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United Nations



World Food
Programme

Hunger Hotspots

FAO-WFP early warnings
on acute food insecurity

August to November 2021 Outlook



Global Network
Against Food Crises

Integrated
actions for
lasting solutions

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Cover Photo: © WFP/ Fredrik Lerneryd, Immaculée holds beans in her hand in Nyaruguru, Rwanda on 28th of May 2021.

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The report is developed jointly by the FAO's Early Warning Early Action Team (EWEA), the FAO's Global Information Early Warning System Team (GIEWS), the FAO's Conflict and Peace Unit (CPU), FAO's regional and country offices, the WFP Analysis and Early Warning Unit (AEW), the WFP Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division (RAM), WFP's regional bureaux and country offices.

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Acronyms

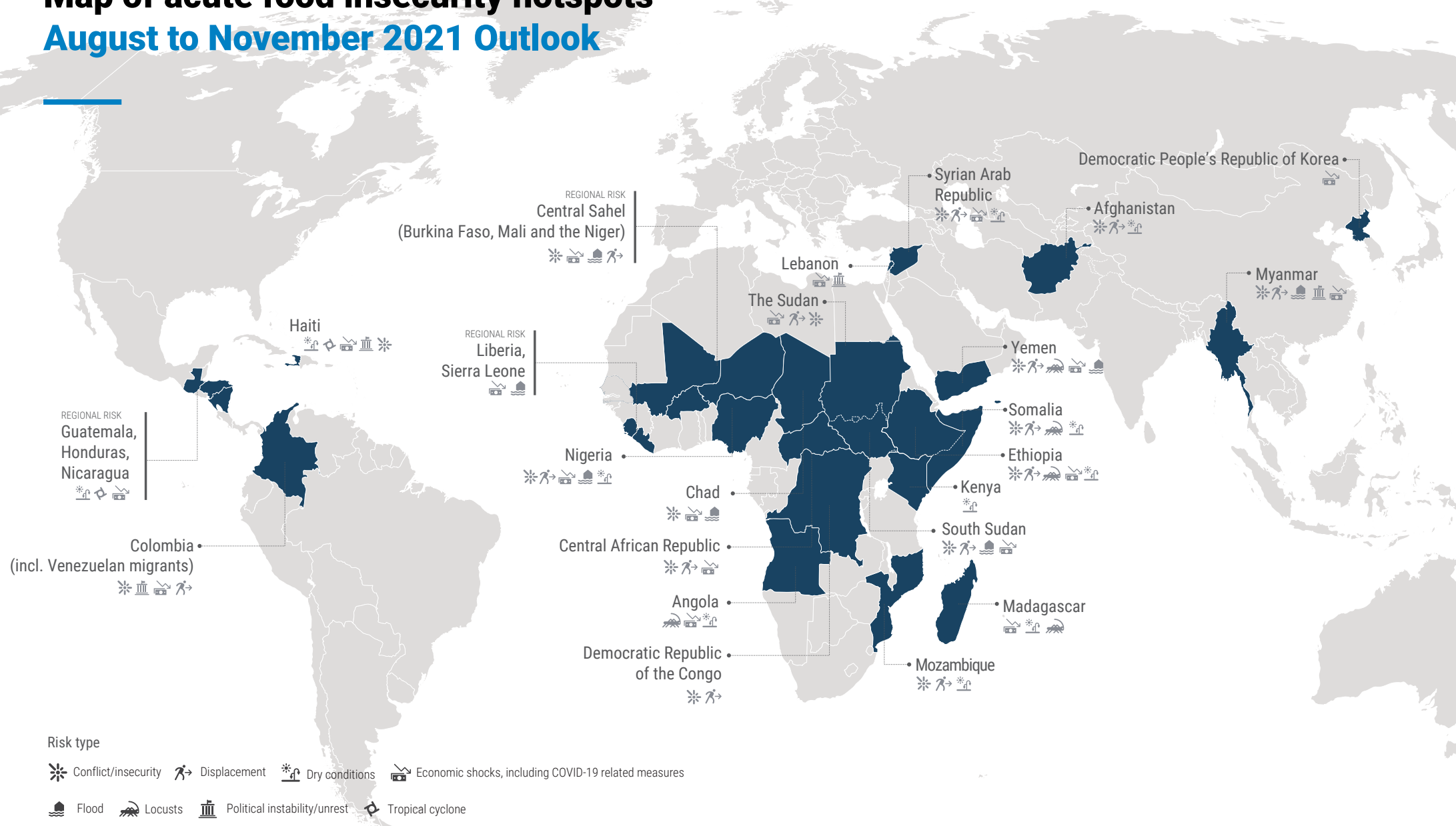
ASAL	Arid and semi-arid lands
AML	African migratory locust
CARI	Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security
CH	<i>Cadre Harmonisé</i>
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
DL	Desert Locust
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
GDP	Gross domestic product
GRFC	Global Report on Food Crises
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
MML	Madagascar migratory locust
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSAG	Non-state armed group
rCARI	remote Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security
RRP	Regional Response Plan
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
UN	United Nations
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

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Map of acute food insecurity hotspots

August to November 2021 Outlook



Source: FAO and WFP, July 2021. Map conforms to United Nations World Map, October 2020.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these map(s) do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO and WFP concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers and boundaries. Dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Final boundary between the Sudan and South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined.

Executive Summary

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) warn that in 23 countries and situations, acute food insecurity is likely to further deteriorate in the outlook period from August to November 2021.

Ethiopia and Madagascar are new highest-alert hotspots. In Ethiopia, up to 401 000 people are projected to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) between July and September 2021 – the highest number since the 2011 famine in Somalia – due to the impact of conflict in Tigray region. The Famine Review Committee estimates a medium to high risk of famine in three out of four possible scenarios. In Madagascar, a total of 28 000 people are also at risk of famine by the end of 2021, due to the country's worst drought in 40 years.

South Sudan, Yemen and Nigeria remain highest alert level hotspots from the previous edition of this report, with an outlook of catastrophic situations. In South Sudan, famine was most likely already happening in parts of Pibor county between October and November 2020, and was expected to continue in the absence of sustained and timely humanitarian assistance. Two other areas remain at risk of famine. In Yemen, the risk of more people facing famine-like conditions may have been contained, but gains remain extremely fragile. In Nigeria, populations in conflict-affected areas in the northeast may be at risk of reaching catastrophic food-insecurity levels.

Among the other countries and situations highlighted in the report, those of particular concern are those with high numbers of people in critical food insecurity coupled with worsening drivers: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Honduras, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Chad, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Kenya and Nicaragua have been added to the list of hotspots, compared to the March 2021 edition of the report. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) is not included due to lack of recent data.

The report reiterates the alarming rate at which acute food security is rising globally, as was forewarned in the past three editions of the FAO-WFP Hunger Hotspots report. In 2020, 155 million people were estimated to be in acute high food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) across 55 countries/territories, up by 20 million from 2019; this negative trend is continuing well into 2021. Acute hunger is increasing not only in scale but also severity: overall, over 41 million people worldwide are now at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions, unless they receive immediate life and livelihood-saving assistance.

Conflict is expected to remain the primary driver of acute hunger, alongside economic shocks – including secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic – and natural hazard risks. Higher international food prices risk further constraining vulnerable households' access to food, as they transmit onto domestic food prices. The ongoing increase of climate hazards and weather extremes, and in their severity, is likely to continue during the outlook period, affecting livelihoods in several parts of the world.

Targeted humanitarian action is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods in 23 hotspots. Moreover, in 5 of these hotspots, humanitarian actions are critical to preventing famine and death. The report provides country-specific recommendations on priorities for emergency response, as well as anticipatory action to address existing humanitarian needs and ensure short-term protective interventions before new needs materialize.



Introduction

FAO and WFP are issuing an early warning for urgent humanitarian actions in 23 countries and situations – called ‘hotspots’ – where part of the population is likely to face fast deterioration of acute food insecurity that will put their lives and livelihoods at risk.

Identified through forward-looking analysis, these hotspots have potential for acute food insecurity to rise between August and November 2021, under the effects of often multiple drivers, interlinked or mutually reinforcing. These risks fall under the categories of violence and conflict, economic shocks, ongoing socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, weather extremes and climate variability, plant pests and diseases, and animal diseases. Drivers often co-exist and reinforce one another. As recounted by the 2021 Global Report on Food Crises, conflict continues to be the primary driver for the largest share of people facing acute food insecurity (around 65 percent), while the economic impact of the pandemic is of increasing immediate and long-term concern, as it plays into weakening currencies, rapid inflation, high food prices and widening unemployment, combined with increasing debt and low purchasing power. Weather extremes remain a significant driver, and a major one in some of the countries, through heavy rains, tropical storms, hurricanes, flooding and drought.

Targeted humanitarian action is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods in 23 hotspots. Moreover, in 5 of these hotspots, humanitarian actions are critical to preventing famine and death. To this end, the report provides country-specific recommendations on priorities for a) anticipatory action: short-term protective interventions to be implemented before new humanitarian needs materialize; and b) emergency response: actions to address existing humanitarian needs.

Situations of acute food insecurity continue to escalate: In 2020, 155 million people were facing Crisis or worse – Phase 3 or above of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) or the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) – across 55 countries/territories covered in the Global Report on Food Crisis 2021.¹ This is a 20-million increase in comparison to the 135 million people reported for 2019. Over 41 million people worldwide are now at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions, unless they receive immediate life-saving assistance.² These deteriorating trends are mostly driven by conflict dynamics, as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include food price spikes, movement restrictions that limit market- and pastoralists activities alike, rising inflation, decreased purchasing power, and an early and prolonged lean season. Given a strict set of methodological parameters, the hotspot countries and locations were selected through a consensus-based process, which involved WFP and FAO Rome-based and field-based technical teams, as well as analysts specialized in conflict, economic risks and natural hazards.

The parameters employed in the forward-looking analysis include:

- Assessed current levels of recent or current food insecurity and malnutrition, especially in terms of deterioration compared to the same timeframe in the previous year, in order to account for the seasonality aspects;
- Assessed projections of acute food insecurity for the outlook period based on analysis of: a) primary and secondary drivers, which are economic shocks, adverse climate conditions and weather shocks, conflict and insecurity, political instability, and diffusion of plant pests and animal diseases; b) the socio-economic state of each country based on assessments of macro-economic stability (including, among others, debt stocks, foreign-exchange reserves, exposure to balance-of-payment crises), the impact of COVID-19 (including direct impact such as reduced fiscal space due to augmented budget deficits in 2020; and indirect impact such as the contraction of tourism revenues and remittances inflows), and the current rise of international food prices (especially for countries importing large shares of their food requirements);
- Absolute numbers of people projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) and the prevalence of these levels of acute food insecurity on the overall analysed population;
- Presence of natural hazards, economic and conflict risks that are likely to have a direct impact on food insecurity (such as unforeseen climatic shocks) or an indirect one (for example, increased internal displacement) over the outlook period;
- Planned and ongoing agricultural activities during the August-to-November period, and existing or likely disruptions caused by COVID-19-related restrictions or other contingent events;
- Absolute numbers of displaced populations; and
- Presence of operational and humanitarian access constraints.

The main sources of data on acute food insecurity (current and projections) are the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification and the *Cadre Harmonisé*. For countries where IPC/CH analyses were not conducted and where no recent analyses were available, estimates of the number of people in acute food insecurity were primarily derived from the IPC-compatible analysis of the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), WFP assessments using the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI), including its application to remotely collected data, rCARI, and Humanitarian Needs Overviews.³ WFP’s open-access Hunger Map Live, and specifically near-real time data on insufficient food consumption, was used to inform trend analysis, and as a triangulation tool during the assessment phase.

The cut-off date for the analysis contained in this report is 7 July 2021.

This report is part of a series of analytical products produced under the Global Network Against Food Crises initiative, to enhance and coordinate the generation and sharing of evidence-based information and analysis for preventing and addressing food crises. In May 2021, the Global Network, in collaboration with the Food Security Information Network, released the 2021 Global Report on Food Crises; this provides further information on global acute food-insecurity figures in 2020. It is available at <http://www.fightfoodcrises.net> and <https://www.fsinplatform.org>.

IPC/CH acute food insecurity phase description and response objectives

PHASE	TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY RESPONSE OBJECTIVE
1 None/Minimal	Households are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income	Resilience building and disaster risk reduction.
2 Stressed	Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies.	Disaster risk reduction and protection of livelihoods.
3 Crisis	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; OR • Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies. 	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.
4 Emergency	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have large food consumption gaps which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; OR • Are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. 	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to save lives and livelihoods.
5 Catastrophe/ Famine*	Households have an extreme lack of food and/or other basic needs even after full employment of coping strategies. Starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical acute malnutrition levels are evident. (For Famine classification, area needs to have	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to revert/prevent widespread death and total collapse of

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