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Can trade facilitation policies help mitigate future food crises? Evidence from the Kingdom of Jordan

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Abstract

Jordan like many Near East and North Africa (NENA) countries, relies heavily on trade to secure its basic food needs. Recent statistics show that 11 out of 13 NENA countries with available data had cereal import dependency ratios above 50 percent over the years 2016–2018 reaching up to 90 percent in all of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and even 100 percent in Jordan and the United Arab Emirates. MENA Region might not be the worst in terms of food insecurity but its high dependency on fertilisers and food requirements make it highly vulnerable to global disturbances in the future. With 2022 marked as a year of unprecedented hunger, and with forecasts that 2023 will not be any better, the global trade system seems to have a greater burden on its shoulder to deliver on the promises of achieving food security. Trade facilitation policies play an essential role with regard to moving food from food surplus to food deficit locations. Hence, and through mixed quantitative and qualitative methods, this study will examine the role of trade facilitation policies as a mitigating tool to achieve food security in import-dependent countries, especially in light of climatic and geopolitical risks and with application to the kingdom of Jordan.

Keywords: Crises, food security, Jordan, trade facilitation