

Forum: GA2 - Economic and Financial Committee (ECOFIN)

Issue: The question of fighting poverty in the horn of Africa

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¹Introduction

The African continent is once more facing a crucial problem- hunger and poverty in the Horn of Africa that encompasses Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Eritrea. These countries in the African continent are enduring underdevelopment in political and socioeconomic spheres. The Horn of Africa is a sub-Saharan area, one of the most food-insecure regions facing the negative effects of climate changes – primarily severe and prolonged period of droughts - that make living conditions almost insufferable.



Concerns about the drought in the Horn of Africa escalated, when the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, FEWSNET, stated that this year was among the driest since 1950.

Correspondingly, the UN office for the co-ordination of humanitarian affairs (OCHA) has made a prediction that around 10 million people in such parts as Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Djibouti will face death by starvation if not provided with humanitarian support.²

Back in the 1960's people from Africa on average used to walk 4 kilometers every morning to get freshwater, and 20 kilometers every day to get to high school. Now, 50 years later, these conditions have changed very little. The people of Africa deserve to see life in rural areas as a choice and not a necessity, without leaving their homeland seeking for a better life conditions.

¹ "Strange Tales from the Horn of Africa." *Martinplaut*, 3 Aug. 2015, martinplaut.wordpress.com/2015/08/03/strange-tales-from-the-horn-of-africa/.

² Ford, Liz. "Africa's Latest Food Crisis Needs a Long-Term Strategy." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 4 July 2011, www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jul/04/horn-africa-drought-food-shortages.

All nations must take into consideration the fact that there can't be a permanent solution of the issue. Therefore, the Nations' role is to provide and implement a long-term solution.

Definition of Key Terms

OCHA - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

IFAD- International Fund for Agricultural Development³

ILO- International Trade Organization

HDI- Human Development Index

WFP- World Food Program

Malnutrition- lack of proper nutrition

Background info

The Horn of Africa is located near to the red sea, river Nile is coming out from its heart, originally enriched with natural gas, gold and uranium plus a fruitful land. However, countries like Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somali are typically known for its religious and ethnic based violence and discriminations, minimal record of respecting democratic and human rights, high crime and violence rates.

The problems of equality and equity in the question of the usage of economic resources, and the access to political power, especially among the people of Somalia and Ethiopia, are the starting point of nemesis and underdevelopment in the Horn.

The ethnic dimension of socioeconomic crisis and poverty in the Horn of Africa is so complex and historically enduring that it can be called the source of any threat to the countries in that region.

³ "Lack of Infrastructure, Jobs Drives Rural Youth to Cities, Says UN Rural Poverty Agency Head." *UN News Center*, United Nations, 3 Apr. 2017, www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56483#.WclHNExePdd.

Key Issues

Of the four major categories of human development, countries in the Horn of Africa are located in what UNDP labeled “Low Human Development” zone.⁴

The Horn of Africa is facing severe hunger and poverty.

Major Parties Involved

Countries:

UK,

Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia;

Organisations:

Save the Children UK, Oxfam, Christian Aid

Timeline

HDI’s five years continuous annual report unveils reality for the horn: They are either facing stagnation, or taking step back.

In 2010, Ethiopia was ranked 157th and Djibouti 147th of the 169 countries examined in the report.

In 2011 187 countries were examined. Eritrea was 177th, Djibouti 165th and Ethiopia 174th.

2011- catastrophic drought struck the Horn of Africa, affecting Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. Over 12 million people were in immediate need of food aid.

By 2013, Eritrea cascaded into 181st and Ethiopia 173rd out of 186 countries in the list. In the year 2014, the HDI for Djibouti went down to 170th, Eritrea to 182nd and Ethiopia to 173rd place, out of 187 countries studied.

Previous Attempts

⁴ “The Horn of Africa and Underdevelopment: The Cultural Challenge.” *INSAMER*, insamer.com/tr/the-horn-of-africa-and-underdevelopment-the-cultural-challenge_395.html.

Since 2012, several productive seasons of average or above average rainfall and low food prices, along with a sufficient humanitarian support, have considerably reduced the number of people suffering from famine.

However, despite these improvements, the malnutrition rates remain very high, especially in the south of Somalia: during the 2013, an estimated 258,000 people died in Somalia from hunger, half of them being children younger than 5 years.

Medicine and medical supplies were distributed to hospitals and clinics across the country.

Emergency food assistance was distributed.

NGO's are also implementing drip irrigation schemes in Ethiopia to ensure water's better consumption of the roots of the crop to avoid the loss of excess water.

Possible Solutions

Possible solutions of the issue could be encouraging schools to install rain harvesting containers and repair existing water sources.

To advise on which crops to plant, encouraging farmers to move away from corn, which doesn't grow well with deficit or excess of water, to millet, sorghum or pigeon peas, which are more resilient.

To provide several essential aspects such as food security and nutrition, nevertheless the main aim should be the fight poverty at the region and attend to restructure the agriculture as a decent income-generating activity.

To practice approaches that will help vulnerable people to exist independent dependent from the unpredictable rainfall.

To identify the sustainable population number for the Horn of Africa, based on what the countries arable land can actually feed. The population of the Horn of Africa has increased from circa 35 mio. in 1970 to above 100 mio. in 2010. Could a population growth program pave the way to a sustainable future for the people living in the Horn of Africa ?

Appendices

I. "United Nations News Centre." *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/News/.

II. "Home." *CARE*, www.careinternational.org.uk/.

III. West, Eleanor. "8 Shocking Horn of Africa Statistics." *Food Republic*, 16 Sept. 2011, www.foodrepublic.com/2011/09/16/8-shocking-horn-of-africa-statistics/.

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1. Ford, Liz. "Africa's Latest Food Crisis Needs a Long-Term Strategy." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 4 July 2011, www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jul/04/horn-africa-drought-food-shortages.
2. "Lack of Infrastructure, Jobs Drives Rural Youth to Cities, Says UN Rural Poverty Agency Head." *UN News Center*, United Nations, 3 Apr. 2017, www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=56483#.WcIHNExePdd.
3. "Strange Tales from the Horn of Africa." *Martinplaut*, 3 Aug. 2015, martinplaut.wordpress.com/2015/08/03/strange-tales-from-the-horn-of-africa/.
4. "The Horn of Africa and Underdevelopment: The Cultural Challenge." *INSAMER*, www.insamer.com/tr/the-horn-of-africa-and-underdevelopment-the-cultural-challenge_395.html.
5. "The Horn of Africa and Underdevelopment: The Cultural Challenge." *INSAMER*, www.insamer.com/tr/the-horn-of-africa-and-underdevelopment-the-cultural-challenge_395.html.