

# The Right to Food

Lecture Series:  
Development Policy XXX

Technische Universität  
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# Content

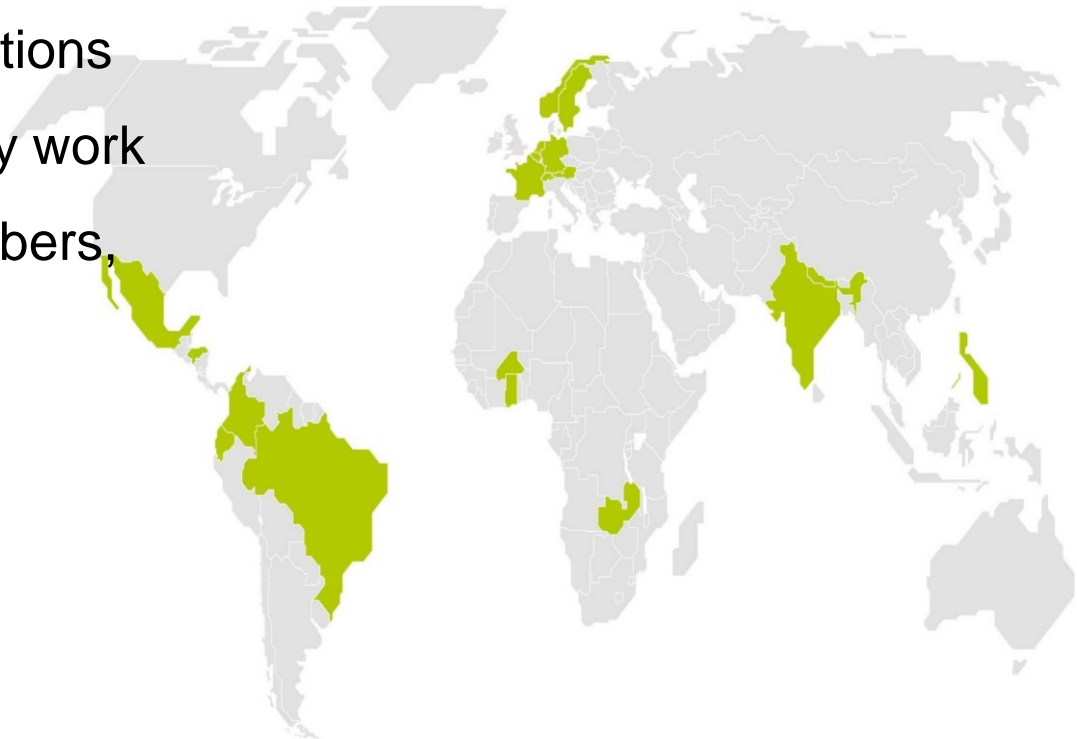


1. FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN)
2. The World's Hungry - Some Facts
3. Main Causes of Hunger
4. The Right to Food in International Law
5. The Normative Content of the Right to Food
6. Implementation of the Right to Food
7. State obligations
8. Development Aid Flows
9. Conclusion

# 1. FIAN



- FIAN = FoodFirst Information and Action Network
- Unique International Human Rights Organisation for the Right to Food
- Founded 1986 in Heidelberg, Germany
- 19 national sections and co-ordinations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe with approx. 6,000 members
- Advisory status at United Nations
- Focus on case and advocacy work
- German section: 1,300 members, based in Cologne, local group in Berlin



## 2. The World's Hungry– Some Facts



Assumption:

Policies to fight hunger need to be based  
on human rights  
to become successful in the long term.

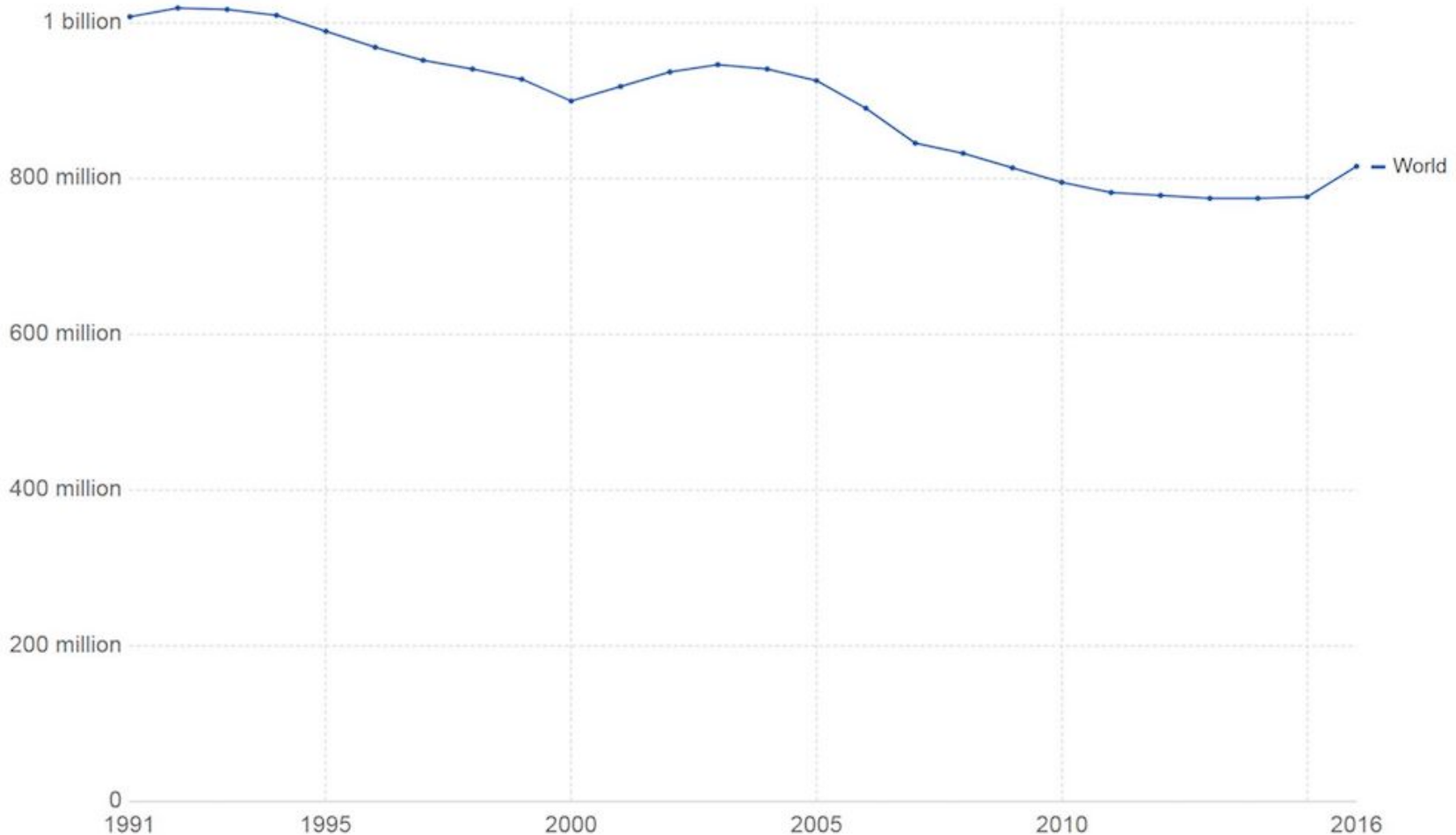
**Why do we need to talk about the right to food  
to fight hunger?**

## 2. The World's Hungry – Some Facts



### Global population defined as undernourished

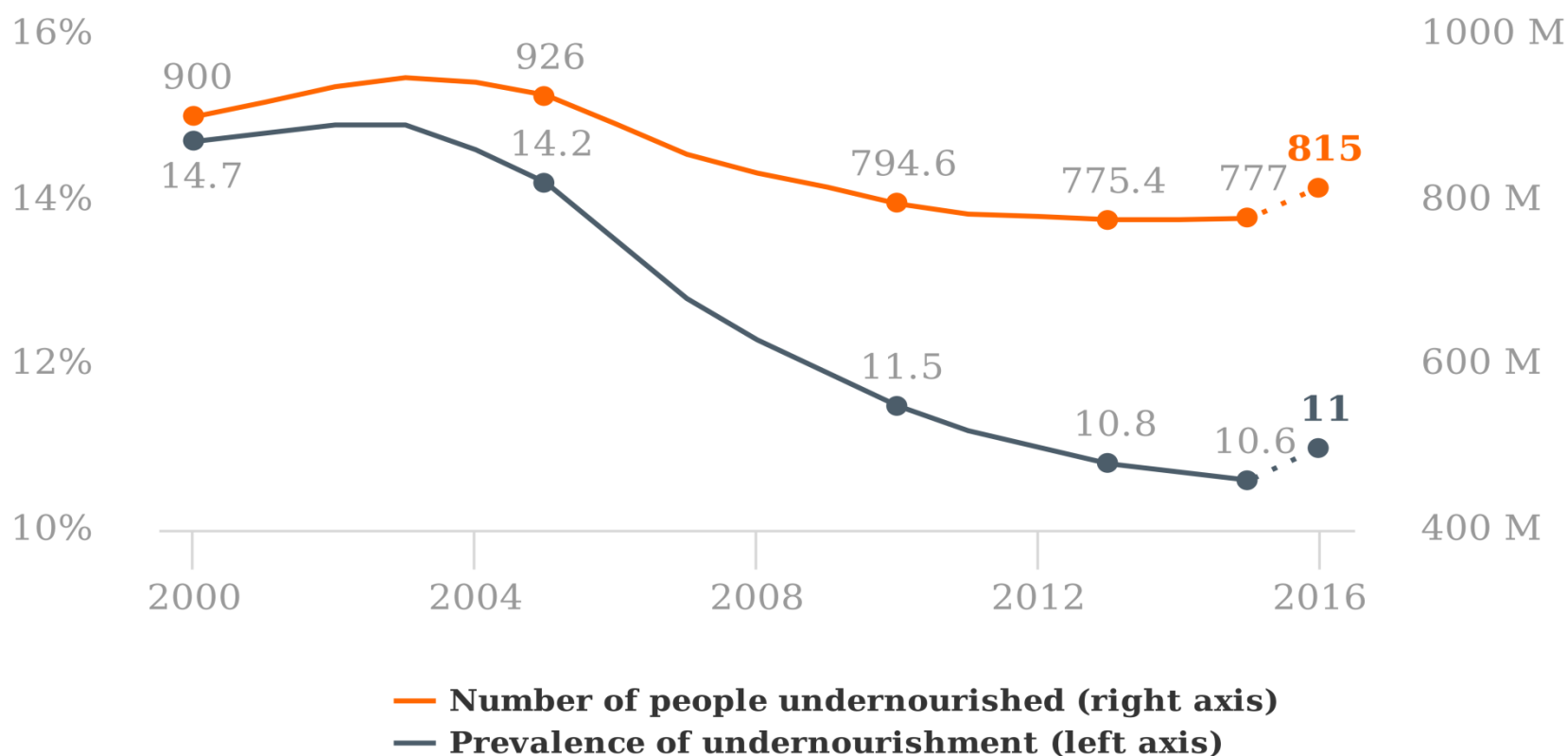
Total number of people who are defined as undernourished. An individual is considered to be undernourished when dietary energy consumption is less than a pre-determined threshold. This threshold is country specific and is measured in terms of the number of kilocalories required to conduct sedentary or light activities.



## 2. The World's Hungry – Some Facts



The number of people undernourished in the world has been on the rise since 2014, reaching an estimated 815 million in 2016



NOTE: Prevalence and number of undernourished people in the world, 2000–2016. Figures for 2016 are projected estimates. SOURCE: FAO.

## 2. The World's Hungry – Some Facts



Among the hungry: How high is the percentage of those persons who suffer from hunger due to disasters during short periods?



**10 percent**

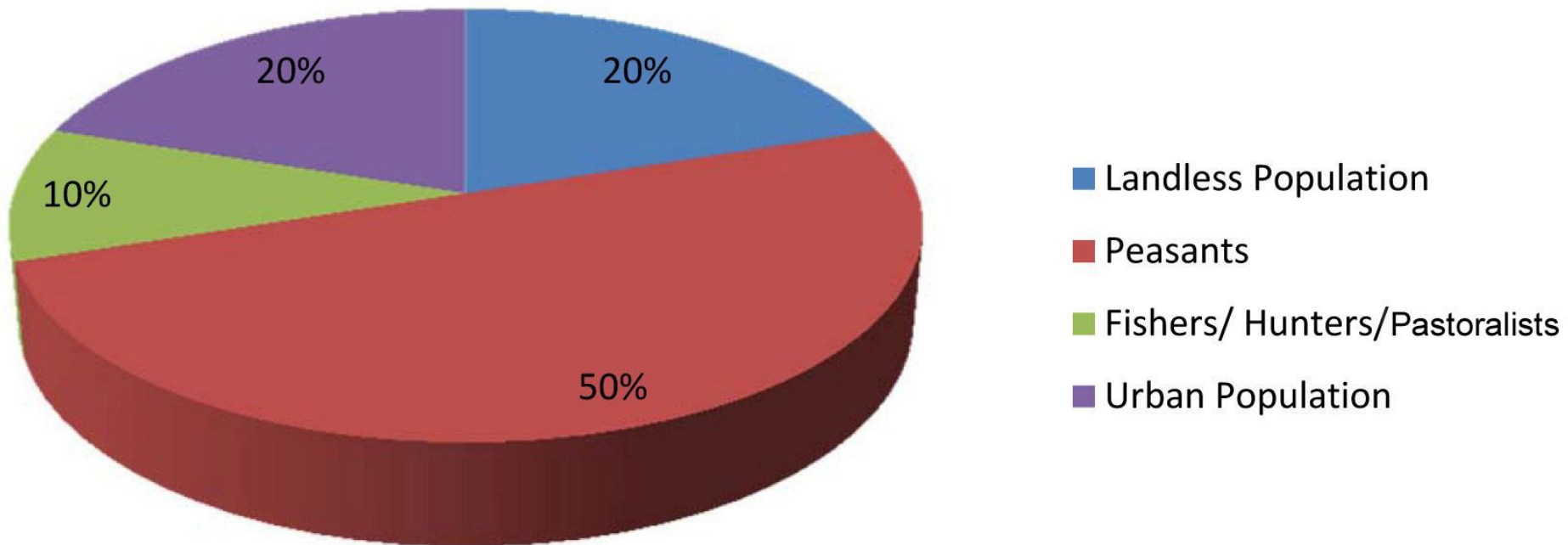
**→ 90% of the hungry experience hunger as chronic hunger.**

## 2. The World's Hungry – Some Facts



### Rates of Hunger

80% of the hungry live in rural areas, 70% of them are Women and girls



Source: United Nations Human Rights Council

## 2. The World's Hungry – Some Facts



**At the same time: small scale farms produce  
70% of global food.**

# 3. Main Causes of Hunger

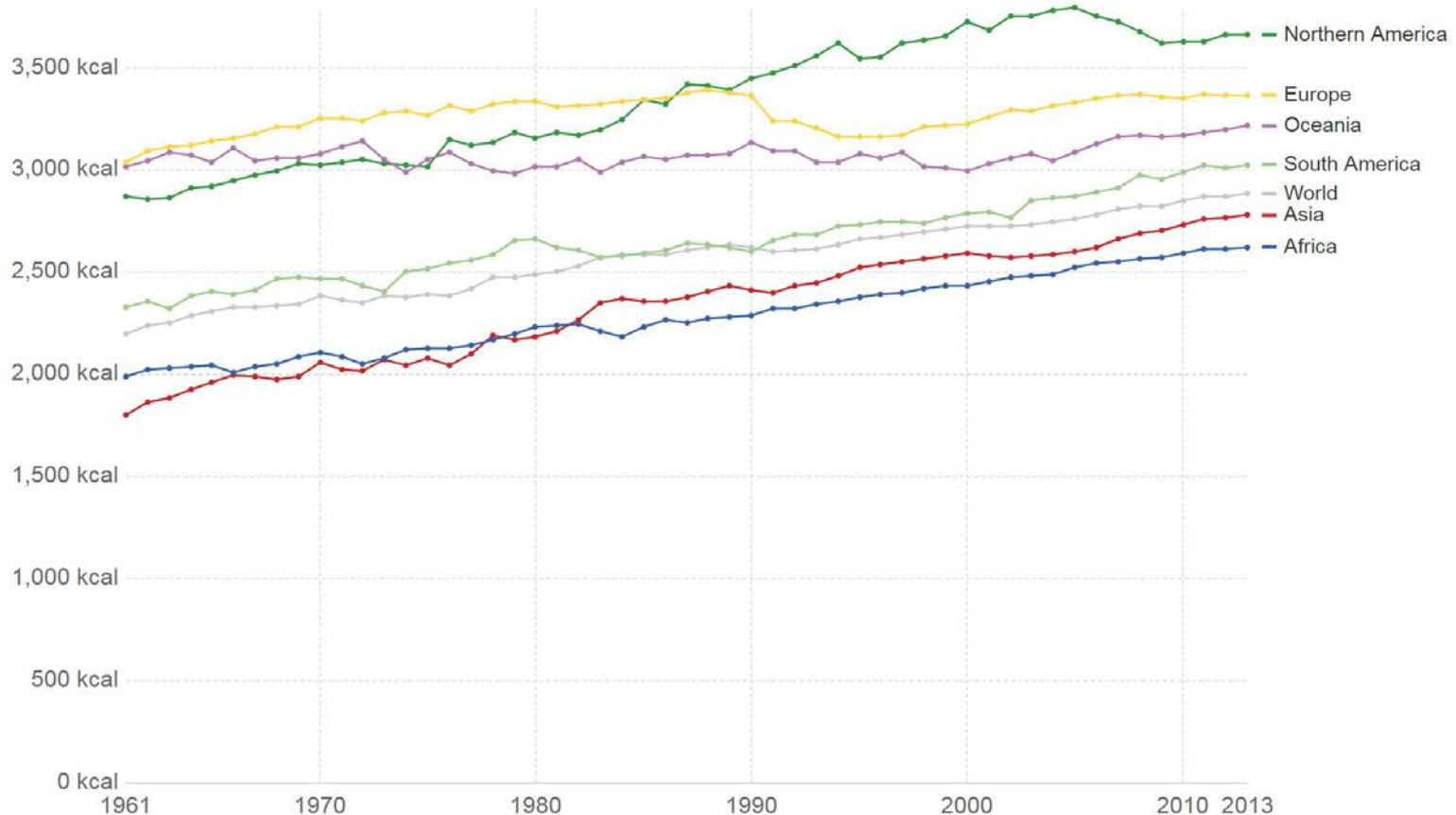


## Myth of hunger: not enough food available to feed the world?

### Food supply by region in kilocalories per person per day, 1961-2013

Our World  
in Data

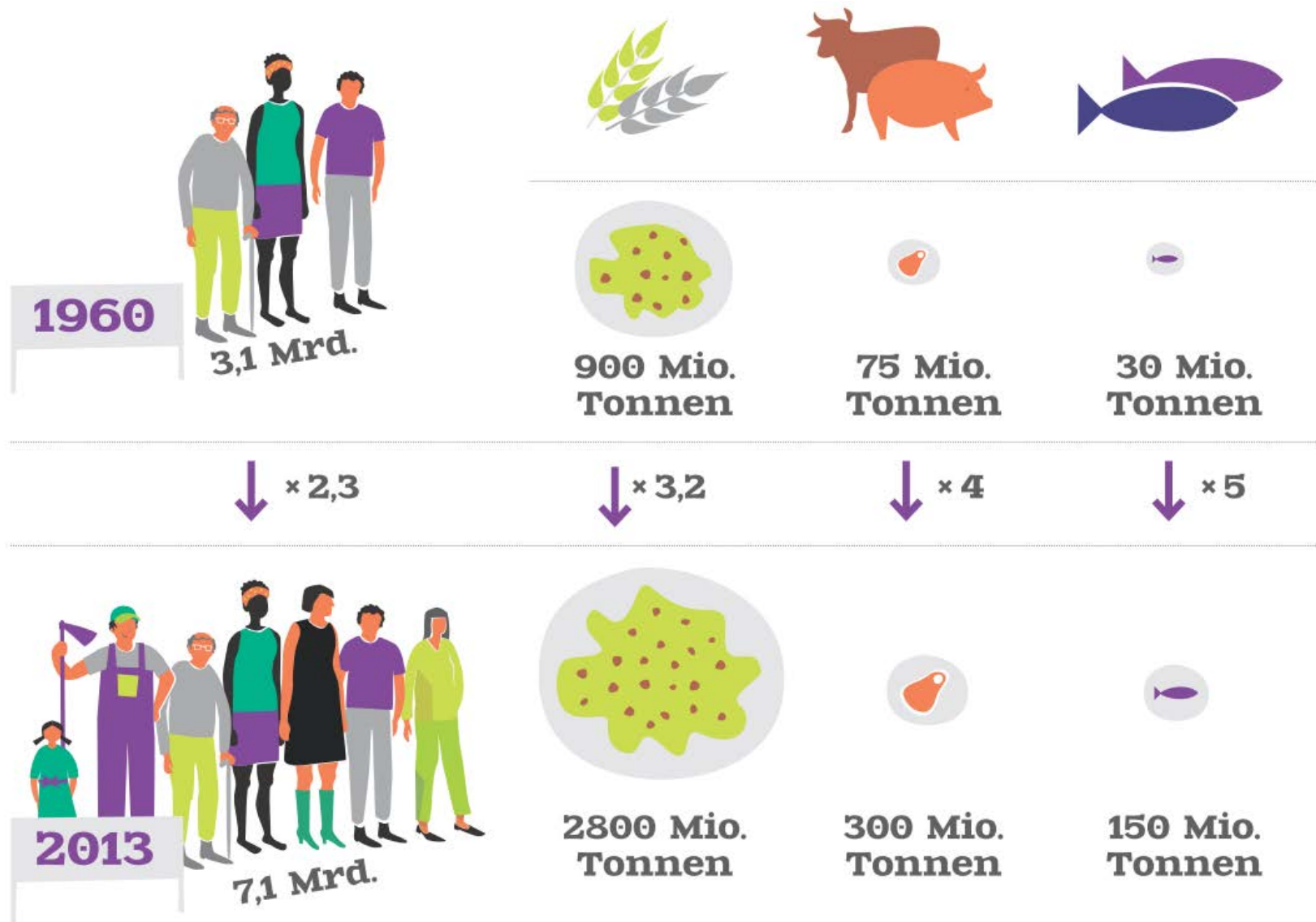
Daily per capita food supply by world region, measured on the basis of average caloric supply (kilocalories per person per day). Note that this measures the food available for consumption at the household level but does not account for any food wasted or not eaten at the consumption level.



Source: Daily caloric supply per capita long-term - FAO (2017)

OurWorldInData.org/food-per-person/ • CC BY-SA

# 3. Main Causes of Hunger



### 3. Main Causes of Hunger



The **Human Rights Council of the United Nations** has identified 5 main causes of hunger in rural areas (2013):

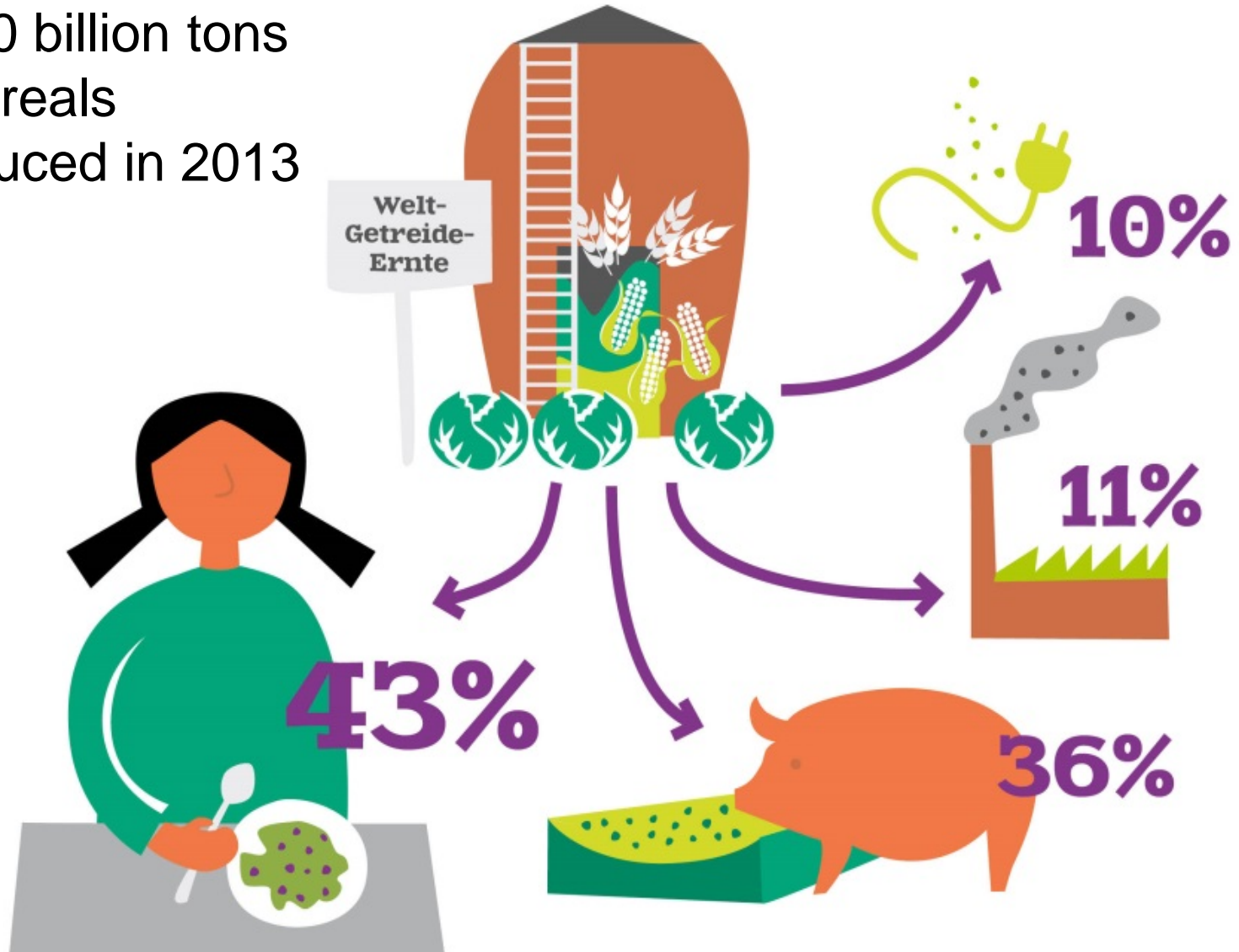
1. Expropriation of land, forced evictions and displacement
2. Gender Discrimination
3. Absence of agrarian reform and rural development policies
4. Lack of a minimum wage and social protection
5. Repression and criminalization of movements protecting the rights of people working in rural areas

**=> Hunger is not caused by insufficient food production**

[http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-75\\_en.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/RegularSession/Session19/A-HRC-19-75_en.pdf)

### 3. Main Causes of Hunger

2,800 billion tons  
of cereals  
produced in 2013



## 4. The Right to Food in International Law



**What is the advantage of the human right to food?**

a) It is internationally agreed:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (Art. 25):

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, ....”



## 4. The Right to Food in International Law



### What is the advantage of the human right to food?

b) It is part of international law:

- **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), (Art. 11)**
- **Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), (Preamble, Art. 14 & 24)**
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), (Art. 6)**

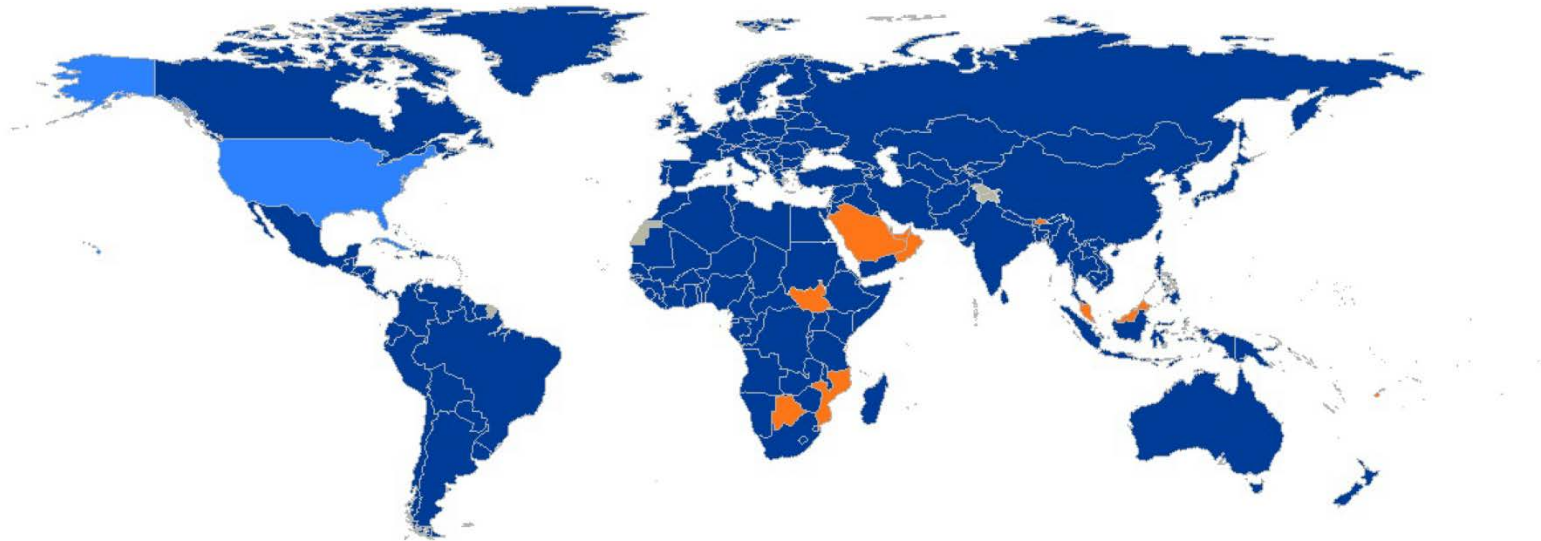


# 4. The Right to Food in International Law



International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Last Updated: 28 Nov 2017



Country Status

State Party (166) Signatory (4) No Action (27)

Definition and meta-data: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/MetadataRatificationStatus.pdf>

Source: Database of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) <https://treaties.un.org>

For application of treaties to overseas, non-self-governing and other territories, shown here in grey, see <https://treaties.un.org>

Note: The boundaries and the names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

## 4. The Right to Food in International Law



### **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Art. 11:**

1. *The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living (...) including adequate food (...) and to the continuous improvement of living conditions (...)*
2. *(...) the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger (...)*

## 4. The Right to Food in International Law



**What is the advantage of the human right to food?**

- c) It's legal/normative content is defined.
- d) The related state obligations are defined.
- e) It allows individual complaints at UN-level

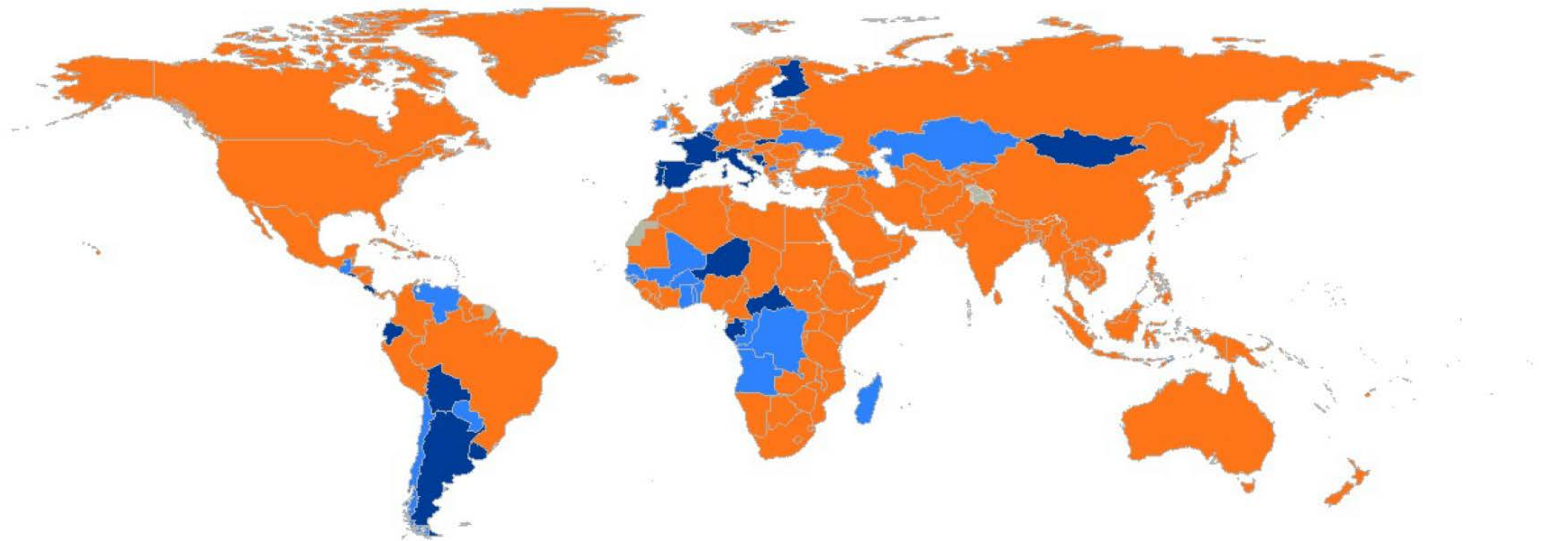


# 4. The Right to Food in International Law



## Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Last Updated: 14 Nov 2016



### Country Status

State Party (22) Signatory (26) No Action (150)

Definition and meta-data: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIIndicators/MetadataRatificationStatus.pdf>

Source: Database of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) <https://treaties.un.org>

For application of treaties to overseas, non-self-governing and other territories, shown here in grey, see <https://treaties.un.org>

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## 5. The Normative Content of the Right to Food



*The right to adequate food is realized when every woman, man and child alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.*

General Comment no. 12 on the right to food, § 6

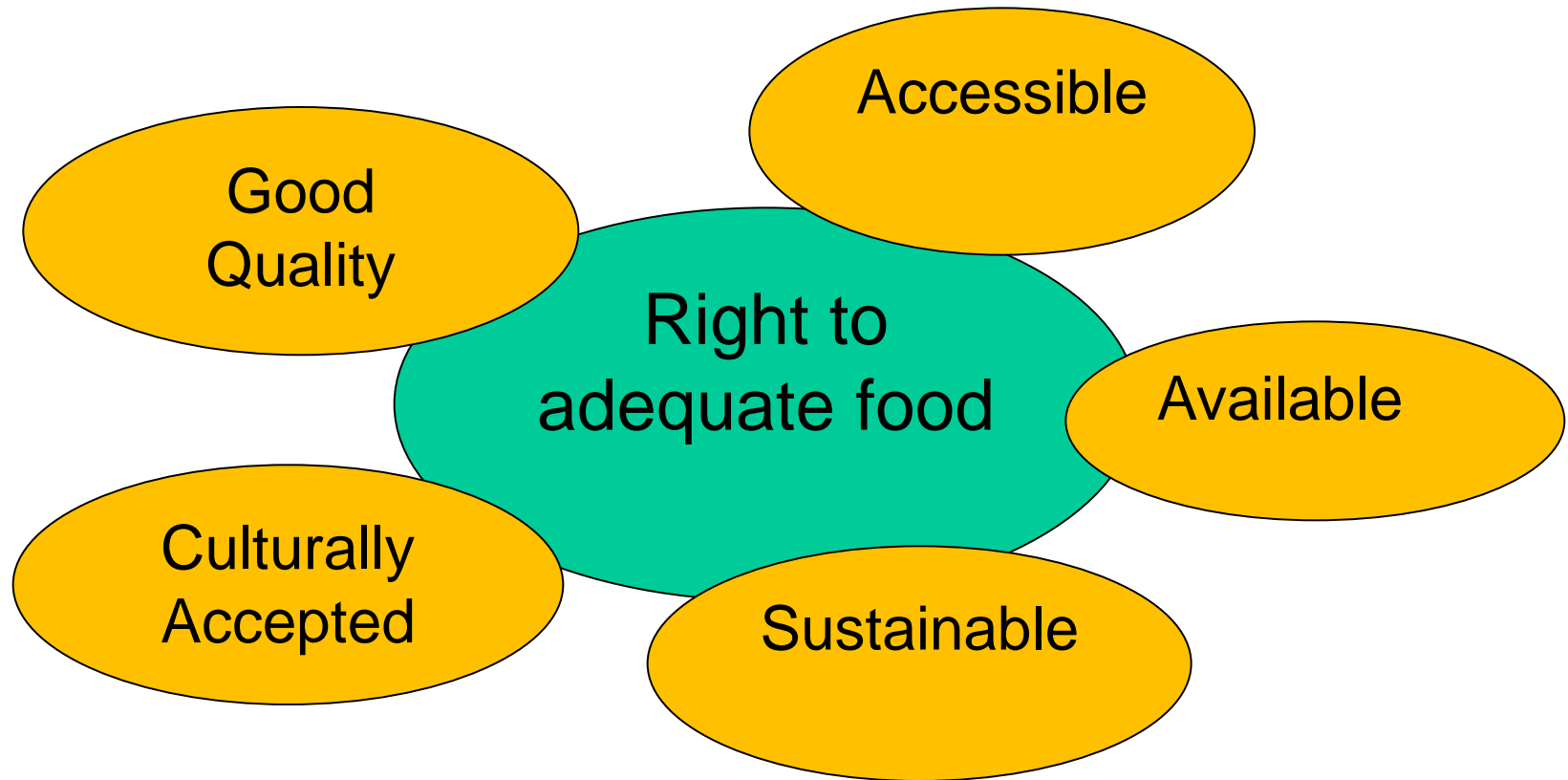
What does “adequate food” mean?



## 5. The Normative Content of the Right to Food



What does “adequate food” mean?



## 6. Implementation of the Right to Food



### General Principles

- » **P**articipation
- » **A**ccountability
- » **N**on-discrimination
- » **T**ransparency
- » **H**uman Dignity
- » **E**mpowerment
- » **R**ule of Law



**Priority to marginalised and discriminated groups**

## 7. State Obligations



**People have rights and states have related obligations:**

- »To respect the Right of Adequate Food  
(Do no harm)
- »To protect the Right of Adequate Food  
against third parties
- »To fulfil the Right of Adequate Food



## 7. State Obligations



**Obligation to co-operate internationally**

**=> Extra-territorial State Obligations (ETOs):**

Human rights obligations beyond state borders:

- Human rights impact of policies on people in foreign countries
- Human rights impact of policies of international organisations on people in foreign countries
- Human rights impact of companies under jurisdiction in foreign countries

## 8. Development Aid Flows



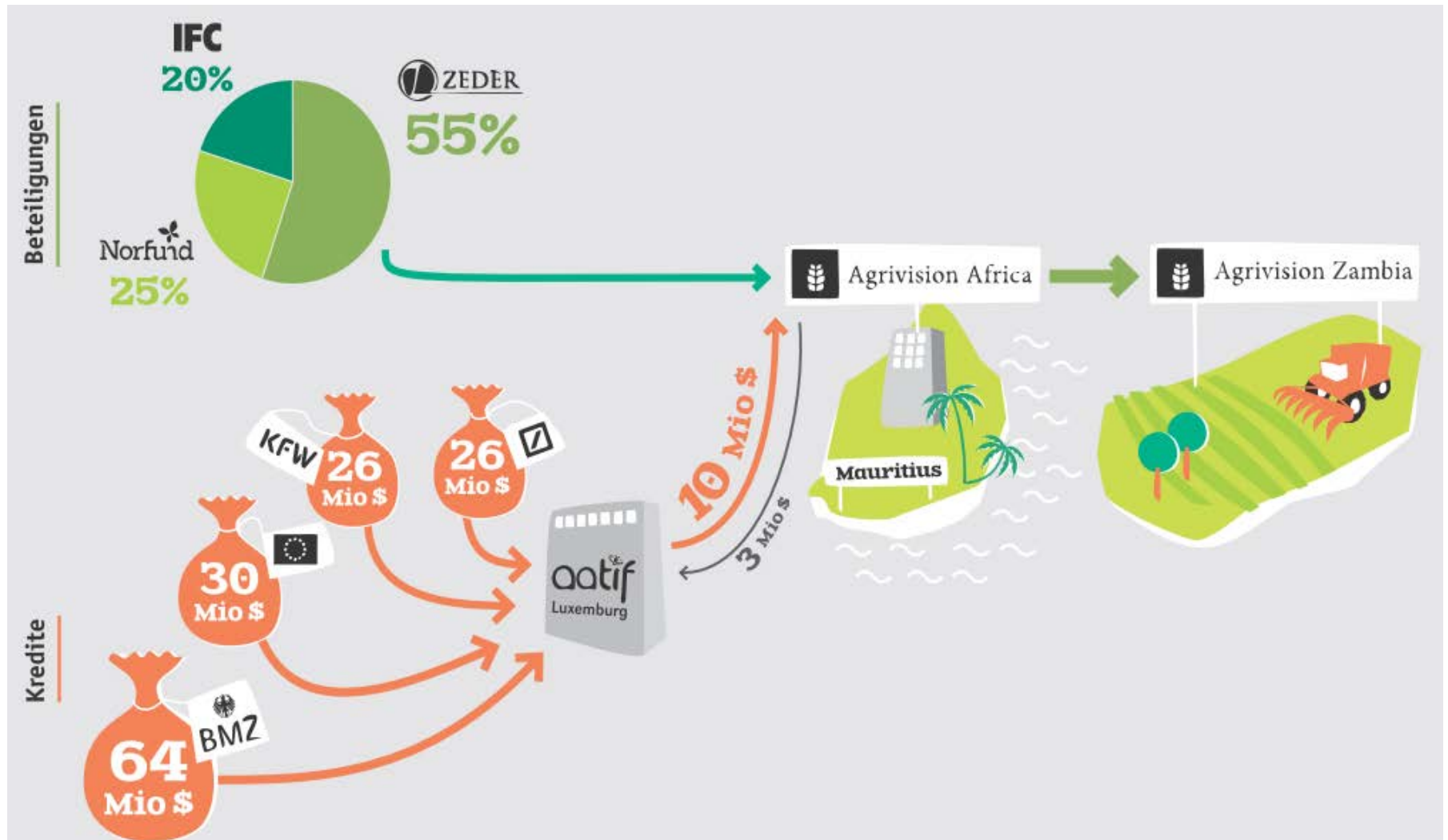
62% of the International Finance Corporation (IFC) investments are directed to banks, investment funds, insurances.

German governmental development aid for agrarian sector, 2017:

- KfW Development Bank approx. 512 Mio. €
- DEG (subsidiary of KfW): 723 Mio. €
- BMZ, One World without Hunger (SEWOH): 200 Mio. €
- GIZ approx. 51 Mio. €



## 8. Development Aid Flows



## 9. Conclusion



Policies to fight hunger need to be based on a human rights approach to become successful in the long term because the right to food:

- Is internationally agreed, international law and defined.
- Gives priority to marginalised and discriminated groups.
- Addresses the power imbalances which lead to the main causes of hunger.
- Is clearly related to state obligations.
- Turns “vulnerable people” into “rights holders”.



# Thank you



**for your attention**

***„The right,  
that is not defended,  
gets lost“  
(CENIDH, Nicaragua)***

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