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# WFP Global Operational Response Plan 2022

Update #4

February 2022

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As we enter the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we find the world has profoundly changed. There is a ring of fire encircling the world where conflict and climate shocks compounded by COVID-19 and rising costs are driving millions of people to the brink of starvation. It reaches from the **Sahel** to **South Sudan** to **Yemen** and **Afghanistan**, carrying on to **Haiti** and **Central America**. Up to **276 million people are currently acutely food insecure** or at high risk in 81 countries. Meanwhile, **44 million people in 38 countries are teetering on the edge of famine**. More than 1 percent of the world's population is now displaced, about 42 percent of whom are children.

**The links between hunger and conflict are complex and far-reaching.** A significant challenge that is impacting WFP's reach and the ability of people to safely access life-saving assistance is the **rise in humanitarian access constraints**. These extend from bureaucratic impediments to blockades of whole populations, deliberate attacks on humanitarian staff and assets, and the forced displacement of increasing numbers of people.

Another worrying trend is **climate extremes – a consequence that is no longer a glimpse into the future, but a daily reality** for communities around the world. From **Angola, Mozambique** and **Madagascar**, to **Afghanistan**, the **Horn of Africa**, across the **Sahel** and in **Haiti**, high levels of food insecurity have been driven by conflict, climate change and back-to-back droughts are pushing millions of people into severe hunger.

In addition to driving needs to unprecedented levels, the socio-economic fallout from the pandemic makes responding to existing crises even more complex. About **97 million more people have been pushed to extreme poverty** of living on less than US\$ 1.90 a day because of the pandemic<sup>1</sup>, ending

a two-decade downward trend and another 207 million are projected to remain unemployed this year<sup>2</sup>.

COVID-19 has exposed massive inequalities within countries as well as among them. Predicted trajectory of economic recovery is likely to make these divides even starker. The economies of richer countries are expected to almost recover fully by next year.<sup>3</sup> For countries already struggling with conflict, fragility, or climate shocks, the rebound to pre-pandemic levels seems increasingly out of reach.

In parallel, **the costs to serve have increased**. While inflation is causing reductions in purchasing power and increasing in poverty for those already in need, it also affects the cost of WFP operations due to higher procurement and shipping prices. **WFP food procurement is currently 30 percent more expensive than in 2019**, resulting in additional costs of approximately US\$ 42 million per month.

Thanks to generous contributions of its partners, **WFP was able to reach 128 million people with food, cash, and nutrition in 2021**. However, the gap between requirements for the next six months and available resources is already exceeding 60 percent. As a result, WFP had to scale back its assistance in some countries by distributing half rations or providing a meal every other day.

**WFP plans to reach 137 million people in 2022.** Projected operational requirements for 2022 are currently US\$ 18.9 billion with **net funding requirements for the next six months (February – July 2022) standing at US\$ 6.1 billion**, of which more than US\$ 5 billion are for emergency responses.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> World Bank. *COVID-19 leaves a legacy of rising poverty and widening inequality*. 7 October 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The International Labour Organization. *ILO World Employment and Social Outlook – Trends 2022*. ILO, 18 January 2022.

<sup>3</sup> UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). *2022 World Economic Situation and Prospects* (WESP). UNDESA, 2022.

<sup>4</sup> All figures are as of 22 February 2022.



# Section I: Looking Ahead: Food Insecurity, Trends and Risks

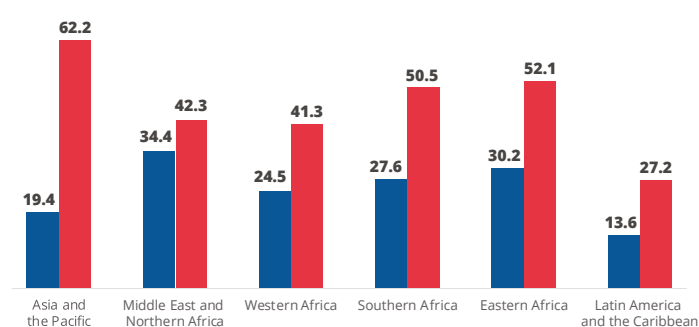
## 2022 FOOD INSECURITY OVERVIEW

Up to 276 million people are estimated to be acutely food insecure or at high risk in 2022 across 81 countries with WFP operational presence and where data is available. This is an increase of 84 percent in comparison to pre-pandemic levels in early 2020. While the number decreased slightly compared to the earlier estimate of 283 million people published in the last update to [WFP's Global Operational Response Plan in November 2021](#), numbers remain at a most worrying level. Increased food insecurity numbers for 2022 were recorded already in 12 countries<sup>5</sup>, and many countries are yet to update their information in the coming months.

### Acute food insecurity is increasing further

● Early 2020 pre-COVID-19 (people, in millions)

● November 2021 estimate (people, in millions)<sup>6</sup>



An estimated 44 million people across 38 countries are in emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 4+) based on most recently published IPC/CH or equivalent analyses. Without urgent life-saving action, these populations will be at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions.

In **Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan**, and **Yemen**, catastrophic conditions (IPC Phase 5) are already present or were projected for 570,000 people.

An estimated two thirds of the population in **South Sudan** will face severe hunger this year, more than at any other time in the country's history. This is due to combined factors of the worst floods in 60 years, conflict and the slow implementation of the peace agreement that has denied much of the country basic services.

Similarly, prolonged conflict, health pandemics and widespread hunger have long been a part of life in **Yemen**, making it easy to forget that for many people it can still get worse. Thanks to generous donor contributions in 2021, WFP increased life-saving assistance to target nearly 13 million people only to reduce rations for 8 million of them towards the end of the year due to funding shortfalls.

It is hard to remember an emergency that has been triggered so quickly by political turmoil and ensuing economic collapse as we are seeing in **Afghanistan**. It took five years of war in Syria for its economy to contract as much as Afghanistan has since August 2021<sup>7</sup>, when the fall of the Government was followed by the freezing of the Afghan central bank foreign-held assets. Prior to that, 11 million Afghans were already acutely food insecure due to drought, conflict, and COVID-19. Now, almost 23 million people – more than half the country – face acute hunger, with women and children being the most affected.

<sup>5</sup> Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Senegal, South Sudan, Togo, and Zambia.

<sup>6</sup> The new February 2022 estimate is the fifth update to WFP's original estimate of COVID-19's impact on acute food security conducted in June 2020 (see [methods paper](#)), covering 81 countries with WFP operational presence. The Pacific Islands Countries and Territories were added in this edition, due to new data available. For this update, the original estimations from June 2020 were replaced with the most recent assessment data and projections for 2022 (or latest available) from Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH), WFP CARI or comparable analyses for 62 countries, available before 27 January. Only IPC/CH exercises with population coverage of above 50 percent were considered, expected peak-numbers for 2022 (or latest available) are used. The numbers are supposed to give a comprehensive estimate of people in need of food assistance for 2022, in countries where WFP operates. The analysis covers rural and urban populations, and refugees.

<sup>7</sup> World Food Programme (WFP). [“Our Presence Is Hope.” WFP Continues to Serve the People of Afghanistan Through a Bitter Winter of Cold and Hunger](#). WFP, 4 February 2022.



## Reinforcing gender data in near real-time food security monitoring



In 2021, WFP set out to integrate gender data into its near real-time food security monitoring tool called [HungerMap LIVE](#): a tool that monitors food security and its drivers in more than 90 countries. The aim of this initiative is to improve WFP's understanding of specific situations, needs and challenges of men, women, girls, and boys related to food security and nutrition, and provide evidence for potential scale-up.

WFP rolled out the pilot for testing in **Somalia**, where the real-time monitoring questionnaire was revised to include questions assessing intra-household differences in consumption-based coping strategies, sim card ownership, and access to health services, school, or markets. Findings showed that women were more likely to reduce the number of meals eaten in a day or limit portion sizes due to lack of food or money to buy food, as compared to men. Differences were also seen in market access or sim card ownership, with women being less likely than men to own a sim card but more likely to be the principal person going to the market.

In 2022, WFP plans to expand the questionnaire in 10 countries with the objective of a global roll-out across all WFP operations with existing real-time monitoring systems.



## DRIVERS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND RISKS AHEAD



### Conflict and Political Upheaval

The primary driver of acute hunger is conflict and insecurity. Whether it is the destruction of essential infrastructure, disruption of markets, razing of fields or storage facilities, the impact is catastrophic for communities and food systems targeted and impacted by fighting. The result is often the forced displacement, loss of assets and reliance on humanitarian assistance as internally displaced or refugees. The growing number of displaced people is testament to this reality.

In **Nigeria**, attacks by non-state armed groups in the north-east, coupled with banditry and intercommunal violence in the north and north-west, will continue to drive displacement and disrupt agricultural and market activities and undermine people's ability to feed themselves. Armed conflict is hampering humanitarian operations in the states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe. WFP has prioritized emergency food and nutrition assistance to the most vulnerable people in the three north-eastern states, but still aims to provide food and nutrition support to 1.7 million people every month. The situation is of highest concern in conflict-affected Borno State, where parts of the population, around 13,500 people, are projected to slide into catastrophic acute food insecurity.

Across **northern Ethiopia**, airstrikes in Tigray and clashes along the region's borders have largely subsided; however, the security situation remains fragile. Meanwhile, the number of people in need of urgent food assistance is at the highest level ever, rising to 9.4 million – an increase of 2.7 million in just four months, mostly in conflict-affected areas in Amhara and Afar. In Amhara, half of the households analysed in a recent post-distribution monitoring exercise reported having food stocks adequate for less than one month survival. In Tigray, less than a third of supplies to meet emergency food needs have entered the region to date, where 2 million people (37 percent of the region's population) are severely food insecure.

New population displacement and disrupted food and trade flows are expected to continue in northern and eastern **Burkina Faso**, western **Niger** and across northern and central **Mali**, with an expansion of attacks into previously more stable areas. As a direct result of this insecurity and climate change, it is estimated that more than 8.1 million people are facing crisis levels of hunger, including 1.1 million in emergency, across five countries - **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania** and **Niger**. This is a more than 60 percent increase since 2019 (up from 3.6 million).

Profound political shifts in **Haiti** and **Myanmar** not only worsened already tenuous crises but will make responding to emergencies even more complex in 2022. In **Myanmar**, the political crisis has changed the situation from complex to chaotic. Since the military takeover in February 2021, the food security situation has worsened. Needs are now widespread, from conflict-affected areas in border regions to urban areas. Despite immense challenges in security, humanitarian access, funding and the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP plans to further augment the size and scope of its operations to reach 4 million people.



### Poverty and Inequality

Rising unemployment, inflation and commodity prices, and freezing of foreign assets are creating the new poor, especially among urban populations and in places that have not been traditional recipients of humanitarian aid.

Inflation in **Venezuela** is soaring, and three quarters of the country's 28 million people are now in extreme poverty – a 10 percent rise from last year. Others live in places where poverty is newly widespread, like **Lebanon**, where a downward economic spiral combined with political turmoil led to dire needs reaching most corners of society.

In **Afghanistan**, WFP is scaling up life-saving operations across all 34 provinces with a goal of reaching 23 million people with food and cash support. Two-thirds of the population are resorting to drastic measures to feed their families. This is a six-fold increase from before 15 August 2021. Through a network of trucks, dozens of warehouses and over 85 cooperating partners, food and nutrition assistance is targeted to meet humanitarian needs, prevent and treat malnutrition, boost markets and community resilience, encourage school attendance and support women and girls.

Humanitarian needs continue to grow in the Republic of **Sudan** as the economic crisis and food insecurity continue to affect millions of people. About 14.3 million people (almost one in every three people) are estimated to need humanitarian assistance in 2022 – the highest in the past decade – of whom, a total of 9.8 million people is estimated to be food insecure. The deterioration of the economy, with high inflation and food prices and shortage of basic commodities are eroding families' purchasing power and ability to provide for themselves, particularly for the most vulnerable segments of the population. The cost of a local food basket in November, as monitored by WFP was 123 percent higher than November 2020. If the unstable socio-political conditions persist and the international and donor community continues to withhold funding, the situation will deteriorate further.

Inflated prices have reduced access to food including in **South Sudan** and **Somalia**, where high fuel and transportation costs are increasing food inflation in remote areas. In **Ethiopia**, the ongoing conflict and the accompanying supply chain disruptions have compounded liquidity shortages and depleted foreign-currency reserves, contributing to the highest food prices in 15 years. In **Mali**, new sanctions imposed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) risk exposure to significant trade and financial disruptions which would further compromise food security.







### Climate Crisis

Vulnerable countries and communities are already suffering from severe losses and damages to lives, livelihoods, crops, and infrastructure caused by the impacts of climate change. Communities that are least responsible for global emissions are facing the worst impacts and do not always have the resources to cope.

A WFP analysis shows that a 2°C rise in average global temperature from pre-industrial levels will see a staggering 189 million additional people in the grips of hunger. In the meantime, climate crises are already a reality for people across the globe from **Madagascar** to **Honduras** to **Bangladesh**, fuelling food insecurity.

Tens of thousands of lives are at risk in southern **Madagascar**, one of the potentially many places in the world where hunger has been driven by climate change. Consecutive droughts have pushed nearly 1.1 million people into severe acute food insecurity. Nearly 14,000 of whom are in catastrophic conditions.

The ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa, the third consecutive season, continues to affect people across parts of southeast **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, and southern **Somalia**. Harvests have failed or are well-below average, and widespread livestock deaths are being reported across the region. Household purchasing power is also declining due to a sharp increase in staple food prices, declining livestock prices, and low agricultural labour demand. In 2022, 13 million people are forecasted to be in crisis and emergency food insecurity levels across the three countries.

At the same time, across **Western Africa**, the rains started late and ended early. Crops are failing and harvests are compromised – an ominous sign of a dry spell with the magnitude of a crisis last seen in 2011. This is already altering pastoralists' transhumance habits, leading to increasingly earlier movements and conflict over access to resources. With conflict, market failure, extreme poverty,

## Regional Drought Response Plan for the Horn of Africa

The response plan provides an overview of WFP's regional response to the drought and accompanying financial requirements over the coming six months. WFP is urgently calling for US\$ 327 million to avert another major humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa countries (**Ethiopia**, **Kenya** and **Somalia**) and support almost 4.5 million people affected by the drought.

By front-loading relief in the first quarter of the year, more efficient use of resources can help prevent what may otherwise become a costly response in 2022. Responding now will prevent the depletion of productive assets, the dramatic worsening of food security outcomes, and escalating levels of acute malnutrition.



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