

## FOOD SECURITY AS A POVERTY ALLEVIATION STRATEGY

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Poverty and hunger remain one of the greatest development challenges of our time. Despite the fact that all other developing regions except sub-Saharan Africa achieved a halving of poverty between 1990 and 2015 both food insecurity and malnutrition remain as one of the problems of the relatively less developed part of the world. The phenomena of hunger and poverty are inextricably linked, but they are two different concepts with distinct approaches to combating them. Within the framework of this study, the policy implemented in RA aimed at poverty alleviation was studied. In particular, the strategic document which discusses the fundamental issues of overcoming poverty and ensuring food security was analyzed.

**Keywords:** poverty alleviation; food security; state policy; Republic of Armenia.

## ПРОДОВОЛЬСТВЕННАЯ БЕЗОПАСНОСТЬ КАК СТРАТЕГИЯ БОРЬБЫ С БЕДНОСТЬЮ

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Нищета и голод остаются одной из самых серьезных проблем развития нашего времени. Несмотря на то, что во всех других развивающихся регионах, за исключением стран Африки к югу от Сахары, уровень бедности сократился вдвое в период с 1990 по 2015 год, отсутствие продовольственной безопасности и недоедание остаются одной из проблем относительно менее развитых стран мира. Явления голода и нищеты неразрывно связаны, но это два разных понятия с разными подходами к борьбе с ними. В рамках данного исследования была изучена проводимая в Республике Армения политика, направленная на борьбу с бедностью. В частности, был проанализирован стратегический документ, в котором рассматриваются принципиальные вопросы преодоления бедности и обеспечения продовольственной безопасности.

**Ключевые слова:** борьба с бедностью; продовольственная безопасность; государственная политика; Республика Армения.

**Theoretical basis.** As Adam Smith notes: «Certainly, no society can be prosperous and happy while the majority of its members are poor and miserable». In this regard, the international community has continuously reaffirmed its commitment to the fight against hunger and poverty.

Poverty alleviation has been included in the main development agendas, both at the national and international levels. The fight against hunger and poverty has found its expression in a number of statements published at international summits of leaders of

different countries. These many declarations culminated in the Millennium Declaration published at the 24th special session of the UN General Assembly in June 2000 [1]. The Millennium Declaration consolidates earlier commitments and at the same time commits to halving the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. At the World Food Summit held in Rome in 1996, 186 heads of state pledged to halve the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015.

Ensuring food security is one of the important cornerstones that lead to the alleviation of the problem of poverty. The importance of ensuring food security in overcoming poverty is determined by the following circumstances:

- the Malthusian Theory's fears are starting to come true (that is, the population of the planet grows by geometric progression, but food production grows arithmetically, so at some point in time, humanity will face the problem of insufficient food);
- those who suffer from poverty in developing countries are mostly rural people;
- the main branch of the economy in developing countries is agriculture;
- the number of undernourished people has remained essentially unchanged in recent decades and will continue to do so.

The profoundly important and at the same time simple definition of food security (adopted at the World Food Conference 1996) consists of 4 parts [2]:

1. Availability of sufficient food in accordance with people's needs.
2. Under normal conditions, people should have access to available food.
3. The instability of production and prices should not threaten the availability and availability of the above-mentioned food.
4. The quality of food consumed by people should meet their needs.

**Discussion.** In the context of emphasizing the role of food security in poverty alleviation, states are developing interconnected and complementary strategies. In particular, the RA Food Security Policy (January 25, 2005) states: «The recessionary processes characteristic of the transition phase of the economy, unfavorable regional developments, and radical structural transformations of the post-privatization period have led to a sharp increase in the level of poverty, including extreme poverty».

Poverty in Armenia, as well as in a number of other transition economy countries, is mainly manifested by food insecurity, therefore, the solution of this problem is a necessary precondition for the gradual overcoming of poverty in the country. Another important strategic direction is ensuring the necessary level of food independence, which, along with food security, is the most important component of the national food security of the country.

In order to solve the problems of both food security and food independence, first of all it is necessary to ensure the balanced and sustainable development of the agro-industrial system of Armenia by increasing the efficiency of the use of labor, logistical, financial, natural and other resources. The solution to the country's food security problem can be implemented only with the joint efforts of the state and territorial administration, local self-government, non-governmental organizations, as well as the donor community. However, in order to coordinate the activities carried out in that direction, to increase the effectiveness of the implemented measures, it is necessary to be guided by clear, adequate and beneficial socio-economic policy provisions for the country based on the analysis of the created and forecasted situation, which are developed based on the correct assessment of the existing hindering factors and

opportunities and a clear understanding of development priorities. This policy is in line with the Strategic Plan for Poverty Alleviation of the RA Government (hereinafter referred to as the Strategic Plan for Poverty Alleviation) and stems from the need to gradually overcome food insecurity, which is the main component of poverty. This policy may also be useful for the adjustment of the Strategic Plan for Poverty Alleviation of the RA (2005) in the prescribed manner, both in terms of content and methodology.

It is expected that during the implementation of the provisions of the country's food security policy, effective cooperation of all interested parties will be ensured, as a result of which an opportunity will be created for all groups of the population of the republic to create sufficient living conditions in the field of providing healthy and complete food [3]. And the Strategic Plan for Poverty Alleviation (August 8, 2003) states: «One of the most important prerequisites for further increasing productivity in agriculture and solving the food security problem is the strengthening of rural settlements and increasing the income of the rural population». Within the framework of the Strategic plan, as the main direction of overcoming rural poverty, the factor of ensuring the growth of agricultural production is strengthened [4].

**Conclusion.** Thus we can state that RA poverty alleviation policy heavily relies on ensuring food security. In turn, ensuring food security will be conditioned by the growth and development of agricultural production.

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