

Access to food in 2020
Results of twenty national surveys using the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

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the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)

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REQUIRED CITATION

Boero, V., Cafiero, C., Gheri, F., Kepple, A.W., Rosero Moncayo, J. & Viviani, S. 2021. Access to food in 2020. Results of twenty national surveys using the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES). Rome. FAO. https://doi.org/10.4060/cb5623en

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ISBN 978-92-5-134706-5

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Key messages

- Between October 2020 and January 2021, the prevalence of annual food insecurity in ten of the twelve countries analysed (for which a previous assessment was available for comparison) has increased:
 - o Five countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Iraq, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zimbabwe) show a statistically detectable increase in the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity combined, but not of severe-only food insecurity.
 - o Two countries (Ethiopia and the Niger) show a statistically detectable increase of severe food insecurity.
 - o Three countries (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso and Nigeria) show a statistically significant increase in both moderate and severe food insecurity, even when assessed separately.
- However, the magnitudes of the increases are relatively modest (with the notable exception of Nigeria):
 - o There is no evidence of a sharp, generalized increase in food insecurity between 2019 and 2020 across these countries, especially for severe food insecurity, in part because these countries already presented relatively high prevalence rates in 2019.
 - o Differences in moderate or severe food insecurity are 10 percentage points on average.
 - Differences in severe food insecurity are 5 percentage points on average.
- There is a broad perception that the COVID-19 (novel coronavirus disease) pandemic has exacerbated the difficulties in accessing food:
 - o On average, three-quarters of the people who suffered from food insecurity attributed their experiences mainly to COVID-19.

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