

Chapter 32

Globalization, Governance, and Food Security: The Case of BRICS

Sebak K. Jana

Vidyasagar University, India

Asim K. Karmakar

Jadavpur University, India

ABSTRACT

Food security is a major area of concern for the five nations that constitute BRICS. BRICS countries account for more than 40% of the world population and 25% of world GDP in PPP terms. Besides, these countries have a key role to play in the post-crisis global economy as producer of goods and services, receivers and exporters of capital, and/or consumer market on large potential. More importantly, these ones envisage ways to promote food security and food production in Third World countries by raising agricultural productivity and output via initiatives like the creation of basic agricultural information exchange system of these countries; enhancing investments in the food supply chain; developing a social safety net through conditional income transfer programmes for the poorest of the poor. In this context the present chapter examines the status of food security of BRICS economies in the context of globalization and governance and its implications thereof.

INTRODUCTION

Food security has emerged as a serious concern for policymakers of the world over. Globally, food security is under serious threat, raising the very real fear that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of halving the proportion of hungry people during 1990 – 2015 may not be met. Accordingly to the Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report 2010, the number of undernourished people exceeded one billion in 2009. In the late nineties, and particularly since 2000, food security has become a standing item on the global agenda and the object of various intergovernmental processes (most notably a series of world food summits dealing with food security in 1996, 2002, 2008).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-0803-8.ch032

Though food security is a national problem, it is now undisputedly accepted as an international responsibility. As a concept, food security has evolved from being traditionally defined in terms of food availability and price stability to more recent definitions that encompass economic access and nutritional balance. The 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) during Nov.13-17, at the Rome headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) declared, "Food Security at the individual, household, regional, national and globally exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." The broadened understanding of what constituted food security led the agreement by the 2012 Committee for World Food Security that (Page 2013): "Food and nutrition security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to food, which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life."

From 1990 to 2000, relative stability in the global food supply resulted in a period of complacency and reduced investment and innovation in food industries compared to other sectors. The exceptional food price hikes in 2008-13 brought back to the forefront the understanding that effective markets and national-level policy decisions are not sufficient for preventing major imbalances among nations and among specific vulnerable population groups, and that uncoordinated short-term national policies can result in destabilizing global impacts on prices and access to food in other countries. Globalization has made a scope for increased cooperation among the BRICS (the acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa invented earlier in 2001 including South Africa by the chief economist Goldman Sachs, with the claim that these countries would become the major players in a future world economy) to promote food security, which at present a serious concern for policymakers, by raising agricultural productivity and output via initiatives including the creation of basic agricultural information exchange system of these countries; enhancing investments in the food supply chain; developing a social safety net through conditional income transfer programmes for the poorest of the poor; as well as undertaking measures to reduce the negative impact of climate change on food security, enhancing agricultural technology cooperation and innovation as well as through promotion of inter- trade and investment in agriculture. Also the BRICS countries could envisage ways to promote food security and food production in Third World countries. To make these efforts prudent, governance of globalization and food security system among these countries is urgently called for.

BRICS countries appeared increasingly eager to engage on the global stage. Whatever had occurred in their past was over and done with. Globalization was happening and they wanted to be part of it. There were other unique economic factors which determined the BRICs status as countries to watch. India is witnessing demographic dividend. Russia had already been invited to join the G7 in 1997 as the West sought to encourage the country towards free markets and democracy following the collapse of communism. Brazil seemed an increasingly likely candidate because, like China during the Asian crisis, it had recently become a more thoughtful economic player.

We have chosen these BRICS countries because the countries accounted for about 40% of the world population and about 25% of world GDP in PPP terms in 2010. Nay, the share of the BRICS in world merchandise exports has increased enormously. While the share of the emerging and developing economies (EDEs) in world merchandise exports has increased from 25.4 per cent in 2000 to 42.3 per cent in 2012, nearly 60 per cent of this increase is on account of the BRICS countries whose share increased from 7.6 per cent to 10.1 per cent. Within BRICS, the largest increase is in China's share, followed by Russia, India, and Brazil. This tectonic shift in trade shares in the 2000s and early 2010s is mainly on

19 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/globalization-governance-and-food-security/165316

Related Content

Energy and Sustainability in the European Region: The Russian Factor

Anatoly Zhuplevand Dmitry A. Shtykhno (2017). *Natural Resources Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1247-1287).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/energy-and-sustainability-in-the-european-region/165346

Infectious Diseases and Climate Vulnerability in Morocco: Governance and Adaptation Options

Mohamed Behnassi, Kholoud Kahime, Samia Boussaa, Ali Boumezzoughand Mohammed Messouli (2017). *Natural Resources Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1056-1074).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/infectious-diseases-and-climate-vulnerability-in-morocco/165335

Management of Drought and Floods in Romania

Lucica Rouand Remus Zgan (2017). *Natural Resources Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 20-63).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/management-of-drought-and-floods-in-romania/165284

Examining the Role of NGOs in Community Water and Sanitation Improvement: A Case of the Tunayilli Community in the Northern Region, Ghana

Gordon Marley, Prosper Bazaanahand Patricia Oppong (2022). *Handbook of Research on Resource Management and the Struggle for Water Sustainability in Africa* (pp. 47-75).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/examining-the-role-of-ngos-in-community-water-and-sanitation--improvement/295924

Water and Wastewater Engineering

Avinash Kumar, Jaya Yadav, Rubeena Vohraand Anand Sebastian (2024). *Advanced Geospatial Practices in Natural Environment Resource Management* (pp. 26-37).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/water-and-wastewater-engineering/342209