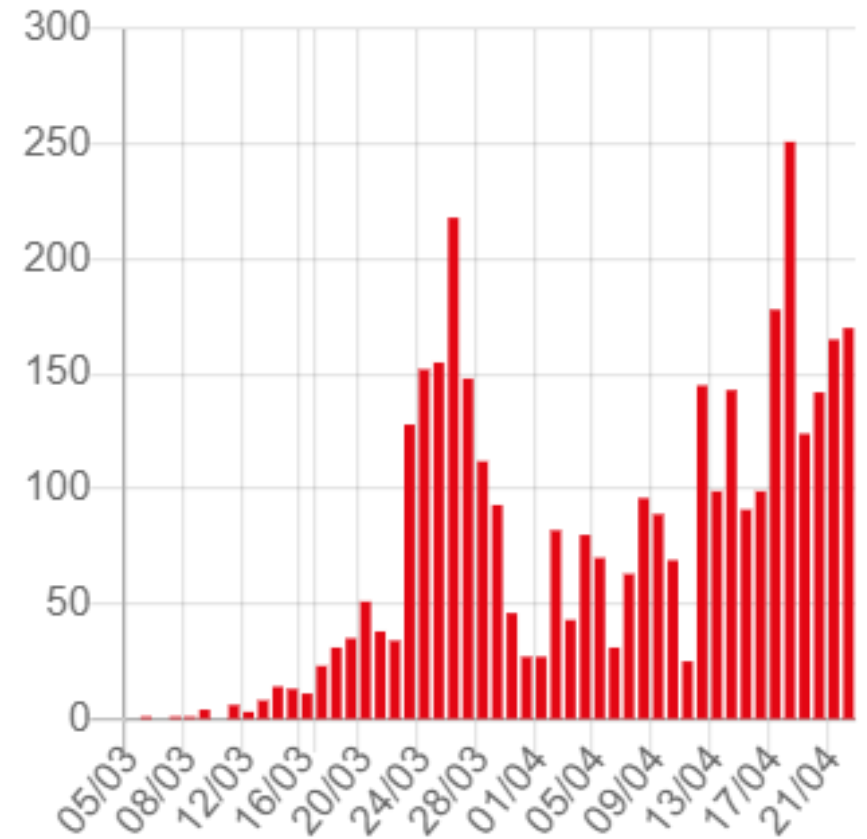
Inadequate policy, regulatory instruments & surveillance, to manage & mitigate

# Covid-19 has arrived

**Africa 22 April 2020 (25 808 +ve cases)**



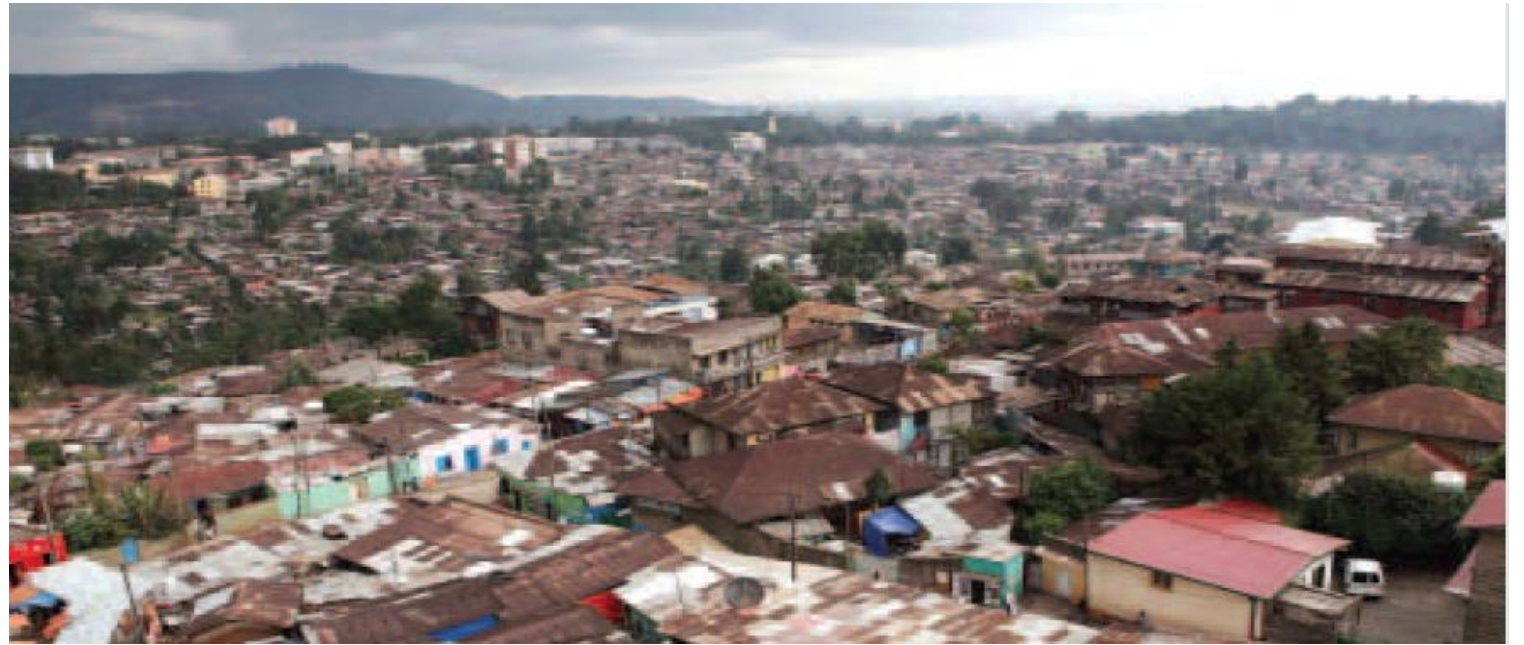
**South Africa 22 April 2020 (3 635 +cases)**



COVID-19

Challenges of  
washing hands  
without  
portable water





There are significant challenges on social distancing and food provision

---

Source: Bekele, 2020

# Key messages on the Impact of hunger on food security

- Malnutrition in all its forms is a significant risk to population health
- Malnutrition is a significant economic burden to countries
- The multiple challenges to current and future food security call for rethinking the direction we should take for sustainable development
- COVID-19 will make the situation significantly worse
- Is there anything we can do different?



RESEARCH  
PROGRAM ON  
Agriculture for  
Nutrition  
and Health

LED BY IFPRI



[a4nh.cgiar.org](http://a4nh.cgiar.org)

*Photo: Photoshare/M. Hasan*