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### Looming food crises present multiple challenges for private sector

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Nations around the world may face famines as food supply chains are disrupted by a confluence of COVID-19–related bottlenecks, ongoing conflicts, and devastating natural disasters. The United Nations’ World Food Programme (WFP) Executive Director David Beasley warned of “famine...of biblical proportions” in remarks given to the United Nations<sup>[1]</sup> on May 7 and reiterated those concerns during an interview with Bloomberg<sup>[2]</sup> on April 21.

According to WFP estimates, more than 250 million people could face famine in the coming months, up from 135 million last year. In his remarks, Beasley urged developed nations to provide aid to distressed countries on the brink of famine through coordinated action to deliver aid, ending trade disruptions, and accelerated and increased funding, including \$350 million to set up a network of logistics hubs and transport systems to keep supply chains running worldwide.

At this point, however, developed nations are dealing with their own food supply chain disruptions and other COVID-19–related problems. The United States President Donald Trump issued an executive order<sup>[3]</sup> to keep meat and poultry plants running on April 28, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration said the government could use the Defense Production Act to prevent additional bottlenecks<sup>[4]</sup> in the fruit and vegetable supply chains. On May 27, U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, ranking member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, introduced the Food Supply Protection Act to address disruptions caused by COVID-19 and other factors.

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