

Editor's Note [Volume 26 No. 4 (2026)]

Conflict, War, and Household Food Security in Africa: Editorial Perspective

Conflict and war remain among the most devastating disruptors of household food security across Africa. Families' ability to feed themselves is directly undermined by violence, displacement, and the destruction of agricultural systems. This editorial highlights the urgent need for policy, humanitarian, and community-based responses to safeguard food systems during periods of instability. Not to mention the many innocent lives lost.

Disruption of Food Production

Abandoned farms and livestock: Armed conflict forces families to flee, leaving behind crops and animals. Many communities are always on the move because of conflict. Children are most vulnerable, while the old are fragile and get inconvenienced. Young men and women are displaced or recruited into fighting, reducing farming capacity. Irrigation systems, storage facilities, and transport routes are often damaged, halting food supply chains.

Market and Supply Chain Breakdown

Blocked access to markets: Families cannot sell produce or buy essentials due to insecurity or road closures. Scarcity and disrupted trade inflate costs, making food unaffordable. War reduces resilience and makes goods unavailable altogether.

Household Consumption and Nutrition

Studies show household food consumption scores drop by 11–20% in conflict zones. Malnutrition rates among children rise from under 2% before conflict to 10–50% during war. Protein deficiencies such as kwashiorkor become widespread among children.

Long-Term Consequences

Generational impact: Malnutrition in childhood leads to stunted growth, poor education outcomes, and reduced productivity later in life. Hunger combined with violence causes lasting emotional harm. Families often rely entirely on humanitarian food assistance, which can be inconsistent.

Regional Context: East Africa

In East Africa, conflicts in South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia have spilled over into neighboring countries, affecting refugee populations and food prices. Kenya,



while relatively stable, faces challenges during droughts, which, when combined with insecurity in the region, strain household food security further.

Why Peace and Dialogue are Always Better Options

Peace and dialogue provide the foundation for sustainable development and stability. They prevent the destruction and displacement caused by conflict, allowing communities to maintain their livelihoods and food security. Through open communication and negotiation, grievances can be addressed without violence, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation. Moreover, peace reduces the need for humanitarian aid and enables long-term investments in agriculture, infrastructure, and social services. Ultimately, choosing peace and dialogue preserves human dignity, saves lives, and builds resilient societies capable of thriving even in challenging circumstances. In the current global context, ongoing conflicts and tensions continue to threaten peace and security worldwide. From protracted wars to emerging disputes, these conflicts exacerbate humanitarian crises, disrupt economies, and increase the risk of widespread instability. The international community faces urgent challenges in addressing these wars through diplomacy and dialogue to prevent further suffering and promote lasting peace.

The Middle East Conflict and Its Impact on Africa

The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has significant repercussions for Africa, affecting its economy, security, and food systems. Rising energy prices driven by disruptions in the Gulf region have increased costs for African airlines and transportation, complicating trade and mobility. The conflict has also strained health systems and vaccine programs due to reduced aid and supply chain interruptions. Economically, African countries face volatility in markets, currency depreciation, and increased costs for essential imports like fuel and fertilizer, which threaten agricultural productivity and food security. These challenges underscore the interconnectedness of global conflicts and the urgent need for diplomatic solutions to mitigate their far-reaching impacts on vulnerable regions like Africa. Conflict and war should not condemn families to hunger. Safeguarding food security must remain central to peacebuilding and recovery efforts across the continent. If we kept children in mind, we would not go to war. Wars and conflicts erase all the gains we have made in addressing hunger.

Prof. Judith Kimiywe, PhD, CNS

Reviewer Editor, AJFAND

In this issue, we have 14 excellent, well-reviewed manuscripts.

