

Food Insecurities in Egypt:
with special reference to dependency, vulnerabilities
and food subsidies

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With key concepts of dependency and vulnerabilities, this paper analyzes food insecurities in Egypt under Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi administration since June 2014 up to the aftermath of the COVID-19 and the Ukraine Crisis. As one of the top wheat importers in the world, Egypt has also been hit by the Black Sea blockade, since it had been heavily reliant on wheat import from Russia and Ukraine. This paper clarifies how Sisi's Egypt has strengthened its dependency on external debts to invest in extravagant megaprojects that are beyond its financial repayment capabilities and only benefit limited parts of the population, especially military-related; most of the vulnerable population, especially urban poor/lower-middle income families and individuals have been left as most vulnerable to external shocks, while shrinking food subsidies and poor-targeted conditional cash transfer only remain as their limited tangible safety nets.

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Food Insecurity in Lebanon amid Economic Crisis

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This study examines the issue of food security in Lebanon since 2020, focusing on wheat and bread. As a result of economic crisis due to the devaluation of the local currency and inflation, many Lebanese citizens faced difficulties in purchasing food, leading to an increase in food insecurity among residents, including Syrian refugees. Russia's invasion of Ukraine further worsened the situation, as Lebanon heavily relies on wheat imports from the two countries. The government attempted to address this issue by subsidizing wheat imports and regulating bread prices; however, these measures have been insufficient due to the lack of food security policy as well as fiscal resources.

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Structural Challenges to Food Security in Tunisia

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This paper examines the structural issues about the food security in Tunisia and its situation after 2020 in relation to domestic factors and global issues. The main causes of current political and economic crises in Tunisia are as follows.

After independence, Tunisia fell into dependence on imports of grains, feeds, and refined oil due to domestic low value-added industries, unstable employment, and a vulnerable agricultural sector. Successive Tunisian governments have implemented various subsidy policies to support the livelihood of people and to maintain their power while demonstrating their legitimacy. This is the main reason for the chronic national budget deficit.

However, because of the socio-economic turmoil following the 2011 "revolution", Tunisia's tourism industry stagnated and immigrant remittances were also sluggish, resulting in a significant decrease in foreign currency income. The COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have pushed up market prices for grains, feeds and energy. The war has also disrupted logistics, then Tunisia has suffered from severe inflation.

Tunisia's natural and technological constraints and institutional deficiencies in food production have resulted in low productivity and extremely low self-sufficiency. Moreover, worsening water risks due to climate change have increased the vulnerability of Tunisia's agricultural sector, but overall export sophistication to finance food imports has yet to be achieved. Fiscal crises caused by multiple factors require even higher debt and unpopular structural adjustments. It is a vicious circle that leads to food insecurity, riots and socio-economic crises.

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Trajectories of Diverse Socialism in Central America and the Caribbean: Focusing on the Sandinista National Liberation Front in Nicaragua

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During the Cold War, various socialist governments were established in Central America and the Caribbean, and a number of these forces were active as major political parties up to the present oftentimes revised their political orientations. First, this study aimed to elucidate the diversity of these lefts and their characteristics. After a brief investigation on the academic trends of comparative communism until the 1980s, the study examined three cases: an overview of long-term changes in the one-party system of the Communist Party in Cuba, activities of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) and the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD) formed by Juan Bosch (who was ousted by the civil war in the Dominican Republic in the 1960s), and democratic socialism developed by Michal Manley of Jamaica in the 1970s and the subsequent trends of the People's National Party (PNP).

Given this survey, we focused on Nicaragua to explain the transformation of Daniel Ortega's FSLN government into an authoritarian one after taking power in the fair election of 2006. We raise two factors. First, the FSLN government was dependent on foreign support, such as ALBA, which was unable to fully maintain social policies since circa 2018 after failing to find a new donor after the death of Hugo Chávez. Second, the Ortega-Alemán Pact and the split of the main opposition weakened the functions of political parties to aggregate and represent the interests of the people.

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