

Hunger Profiteers, Granny Killers and Skin-Deep Morality

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Global Research, June 03, 2023

Theme: [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

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First published on April 20, 2023

Today, [a fifth \(278 million\) of the African population](#) are undernourished, and 55 million of that continent's children under the age of five are stunted due to severe malnutrition.

In 2021, an Oxfam review of IMF COVID-19 loans showed that 33 African countries were encouraged to pursue austerity policies. Oxfam and Development Finance International also revealed that 43 out of 55 African Union member states face public expenditure cuts totalling \$183 billion over the next few years.

As a result, almost three-quarters of Africa's governments have reduced their agricultural budgets since 2019, and more than 20 million people have been pushed into severe hunger. In addition, the world's poorest countries were due to pay \$43 billion in debt repayments in 2022, which could otherwise cover the costs of their food imports.

Last year, Oxfam International Executive Director Gabriela Bucher stated that there was a [terrifying prospect](#) that in excess of a quarter of a billion more people would fall into extreme levels of poverty in 2022 alone. That year, food inflation rose by double digits [in most African countries](#).

By September 2022, some 345 million people across the world were experiencing acute hunger, a number that has more than doubled since 2019. Moreover, [one person is dying of hunger every four seconds](#). From 2019 to 2022, the number of undernourished people grew by [150 million](#).

Billions of dollars' worth of arms continue to pour into Ukraine from the NATO countries as US neocons pursue their goal of regime change in Russia and balkanisation of that country.

Yet people in those NATO countries are experiencing increasing levels of hardship. The US

has sent almost 80 billion dollars to Ukraine, while [30 million](#) low-income people across the US are on the edge of a 'hunger cliff' as a portion of their federal food assistance is taken away. In 2021, it was estimated that [one in eight](#) children were going hungry in the US. In England, [100,000 children have been frozen out of free school meals](#).

Due to the disruptive supply chain effects of the conflict in Ukraine, [speculative trading](#) that drives up food prices, the impact of closing down the global economy under the guise of COVID and the inflationary impacts of pumping [trillions of dollars into the financial system](#) between September 2019 and March 2020, people are being driven into poverty and denied access to sufficient food.

Matters are not helped by issues that have long plagued the global food system: cutbacks in public subsidies to agriculture, WTO rules that facilitate cheap, subsidised imports which undermine or wipe out indigenous agriculture in poorer countries and loan conditionalities, resulting in countries 'structurally adjusting' their agri sectors thereby eradicating food security and self-sufficiency – consider that Africa has been [transformed from a net food exporter in the 1960s to a net food importer](#) today.

Great game [food geopolitics](#) continue and result in elite interests playing with the lives of hundreds of millions who are regarded as collateral damage. Policies, underpinned by neoliberal dogma masquerading as economic science and necessity, which are designed to create dependency and benefit a handful of multi-billionaires and global agribusiness corporations who, ably assisted by the World Bank, IMF and WTO, now preside over an increasingly centralised food regime.

Many of these corporations have engaged in [rampant profiteering](#) at a time when people across the world are experiencing rising food inflation. For instance, 20 corporations in the grain, fertiliser, meat and dairy sectors delivered \$53.5 billion to shareholders in the fiscal years 2020 and 2021. At the same time, the UN estimates that \$51.5 billion would be enough to provide food, shelter and lifesaving support for the world's 230 million most vulnerable people.

As a [paper in the journal Frontiers noted in 2021](#), these corporations form part of a powerful alliance of multinational corporations, philanthropies and export-oriented countries who are subverting multilateral institutions of food governance. Many who are involved in this alliance are co-opting the narrative of 'food systems transformation' as they anticipate new investment opportunities and seek total control of the global food system.

This type of 'transformation' is more of the same wrapped in a climate emergency narrative in an attempt to move food and farming further towards an ecomodernist techno-dystopia controlled by big agribusiness and big tech, as described in the article [The Netherlands: Template for Ecomodernism's Brave New World](#).

A 'brave new world' where a concoction of genetically engineered items, synthetic food and ultra-processed products will do more harm than good – but will certainly boost the bottom line of the pharmaceutical corporations.

While securing further dominance over the global food system and undermining food security in the process, global agribusiness frames this as 'feeding the world'.

The model these corporations promote not only creates food insecurity but also [produces](#)

[death and illness.](#)

Former Professor of Medicine Dr Paul Marik recently [stated](#):

“If you believe the narrative, Type 2 diabetes is a progressive metabolic disease that’ll result in cardiac complications. You’re going to lose your legs. You’re going to have kidney disease, and the only treatment is expensive pharma drugs. That is completely false. It’s a lie.”

It is projected that by the end of this decade half of the world’s population are going to be obese and over 20% to 25% will have Type 2 diabetes.

According to Marik, the bottom line is Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disease due to bad lifestyle and really bad eating habits:

“We eat all the time. We snack all the time. This is part of the food industry’s goal. Processed food, starch, becomes an addiction. Most of us are glucose addicted and it’s, in fact, more addictive than cocaine. It creates this vicious cycle of insulin resistance.”

He adds that if you’re insulin resistant, this prevents leptin and the other hormones acting on your brain, so you’re continually hungry:

“If you are continually hungry, you eat more, which causes more insulin resistance. It causes this vicious cycle of overeating carbohydrates...”

This is the nature of the modern food system. Cheap processed ingredients, low-nutrient value, highly addictive and [maximum profits](#). A system that is being imposed or has already been imposed on countries whose populations once had healthy, unadulterated diets (see [Obesity, malnutrition and the globalisation of bad food - theecologist.org](#)).

Over the past 60 years in Western nations, there have been fundamental changes in the quality of food. In 2007, nutritional therapist David Thomas in ‘A Review of the 6th Edition of McCance and Widdowson’s the Mineral Depletion of Foods Available to Us as a Nation’ noted a precipitous change towards convenience and pre-prepared foods containing saturated fats, highly processed meats and refined carbohydrates, often devoid of vital micronutrients yet packed with a cocktail of chemical additives including colourings, flavourings and preservatives.

Aside from the [negative impacts](#) of Green Revolution cropping systems and practices, Thomas proposed that these changes are significant contributors to rising levels of diet-induced ill health. He added that ongoing research clearly demonstrates a significant relationship between deficiencies in micronutrients and physical and mental ill health.

Increasing prevalence of diabetes, childhood leukaemia, childhood obesity, cardiovascular disorders, infertility, osteoporosis and rheumatoid arthritis, mental illnesses and so on have all been shown to have some direct relationship to diet, specifically micronutrient deficiency, and [pesticide use](#).

It is clear that we have a deeply unjust and unsustainable food system that causes environmental devastation, illness and malnutrition, among other things. People often ask: So, what’s the solution? The solutions have been made clear time and again and involve a genuine food transition towards agroecology.

Unlike the co-opted version of 'food transition' being promoted, agroecology offers [concrete, practical solutions](#) to many of the world's problems that move beyond (but which are linked to) agriculture. Agroecology challenges the prevailing moribund doctrinaire economics of a neoliberalism that drives a failing system. Well-known academics like Raj Patel and Eric Holtz-Gimenez have written extensively on the potential of agroecology. And its [benefits are clear](#).

In finishing, let us consider the skin-deep morality pedalled throughout the COVID period. During COVID, the official narrative was underpinned by emotive slogans like 'protect lives' and 'keep safe'. Those who refused the COVID jab were labelled 'granny killers' and 'irresponsible'. All presided over by government politicians who too often failed to obey their own COVID rules.

Meanwhile, while having terrorised the public with a health crisis narrative, they continue to collude with powerful agrifood corporations that destroy health courtesy of their practices. They continue to facilitate a system that serves the needs of global agricapital and ruthless investors like BlackRock's Larry Fink [who secure massive profits from](#) a monopolistic food system (Fink also invests in the pharma sector – one of the biggest beneficiaries of a sickening global food regime) that by its very nature creates illness, malnutrition and [hunger](#).

The COVID narrative was imbued with the notion of moral responsibility. The people who sold it to the masses have no morality. Like the UK's former health minister and COVID rule breaker Matt Hancock (see [Matt Hancock's Car Crash Interview](#)), they are willing to sell their soul (or influence) to the highest bidder – in Hancock's case, a [£10,000 wage demand](#) for a day's 'consultancy' as a sitting politician or a few hundred thousand to bolster his ego, bank balance and image on a celebrity TV programme.

In a corrupted and corrupting society, the rewards could be even higher for the likes of Hancock when he leaves office (a *health* minister who helped traumatise the population while doing nothing to hold the *health-damaging* agribusiness corporations to account). But with a long line of well-rewarded fraudsters to choose from, we already know that.

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Read Colin Todhunter's e-Book entitled

Food, Dispossession and Dependency. Resisting the New World Order

We are currently seeing an acceleration of the corporate consolidation of the entire global agri-food chain. The high-tech/big data conglomerates, including Amazon, Microsoft, Facebook and Google, [have joined traditional agribusiness giants](#), such as Corteva, Bayer, Cargill and Syngenta, in a quest to impose their model of food and agriculture on the world.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is also involved (documented in '[Gates to a Global Empire](#)' by Navdanya International), whether through [buying up huge tracts of farmland](#), promoting a much-heralded [\(but failed\) 'green revolution' for Africa](#), pushing [biosynthetic food](#) and [genetic engineering technologies](#) or more generally [facilitating the aims of the mega agri-food corporations](#).

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