

Endangered seeds

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By Guillermo Alvarado

Humanitarian authorities warned that in Afghanistan, a country rich in natural resources but devastated by decades of war and foreign occupation, the first cases of children dying as a consequence of hunger have already begun to be registered.

In the central province of Ghor, at least 17 children have died from lack of food and another 300 are in hospital, most of them with severe malnutrition, so their lives are also in imminent danger.

The situation was already serious during the foreign military intervention, led by the United States, when about half of the population, estimated at 38 million people, depended on foreign aid for survival, especially internally displaced persons and refugees.

The damage caused by the war was compounded in recent times by a persistent drought that destroyed a large number of crops, bringing with it an exaggerated increase in prices and putting them beyond the purchasing power of most families.

The re-conquest of power by the Taliban and the abrupt departure of the West only made matters worse.

The regime built by the occupiers over 20 years proved to be held together by pins and collapsed in a few weeks, leaving hundreds of thousands of workers practically on the street and suddenly losing the income necessary to survive.

Added to the precariousness was the fear of reprisals for having collaborated in any way with the system imposed by the invaders, which motivated many to move with the intention of crossing the borders.

The tragedy was completed with the application of sanctions against the Taliban, such as the freezing of money destined for development programs, or the International Monetary Fund's measure to prevent the new government from accessing the monetary reserves deposited in the United States.

In this bleak landscape, children bear the brunt and the UN has already warned that if nothing is done, by the end of 2021, one million children under 5 years of age will suffer from severe malnutrition and will require medical assistance to survive, something that not all of them will achieve.

As is well known, acute malnutrition not only compromises the present of infants, but also affects their future, which will be permanently accompanied by physical and intellectual sequelae.

If childhood is the seed of society, in Afghanistan the future looks very dark because from today, it is being marked forever.

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