

better nutrition,  
better lives

# UNDERSTANDING HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION

Undernourishment or chronic hunger is the inability of persons to consume enough food sufficient to meet dietary energy requirements.

Undernourishment is down from more than 1 billion in 1992 to around 805 million today, a fall of 21 percent;



**161 million children** are stunted due to **chronic malnutrition**

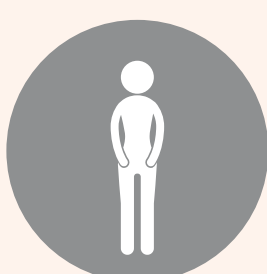


**99 million children** are underweight

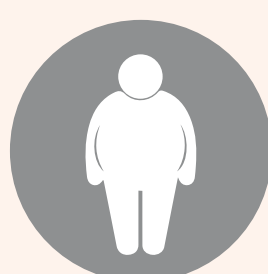


**51 million children** wasted due to **acute malnutrition**  
*WHO, 2013*

Malnutrition, in all its forms, is a major impediment to development. Malnutrition occurs when a person's diet contains too few or too many nutrients.



Micronutrient deficiencies or "hidden hunger" affect around **2 billion people**



Obesity affects around **half a billion adults**

The consequences of malnutrition range from:



increased risk of **death**

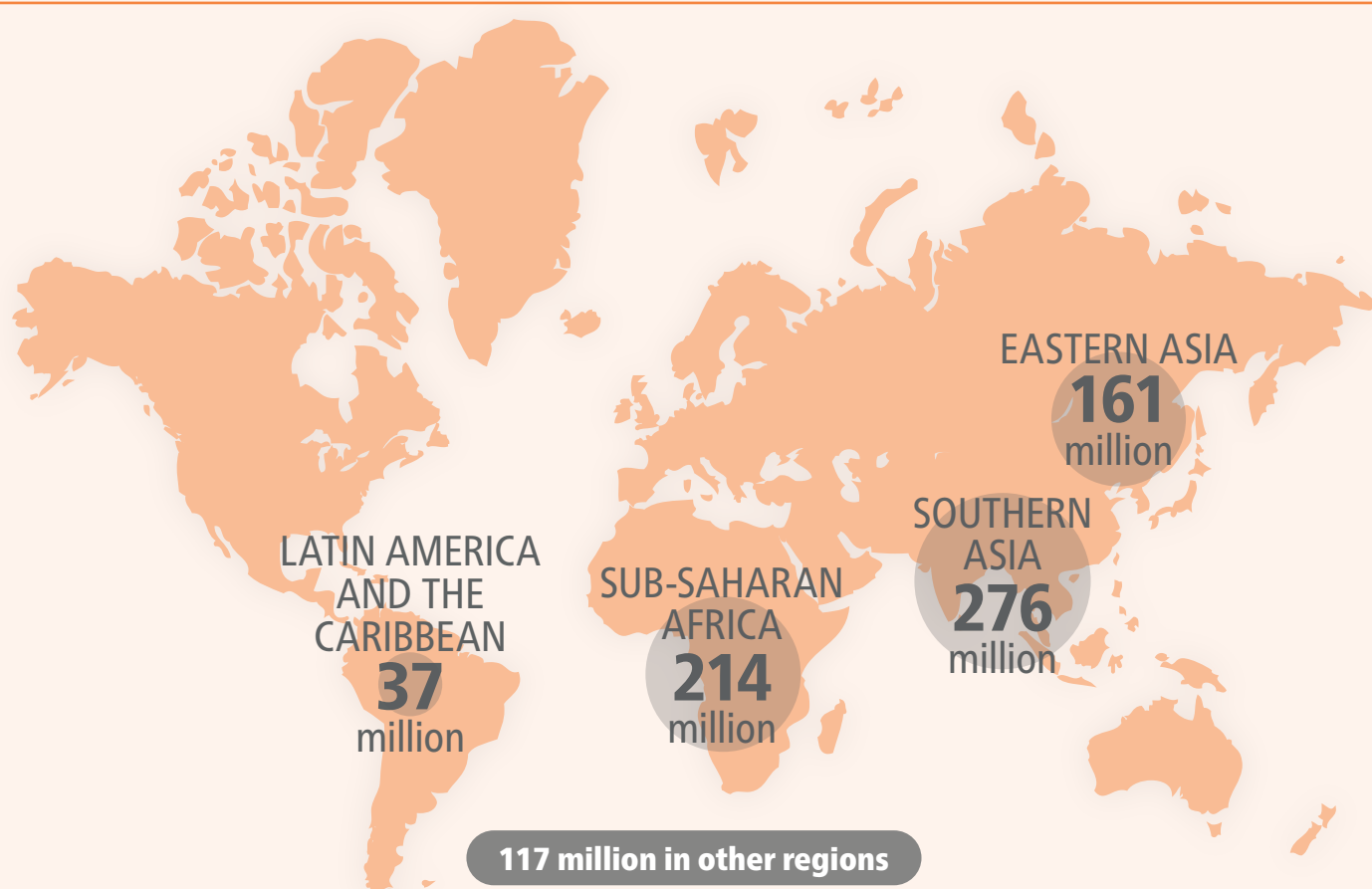


increased prevalence of **diet-related non-communicable diseases**



serious chronic **health conditions**

Most of the world's undernourished people are still found in Southern Asia, followed by sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.



There is no "ideal" diet that is right for everyone.

While individual nutritional and dietary needs vary with age, sex, health, status and activity levels, most general dietary advice for adults recommends the following:



Eat starchy **carbohydrates** as the basis of most meals



Eat variety of **fruits and vegetables** every day



Eat **legumes** regularly



Consume **milk and milk products** regularly



Eat **meat, poultry, eggs and fish** regularly



Choose moderate amounts of **fats and oils** in your diet



Drink plenty of **water** every day



Maintain **energy balance** to keep a **healthy body weight**



Get regular **exercise**



Limit consumption of **sugar, sugary foods and beverages**



Limit consumption of **salt**



Limit consumption of **alcohol**

**Investing in nutrition makes economic sense as it improves productivity and economic growth and promotes the health of the nation.**

[www.fao.org/icn2](http://www.fao.org/icn2)



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