



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Food  
Programme

# Hunger Hotspots

FAO-WFP early warnings  
on acute food insecurity

June to November 2023 outlook



Global Network  
Against Food Crises

Integrated  
actions for  
lasting solutions

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Cover Photo: © WFP/Martin Karimi. Food Distribution in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya, 2023.

Photo page vi: © WFP/Theresa Piorr. Mother of seven challenged by rising food prices and struggling to support her family, Haiti, 2022.

Photo page viii: © WFP/Gabriela Vivacqua. Farm submerged by floodwaters, South Sudan, 2022.

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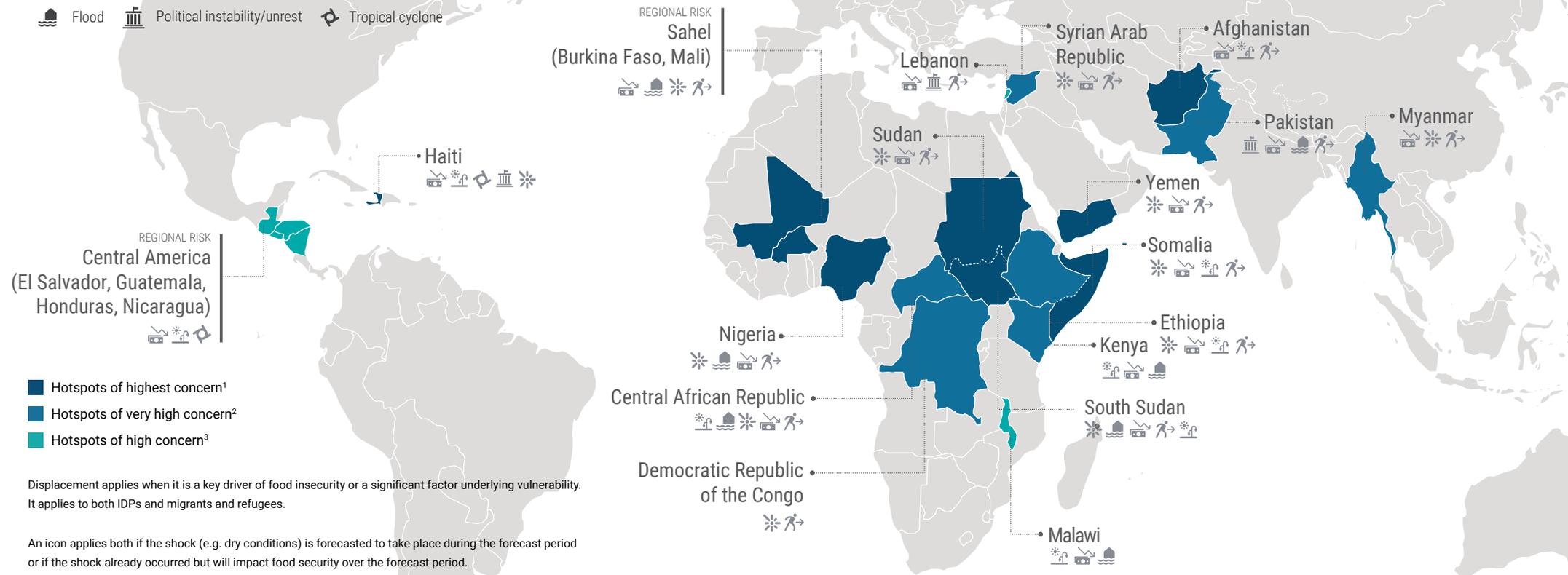
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# Early warning hunger hotspots

## June to November 2023

### Key drivers and aggravating factors

-  Conflict/insecurity
-  Displacement
-  Dry conditions
-  Economic shocks
-  Flood
-  Political instability/unrest
-  Tropical cyclone



Displacement applies when it is a key driver of food insecurity or a significant factor underlying vulnerability. It applies to both IDPs and migrants and refugees.

An icon applies both if the shock (e.g. dry conditions) is forecasted to take place during the forecast period or if the shock already occurred but will impact food security over the forecast period.

<sup>1</sup> This category includes hotspots already with populations in Catastrophe (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC]/Cadre Harmonisé [CH]), as well as hotspots at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions. At risk are those hotspots where an extremely vulnerable population in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) is facing severe aggravating factors – especially access constraints – that indicate a further deterioration and possible occurrence of catastrophic conditions in the outlook period. Per definition, this category also includes hotspots with Famine or Risk of Famine.

<sup>2</sup> These are hotspots with sizeable populations – over 500 000 people – estimated or projected to be in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) levels of acute food insecurity or identified as severely acute food insecure as per WFP's Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) or remote CARI (rCARI) methodology; or hotspots with more than 10 percent of the analysed population in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) or severely acute food insecure, and at least 50 percent of the population analysed. In the included countries, life-threatening conditions are expected to further intensify in the outlook period.

<sup>3</sup> Other countries, in which acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate further during the outlook period, and which were identified as hunger hotspots.

**Source of data:** FAO and WFP. 2023. *Hunger Hotspots analysis (June to November 2023)*. Rome. **Source of map:** United Nations. 2020. *Map of the World*. Cited 20 September 2022. [www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world](http://www.un.org/geospatial/content/map-world)

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

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<b>CARI</b>	Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security
<b>CH</b>	Cadre Harmonisé
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>FEWS NET</b>	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
<b>GAM</b>	global acute malnutrition
<b>HRP</b>	Humanitarian Response Plan
<b>IDP</b>	internally displaced person
<b>IPC</b>	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
<b>IRG</b>	Internationally Recognized Government
<b>rCARI</b>	remote Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations Refugee Agency
<b>WASH</b>	water, sanitation and hygiene
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme



# Executive summary

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The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) warn that acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate further in 18 hunger hotspots – comprising a total 22 countries – during the outlook period from June to November 2023.

**Afghanistan, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen remain at the highest concern level. Haiti, the Sahel (Burkina Faso and Mali) and the Sudan have been elevated to the highest concern levels;** this is due to severe movement restrictions of people and goods in Haiti, as well as in Burkina Faso and Mali, and the recent eruption of conflict in the Sudan. All the hotspots at the highest level have populations facing or projected to face starvation (Catastrophe, Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC]/Cadre Harmonisé [CH] Phase 5), or are at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions, given they have already critical food insecurity (Emergency, IPC/CH Phase 4) and are facing severe aggravating factors. These countries require the most urgent attention.

**Pakistan, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Syrian Arab Republic are hotspots with very high concern, and the warning is also extended to Myanmar** in this edition. All these hotspots have a high number of people facing critical acute food insecurity, coupled with worsening drivers that are expected to further intensify life-threatening conditions in the coming months.

**Lebanon, El Salvador and Nicaragua** have been added to the list of hunger hotspot countries, since the September 2022 edition. **Malawi, Guatemala and Honduras** remain hunger hotspot countries.

The deterioration of acute food insecurity in the hunger hotspots occurs in context of a global food crisis. As a result, the countries and situations covered in this report highlight the most significant deteriorations of hunger expected in the outlook period but do not represent all countries with high levels of acute food insecurity.

The eruption of conflict in Sudan marks a new spike in global levels of organized violence and armed conflict which have slightly reduced compared to the last edition of this report. Conflict will disrupt livelihoods – including agricultural activities and commercial trade – as people are either directly attacked or flee the prospect of attacks, or face movement restrictions and administrative impediments. In addition, new emerging conflicts, in particular the eruption of conflict in the Sudan, will likely drive global conflict trends and impact several neighbouring countries. The use of explosive ordnance and siege tactics in several hunger hotspots continues to push people into catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity, highlighting the critical role of humanitarian access in preventing the worst outcomes of hunger. Economic concerns continue to drive acute food insecurity in almost all the hunger hotspots. This reflects a global trend already registered in 2022,<sup>1</sup> when economic risks were driving hunger in more countries than conflict was.

The global economy is expected to slow down in 2023 – amid monetary tightening in advanced economies – increasing the cost of credit. Despite a year long easing of international food prices, domestic prices remain high,<sup>2</sup> amid low foreign currency reserves in many countries, restricting imports. Limited economic access is likely to be further compounded by the overall reduction in donor support to offset global hunger.

Weather extremes, such as heavy rains, tropical storms, cyclones, flooding, drought and increased climate variability, remain significant drivers in some countries and regions. The May 2023 forecast suggests an 82 percent likelihood of El Niño conditions starting in the May–July 2023 period, with significant implications for several hunger hotspots. Continuous monitoring of forecasts and their impacts on production remains critical. Cyclone Mocha has left a trail of devastation in May 2023 in Myanmar where households in many townships and displacement sites in northern Rakhine have lost substantial food stocks and livelihoods.

Urgent and scaled-up assistance is required in all 18 hunger hotspots to protect livelihoods and increase access to food. This is essential to avert a further deterioration of acute food insecurity and malnutrition. In the hotspots of highest concerns, humanitarian actions are critical in preventing further starvation and death. However, humanitarian access is limited in various ways, including insecurity due to organized violence or conflict, the presence of administrative or bureaucratic impediments, and movement restrictions.

This 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

For the outlook period of June to November 2023, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) are issuing an early warning for urgent humanitarian action in 18 hunger hotspots, including 2 regional clusters and comprising a total of 22 countries. In the hunger hotspots, parts of the population will likely face a significant deterioration of already high levels of acute food insecurity, putting lives and livelihoods at risk.

Identified through forward-looking analysis, these hotspots have the potential for acute food insecurity to rise significantly during the outlook period, under the effects of multiple overlapping drivers, interlinked or mutually reinforcing. These fall under the categories of conflict and organized violence, economic shocks, weather extremes and climate variability. Humanitarian access constraints, malnutrition and animal and plant pests and disease can exacerbate the impact of these drivers.

Targeted humanitarian action is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods in all 18 hunger hotspots. In eight of these – Afghanistan, Haiti, Nigeria, the Sahel region (Burkina Faso and Mali), Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Yemen – humanitarian action is critical to prevent starvation and death.

To this end, the present report provides country-specific recommendations on priorities for:

- anticipatory action – short-term protective interventions to be implemented before new humanitarian needs materialize; and
- emergency response – actions to address existing humanitarian needs.

## Rationale for the inclusion of anticipatory action recommendations

Anticipatory actions are short-term disaster risk management interventions implemented during the critical time window between an early-warning trigger – the point when forecasts show that a hazard is likely to occur in the future – and the actual impact of the forecast hazard on lives and livelihoods. The objective is to protect the most vulnerable people and their livelihoods from the expected impacts of the hazard.

This report features recommendations for anticipatory actions and emergency response, tailored to the flagged risks. Anticipatory action recommendations are only included if the risk analysis indicates a hazard/shock that has yet to materialize in the near future. When a hazard/shock has already affected agricultural livelihoods and/or food security, the window of opportunity for anticipatory action is usually considered closed, even if the impacts of the hazard/shock are expected to continue in the present and future. In such cases, only emergency response recommendations are made in this report.

Recognizing the role that anticipatory action can play in protracted crises, anticipatory action recommendations are included in such contexts, when appropriate, if the aim of the actions is to mitigate the impact of a new hazard or shock, rather than addressing pre-existing humanitarian needs and underlying vulnerabilities. Considering the long outlook period of over six months featured in this report, the proposed anticipatory actions are indicative and would only be suggested for implementation if a trigger is reached or clear early-warning signs manifest. Some recommendations also refer to preparedness activities, which are always critical for the effective and timely implementation of anticipatory actions.

The selection of hunger hotspots is based on consensus among food security experts and conflict, economic and natural hazards analysts from FAO and WFP, both Rome- and field-based. The process is informed by an initial prioritization, using a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators that include:

- Latest absolute figures (projections, where available) of people in Crisis or worse (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC]/Cadre Harmonisé [CH] Phase 3 and above) and the prevalence of these levels of acute food insecurity in the population analysed, as well as the year-on-year trend of both absolute figures and prevalence.
- Forward-looking risk analysis of key drivers of acute food insecurity, namely conflict and political violence, economic shocks and natural hazards.
- Ongoing or planned agricultural activities for the outlook period, and existing or likely disruptions caused by different events or risks.
- Aggravating factors, such as humanitarian access constraints, levels of acute malnutrition, lack of national coping capacity, displacement, and the incidence of animal and plant pests and diseases.

The report prioritizes the use of IPC and CH as data sources on Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 3 and above). When recent IPC/CH is not available, alternative sources have been considered such as the WFP Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI), including its application to remotely collected data (rCARI), Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), or the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET).

The acute food insecurity figures presented in this report for the Syrian Arab Republic, Myanmar and Ethiopia are extracted from HNO/HRP number of people in need of food and livelihood assistance. These are based on WFP's CARI/rCARI methodology for Syrian Arab Republic and Myanmar, in addition to the Sudan.

For Ethiopia, acute food insecurity figures are based on a combination of WFP CARI, Household Economy Analysis (HEA), Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM), and Village Assessment Survey (VAS). For all the other 16 countries where data is available, acute food insecurity figures are based on IPC/CH.

FEWS NET and IPC use the same scale although FEWS NET figures may differ as it uses a different approach. Populations that are classified as 'moderately acute food insecure' and 'severely acute food insecure', as per WFP's CARI methodology, are reported as an approximation to populations facing Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 and above).

The cut-off date for the analysis and information contained in this report was 17 May 2023.

This report is part of a series of analytical products produced under the Global Network Against Food Crises to enhance and coordinate the generation and sharing of evidence-based information and analysis for preventing and addressing food crises. In May 2023, the Global Network, in collaboration with the Food Security Information Network, released the 2023 Global Report on Food Crises, which highlights the number of people estimated to be in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 and above) and the prevalence of these numbers within the population analysed in 58 countries/territories with food crisis situations in 2022. The report is available at [fightfoodcrises.net](https://fightfoodcrises.net) and [fsinplatform.org](https://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"> <li>• Have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; OR</li> <li>• Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies.</li> </ul>	<b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.
4 Emergency	Some households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have large food consumption gaps which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; OR</li> <li>• Are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation.</li> </ul>	<b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> 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 extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality).	<b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> to revert/prevent widespread death and total collapse of livelihoods.

\* Some households can be in Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5) even if areas are not classified as Famine (IPC/CH Phase 5). Given the severity and implications of classifying Famine, specific IPC protocols have been developed, and special considerations are identified in the IPC Technical Manual 3.1 (see p. 24-25 for more details on criteria) [www.ipcinfo.org/ipc/technical/manual\\_en](https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc/technical/manual_en)

The classification of areas in Famine Likely is permitted when all IPC protocols for Famine classification are met, except for the existence of reliable evidence for all three outcomes – food consumption or livelihood change, global acute malnutrition (GAM), and crude death rate. Areas can be classified as Famine Likely if minimally adequate evidence available indicates that a Famine may be occurring or will occur. Famine and Famine Likely are equally severe, the only difference is the amount of reliable evidence available to support the statement.

# Upcoming trends of food insecurity drivers

To identify hunger hotspots, FAO and WFP have assessed how key drivers of acute food insecurity are likely to evolve in the coming months, along with their potential combined effects across countries; the related risks of deterioration were also assessed. Below is an overview of key findings.

## Organized violence and conflict risks

Organized violence and armed conflict continue to constitute key drivers of acute food insecurity in the following hunger hotspots: Central African Republic, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Nigeria, the Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali), Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

The recent escalation of conflict in the Sudan marks a new peak in global levels of violence which had experienced a slight reduction since the last edition of this report,<sup>3, 4</sup> which was characterized by a three-year peak in conflict incidents – in particular, incidents involving explosive devices. In August 2022 alone, over 6 000 explosions and other remote-violence incidents were recorded. Since then, the scale and intensity of armed conflict has gradually reduced to 4 259 events in March 2023.<sup>5</sup> Ceasefires and effective steps towards conflict resolution, for example in Ethiopia and Yemen, have contributed to this trend, and in particular to the reduction of the use of explosives and remote violence. However, this trend has likely been reversed as of mid-April 2023, with conflict erupting in the Sudan and leading to a surge in violence. Despite major uncertainty, the conflict is likely to drive global conflict trends in the outlook period and affect several neighbouring countries (see: Regional implications of the Sudan crisis). Further, several countries projected to have alarming rates of acute food insecurity in the outlook period are impacted by an increasing use of explosive ordnance, including the laying of new landmines, use of cluster munitions and deployment of improvised explosive devices. The use of explosive weapons and other conflict incidents disrupts market and humanitarian access, and destroys and degrades agricultural land. This includes the deliberate targeting of water infrastructure and sources, which contributes to a shortage of water for food production.

The use of siege tactics, as part of armed conflict and urban organized violence, continues to compound acute food insecurity, through the use of hunger as a weapon of war. In several hunger hotspots, siege tactics have pushed, or are projected to push, people into catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity, highlighting the critical role of humanitarian access in preventing hunger. Additionally, while not at the same levels as 2022, elevated food and fuel prices are expected to continue driving protests and riots, with the potential for further deterioration into organized violence.<sup>6</sup>

## Economic risks

The global economy is expected to slow down in 2023,<sup>7</sup> amid monetary tightening in advanced economies, increasing cost of credit affecting emerging and developing economies, and persistently high international commodity prices. The International Monetary Fund projects global GDP growth at 2.8 percent in 2023, the lowest value in the last ten years besides the COVID-19-induced plunge in 2020.<sup>8</sup> The slowdown in global growth could have a particular impact on the economies of low- and middle-income countries that rely heavily on exports to advanced economies.

Over the past year, high international commodity and credit costs have steadily widened the external imbalances of numerous countries, depleted foreign-exchange reserves, and contributed to several countries sliding towards or into debt distress.<sup>9</sup> Several governments have asked for financial support from multilateral institutions and bilateral partners, to renegotiate and restructure their external liabilities. Depleting foreign-exchange reserves have resulted in prolonged inability to finance import of essential goods, including food and energy commodities. As inflation levels remain high, central banks in advanced economies are likely to further raise interest rates.<sup>10</sup>

While international prices came down from a peak in 2022, prices remain above pre-pandemic levels. International food prices saw a steady reduction for 12 consecutive months until March 2023, before rebounding slightly in April, when the FAO Food Price Index was 127.2 – well below the all-time high of 159.7 reached in March 2022 but still significantly above the pre-pandemic, five-year average of 94.8.<sup>11</sup> However, the year-long reduction of international quotations has not significantly translated into lower domestic prices, due to an array of factors such as the time lag of transmission from international to domestic prices,<sup>12</sup> a strong US dollar – the currency used for most international trade – vis-à-vis national currencies, the continuously high prices of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers,<sup>13</sup> domestic macroeconomic distress complicating access to key imports, and high energy and labour costs impacting food retail prices. Over the past year, local food prices have increased by 15 percent in 54 countries, including 3 countries where they increased by more than 100 percent.<sup>14</sup>

As food prices are likely to remain elevated over the outlook period and macroeconomic distress in low- and middle-income countries is unlikely to subside, the subsequent deterioration of purchasing power is expected to negatively affect households' access to food in the coming months. Increasingly limited economic access is likely to be further compounded by the overall reduction in donor support to offset global hunger, as donor governments plan to scale back their contributions closer to pre-pandemic levels, while global humanitarian needs and cost of assistance remain at extremely high levels.<sup>15</sup>

## Natural hazard risks

Following a rare, prolonged, almost three-year La Niña phase, as of May 2023, El Niño Southern Oscillation-neutral conditions are prevailing, meaning sea surface temperatures are near average across most of the equatorial Pacific Ocean. However, forecast models indicate an increasing probability of El Niño conditions developing by mid-2023. The latest forecast from the International Research Institute for Climate and Society from May suggests an 82 percent likelihood of El Niño conditions starting in the May–July period.<sup>16</sup>

This shift in climate patterns can have significant implications for different regions in the world.<sup>17</sup>

Historically, typical rainfall patterns during El Niño events tend to be the reverse of La Niña. However, no two El Niño events are the same, and other climate drivers play a role. Therefore, continuous monitoring of seasonal forecasts is critical.

The Dry Corridor of **Central America**, which includes countries such as Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, is highly likely to experience below-normal rainfall during the ongoing first rainy season (*Primera*: April–June). This below-average rainfall is expected to continue throughout the entire *Primera* season, posing challenges for agriculture and food security in these already vulnerable regions. Dryness is expected to persist also through the August–October period, possibly also affecting the main *Postrera* bean crop.

The **hurricane season** in the Caribbean Sea starts in June, lasting until November and peaking in October. While an El Niño event usually suppresses hurricane activity, latest forecasts indicate a moderate likelihood of an average to slightly above-average season.<sup>18</sup> Due to above-average sea surface temperatures in the northern Caribbean Sea, primary risk areas include Haiti.

In **East Africa**, average to above-average rainfall conditions are expected for the remainder of the ongoing March–May season. However, given the magnitude of livelihood losses incurred during the past five consecutive seasons of below-average rainy seasons, drought recovery will take many years.

In **South Sudan**, forecasts for the June to September period show a tendency for below-average rainfall in eastern areas and on average in western areas. However, due to poor skill of these forecasts, this outlook is uncertain. Additionally, heavy March–April rains over the basin of Lake Victoria – the main source of water of the White Nile River which crosses South Sudan – are keeping the lake levels near their historical record; this heightens the risk of continuation in 2023 of a succession of unusually widespread floods, causing crop and livestock losses.

**West Africa and the Sahel** are forecast to have a timely onset of the rainy season in May–June, which will be beneficial for crop development and food production. However, there is an increased probability of consecutive flooding seasons along rivers in the Niger, Mali, northern and eastern Burkina Faso, and western Nigeria, which could reduce the production of crops such as maize and millet.

In **Afghanistan**, the ongoing spring crop season (April–May in most of the country, and March–May in the arid southern regions) is likely to conclude with cumulative below-average rainfall.

For important agricultural seasons later in the year, given the long lead time, seasonal forecasts are still highly uncertain; therefore, these need to be interpreted with the required caution and regularly monitored as their predictive skills improve.

For the October–December short/*Deyr* rains season in the **Horn of Africa**, early signs suggest above-average rainfall in large parts of Kenya, Somalia, and southern and eastern Ethiopia.

This would provide some relief for vulnerable populations in rural and pastoralist areas, even though full livelihood recovery will take years. In addition, this brings risk of flooding.

In **Southern Africa**, early signs suggest erratic rainfall patterns for the November–March rainy season. The southern half, including Malawi, may experience average to below-average rainfall.

In **Afghanistan**, the November–April season could be marked by below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures, potentially leading to water scarcity, and negatively affecting crop growth for another season.

## Regional implications of the Sudan crisis

The eruption of armed conflict in the Sudan in April 2023 is likely to have significant ramifications for its neighbouring countries, in particular large population movements and increasing levels of acute food insecurity among displaced and returning populations, and host communities across several regions.

Before the crisis, the Sudan was hosting over 1 million refugees, including 800 000 South Sudanese, 135 000 Eritreans, 93 000 Syrians, 70 000 Ethiopians and 25 000 nationals of the Central African Republic.<sup>19</sup> If the conflict persists, many are likely to seek to return to their country of origin or seek refuge in third countries, in addition to Sudanese nationals trying to flee the country. As of 17 May 2023, significant cross-border movements have been reported, with more than 220 000 people having fled to Chad, South Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and the Central African Republic.<sup>20</sup> The most significant cross-border movements so far have been Sudanese refugees arriving in Chad and Egypt, over 18 000 in Ethiopia and South Sudanese returning to South Sudan. This includes over 83 000 new arrivals, primarily Sudanese nationals, in Egypt, more than 60 000 in Chad, 57 000 in South Sudan, and around 3 400 in the Central African Republic.<sup>21</sup> More than 11 000 people have crossed into Ethiopia with over 1 000 daily arrivals, among them Sudanese citizens, returning Ethiopians and third-country nationals. Comparatively smaller number of arrivals in Libya and Eritrea are ongoing.

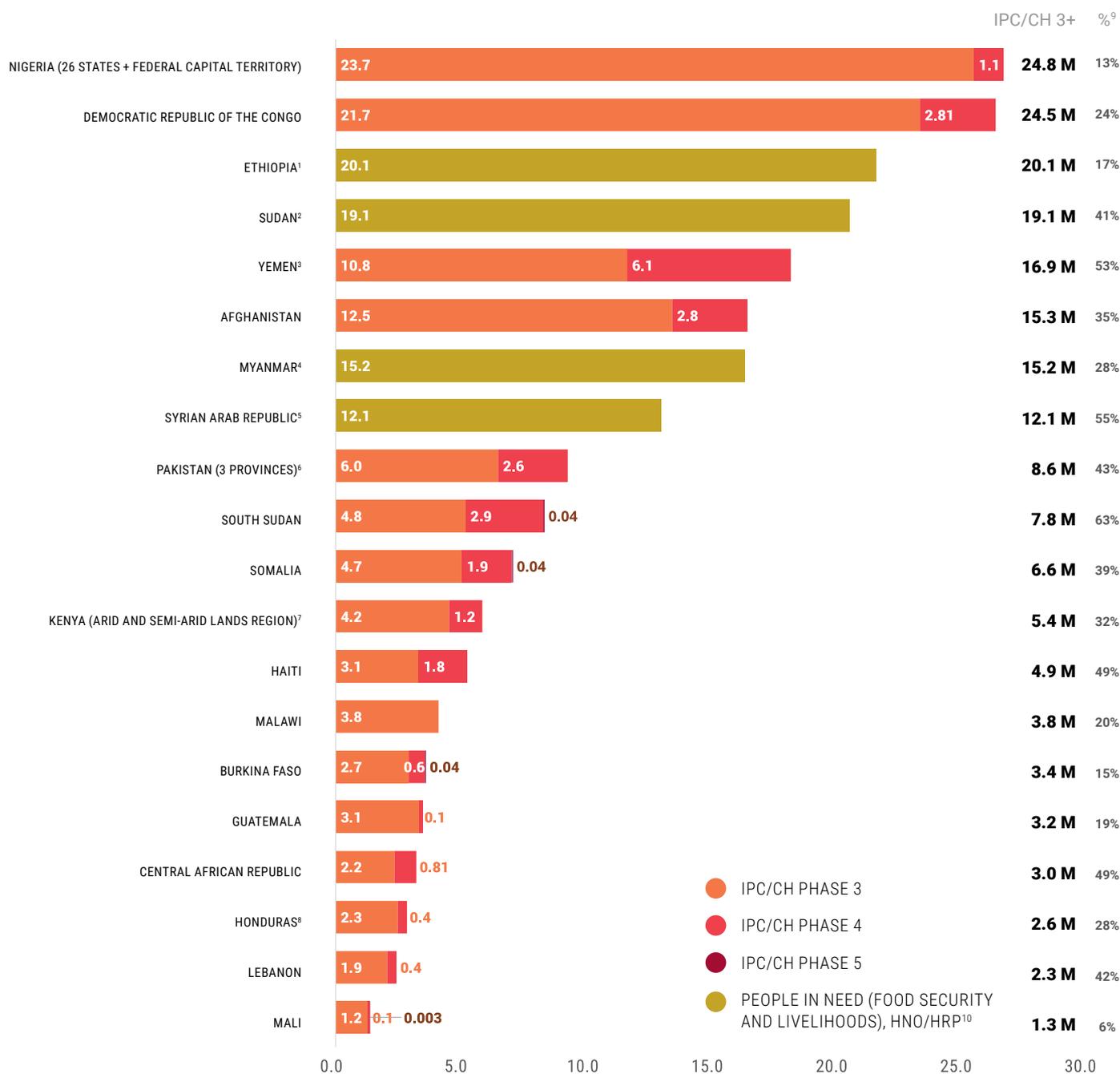
Without a conflict resolution, more people will be forced to flee in search of safety and basic assistance. The focus of the fighting on cities and towns, including the capital Khartoum, home to some 6 million people, is likely to continue to drive displacement. The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) projects that approximately over 1 million people will flee the Sudan to the seven neighbouring countries by October 2023, including 640 000 Sudanese, 204 000 returnees, 166 500 migrant returnees and 51 000 refugees of other nationalities hosted by the Sudan.<sup>22</sup> Around one-third of those, an estimated 350 000 individuals, are expected to seek refuge in Egypt alone and 100 000 in Chad. Moreover, 250 000 are projected to move to South Sudan, including 144 000 returnees. 215 000 are projected to cross to Ethiopia, including 100 000. Around 55 000 are likely to move to Eritrea, and 25 000 to the Central African Republic and Libya.<sup>23</sup>

Insecurity in the Sudan will likely also impact supply routes for commercial and relief goods, particularly in and from Port Sudan.<sup>24</sup> This could affect humanitarian actors' ability to secure the constant flow of assistance that is required for regional relief needs. The disruption of trade and supply chains would further exhaust low foreign-exchange reserves and drive already elevated prices in several countries, adding further pressure on the already strained economic situation and inflation. South Sudan, which relies on Port Sudan for both imports – including humanitarian goods – and crucial oil exports, is of particular concern.<sup>25</sup> In addition, disruptions in cross-border trade in conflict regions (greater Darfur region in the west and greater Kordofan region and Blue Nile state in the east) are likely to result in reduced availability of commodities and rising food prices both in the Sudan and neighbouring countries. Trade flow disruption is already translating into significant price increases for food and fuel, with up to 84 percent for fuel and 56 percent for the basic food basket observed since the beginning of the conflict.<sup>26</sup>

The movement of refugees into neighbouring countries and the impact of disruptions to trade could also drive tensions among host communities, already displaced populations, and new arrivals, as many of these countries are already grappling with significant populations of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) competing for limited livelihood resources and labour opportunities. Chad and South Sudan are of particular concern as the influx of refugees could further destabilize already fragile social and political environments.

# Number of people in acute food insecurity in hunger hotspot countries

in 2023 (where available, most recent projection), in millions



Source of data: FAO and WFP. 2023. *Hunger Hotspots analysis (June to November 2023)*. Rome.

The data presented is most recent projection, data is from 2023 except for Ethiopia, Honduras, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen (all 2022). For El Salvador and Nicaragua, no recent IPC/CH or WFP CARI data is available. <sup>1</sup>HRP 2023 (February 2023). Data is from 2022. Refers to the number of People in Need (PIN) of food security and livelihood assistance. <sup>2</sup>Based on WFP CARI. <sup>3</sup>Most current data reported is non-peak. Peak numbers are presented in the graph on page 10. Data is from 2022. <sup>4</sup>Based on HNO 2023 (data source: WFP rCARI). Data is from 2022. Refers to the number of people in need of food security and livelihood assistance. <sup>5</sup>Based on WFP CARI. Data is from 2022. Refers to the number of people in need of food security and livelihood assistance. <sup>6</sup>Less than 50 percent of the population covered by IPC/CH. Data is from 2022. <sup>7</sup>Less than 50 percent of the population covered by IPC/CH. <sup>8</sup>Data is from 2022. <sup>9</sup>Prevalence of the population analysed expressed in percentage terms. <sup>10</sup>Populations that are classified as 'moderately acute food insecure' and 'severely acute food insecure' as per WFP's CARI methodology are reported as an approximation to populations facing Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 and above).

The IPC technical manual provides guidance on where each indicator sits within the IPC analytical framework. For details see: [ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ipcinfo/manual/IPC\\_Technical\\_Manual\\_3\\_Final.pdf](https://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/manual/IPC_Technical_Manual_3_Final.pdf).

# Highest concern: Hotspots with catastrophic conditions

This category includes:

- countries with populations already in Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5);
- and countries at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions, i.e. where an extremely vulnerable population in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) is facing severe aggravating factors – especially access constraints – which indicate the possibility of a further deterioration and possible occurrence of catastrophic conditions in the outlook period. By definition, this category also includes countries with Famine or Risk of Famine.

**Afghanistan, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen** remain hotspots of highest concern for the June to November 2023 outlook. **Haiti, the Sudan** and **Sahel region (Burkina Faso and Mali)** have been included in this category for this edition, increasing the level of concern from very high in the last edition. These countries all have segments of populations identified or projected to experience starvation or death (Catastrophe/Famine, IPC/CH Phase 5), or at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions. They require the most urgent attention.

In **Afghanistan**, approximately 15.3 million people (35 percent of the population analysed) are estimated to face high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) between May and October 2023, including just under 2.8 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). While these numbers may stabilize in the coming months, a deterioration of the economic situation – due to a potential drop in foreign earnings from humanitarian funding and exports, as well as the impact of the ban on female staff and the effects of below-average precipitation – could result in a worsening of acute food insecurity.

In **Haiti**, around 19 000 people faced catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 5) in September 2022 inside Cité Soleil, one of the capital's neighbourhoods most affected by violence. Despite a moderate improvement in humanitarian access, urban populations in areas where armed groups are present remain particularly at risk of extreme lack of food and/or other basic essentials. Overall, acute food insecurity continues to deteriorate, with a record 4.9 million people projected to be facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) levels of acute food insecurity by June 2023, including 1.8 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).<sup>27</sup>

In **Somalia**, alarming acute food insecurity is projected to deteriorate through June 2023, bringing 40 350 people to Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), facing starvation and death, due to impacts of a three-year drought, high food and water prices, and persistent conflict.<sup>28</sup> About 6.6 million people are projected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) between April and June, including 1.85 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

In **South Sudan**, dry spells, flooding, high food prices and persistent subnational conflict will likely drive persistently high level of acute food insecurity, including 43 000 people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) through July 2023. The impact of the conflict in the Sudan, in particular the influx of large numbers of returnees and disruptions of supply chains, could exacerbate these alarming levels of acute food insecurity. Overall, 7.8 million people, or 63 percent of the population, are projected to face Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above), including 2.9 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), during the lean season between April and July 2023.<sup>29</sup>

In the **Sudan**, the number of people facing acute food insecurity is likely to dramatically increase due to the impact of the conflict on the production, availability and access to food, compounding a fragile humanitarian situation. Hunger is already expected to increase during the lean season from June to September 2023. At least 19.1 million people will likely be acutely food insecure through September, based on WFP's CARI methodology, as a result of the conflict.<sup>30</sup> Suspensions of live-saving assistance are a particular concern, in addition to the failure to scale up to the new needs.

In the **Sahel region (Burkina Faso and Mali)**, already catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity are expected to worsen between June and August 2023, when 45 200 people are projected to face Catastrophe (CH Phase 5) in conflict-affected Boucle du Mouhoun and Sahel regions in Burkina Faso, and Menaka region in Mali.<sup>31</sup> These are the highest figures of populations in catastrophic conditions ever projected for Burkina Faso, and the first time that Mali has had projected populations in Catastrophe (CH Phase 5), caused by the besiegement of civilians by non-state armed groups limiting the movement of goods and people, as well as livelihood activities. Deteriorating conflict – which could lead to further spill over into neighbouring countries – and high food prices in conflict-affected areas are expected to drive worsening acute food insecurity levels in the outlook period. The situation would be further aggravated if the forecast above-average rainfall, which heightens the risk of flooding, were to materialize.

In **Nigeria**, acute food insecurity is expected to deteriorate in the outlook period, driven by the multidimensional security crisis, together with weak macroeconomic conditions and multiple natural hazards. Over 24.8 million people are projected to be acutely food insecure between June and August 2023, including 1.1 million people in Emergency (CH Phase 4).<sup>32</sup> Humanitarian access constraints remain very high, particularly in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, where at least 31 local government areas remain partially or completely inaccessible.<sup>33, 34, 35</sup>

In **Yemen**, while increased humanitarian assistance due to a lull in fighting and a stabilization of food prices contributed to a relief from catastrophic conditions, concerns over extreme levels of acute food insecurity persist, especially in case of a resumption of full-scale hostilities and a new decline in assistance levels. The 6.1 million people estimated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) as of December 2022 are particularly vulnerable, out of nearly 17 million people facing Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above).<sup>36</sup>

# Very high concern: Hotspots with deteriorating critical conditions

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Several other hunger hotspots need urgent action to avert extreme hunger or death. These are countries with sizeable populations – over 500 000 people – estimated or projected to be facing Emergency levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4) or identified as severely acute food insecure, as per WFP's CARI or rCARI methodology; or countries with more than 10 percent of the analysed population in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) or severely acute food insecure, and at least 50 percent of the population analysed. In the countries included in this report, life-threatening conditions are expected to further intensify in the outlook period. The **Central African Republic**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, **Ethiopia**, **Kenya**, **Pakistan** and the **Syrian Arab Republic** are hotspots of very high concern, and the alert is also extended to **Myanmar** in this edition.

In the **Central African Republic**, where 807 000 people are facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) from April to August 2023,<sup>37</sup> critical levels of acute food insecurity could further deteriorate; this is especially the case among conflict-affected and displaced populations, as well as poor households in urban and peri-urban areas whose access to food is limited due to low purchasing power, rising food prices and deteriorating livelihoods.<sup>38</sup>

The intensification of conflict and subsequent large-scale displacement, amid significant access constraints for humanitarian actors, will likely drive a further deterioration of acute food insecurity in northeastern provinces of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**. Northeastern provinces already concentrate almost 30 percent of the 2.8 million people projected to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) nationwide between January and June 2023.<sup>39</sup>

In **Ethiopia**, high levels of acute food insecurity are expected to persist as a result of subnational conflict, high food prices, the lingering impact of past droughts, and an estimated 4.6 million people internally displaced across the country. In 2023, 20.1 million people need food assistance, and around 7.4 million children and women need nutrition assistance.<sup>40</sup>

In **Kenya**, a prolonged drought, a deteriorating economy resulting in above-average food prices,<sup>41</sup> and localized conflict are driving record critical levels of acute food insecurity. Over 1.2 million people are projected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between March and June 2023.<sup>42</sup>

In **Myanmar**, the intensity of the conflict and ongoing, high numbers of displacement amid extreme constraints to humanitarian access – which are likely to further deteriorate in the outlook period – raise very high concerns over the potential level of people facing critical levels of acute food insecurity; 15.2 million people were expected to require food and livelihood assistance in 2022, as per WFP's rCARI,<sup>43</sup> and 2.2 million children and women are in need of nutrition assistance in 2023.

A likely worsening of the economic and political crises could further reduce households' purchasing power and ability to afford food and essential goods in **Pakistan**, 2.6 million people (13 percent of the population) were likely to face Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between September and December 2022.<sup>44</sup>

In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, deteriorating economic conditions and the impact of the earthquakes in early 2023 are likely to increase acute food insecurity. Based on WFP's CARI methodology, 12.1 million people were assessed to be acutely food insecure between August and October 2022.<sup>45</sup> 5.9 million Syrian children and women require nutrition assistance in 2023 – an 18 percent increase compared to 2022.<sup>46</sup>

## Other countries that require monitoring

Several other countries or situations, while not identified as hunger hotspots in this report, merit close monitoring. These include: i) countries or situations where data was insufficient or not available to allow for a comparative assessment based on the applied methodology, but which were flagged as concerning during the discussions on the basis of other evidence, as described below; and ii) countries or situations in protracted crisis with high numbers of people in acute food insecurity, but without clear evidence for a likely food security deterioration of a level comparable with trends observed in countries selected as hunger hotspots. Such situations of concern include, but are not limited to, the following countries:

Despite a lack of recently updated data, available analyses suggest that a large proportion of the population in the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** might suffer from low levels of food consumption and poor dietary diversity. This is mainly the result of a protracted economic crisis, which was exacerbated by the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The situation is aggravated by an estimated below-average 2022 agricultural output,<sup>47</sup> largely due to dry conditions in the planting season (March–April) and flooding in July–August. This could have a severe impact on food security, particularly during the lean season in May–August.

The impact of Cyclone Freddy and continued effects of the conflict in the northern Cabo Delgado province are likely to stress food insecurity in **Mozambique** in the coming months. The double landfall of Cyclone Freddy in February and again in March led to flooding of an estimated 0.4 to 0.6 million ha of cropland in 8 provinces, of which 135 000 ha of cropland are considered lost.<sup>48</sup> Flooding also resulted in a rapid rise in cholera cases.<sup>49</sup> An estimated 3.1 million people were acutely food insecure and in need of urgent assistance (IPC Phase 3 and above) until March 2023,<sup>50</sup> without considering some districts in Cabo Delgado that were inaccessible due to security and where food security assessments could not be conducted. In Cabo Delgado, the number of people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) increased more than sixfold in 2023, compared to the previous year.<sup>51</sup>

The food security situation in **Zimbabwe** is foreseen to remain stressed in southern provinces, due to localized shortfalls in cereal production.<sup>52</sup> Substantial rainfall deficits since February 2023, combined with high temperatures, are foreseen to result in reduced harvests in the south; parts of the south were already projected to remain in Crisis (IPC Phase 3).<sup>53</sup>

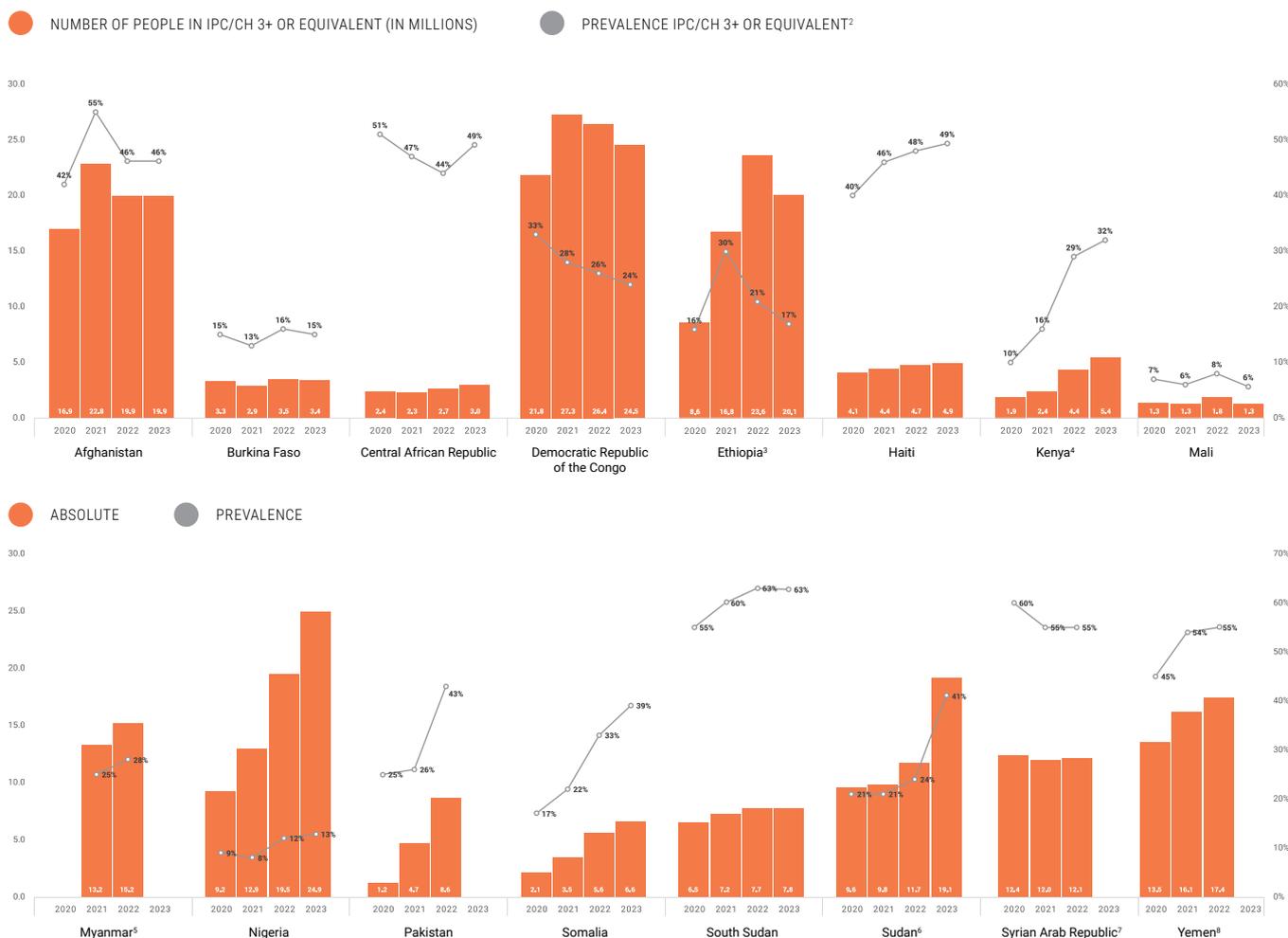
Moreover, persistent double-digit inflation,<sup>54</sup> coupled with currency depreciation and shortages of foreign currency, continues to severely hamper access to food, particularly considering limited wage growth.

In **Colombia**, 15.5 million Colombians, 30 percent of the national population,<sup>55</sup> faced high levels of acute food insecurity in October–November 2022, based on WFP's CARI methodology; a further 1.3 million migrants with intention to settle in the country were in high levels of acute food insecurity between June and August 2022 (52 percent of the migrant population living in Colombia), based on WFP's CARI methodology.<sup>56</sup> The likely continuing economic challenges,<sup>57</sup> high inflation,<sup>58</sup> and potential adverse impacts of dry weather conditions from June to November,<sup>59</sup> as well as conflict and the subsequent confinements of 2022,<sup>60</sup> require close monitoring of the situation.

In **Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**, the situation requires attention despite the lack of recent comparable data. Available evidence points towards relative stabilization of the economic situation since 2021, after seven years of economic recession,<sup>61</sup> though inflation is expected to remain very high at 400 percent in 2023.<sup>62</sup> Despite the economic growth due to an improvement in oil production in 2022 and early 2023,<sup>63</sup> scarcity of foreign exchange, coupled with hyperinflation and the maxi-depreciation of the national currency, are key factors contributing to the general increase of prices of many goods, including food staples, which have affected access to food.<sup>64</sup> Forecast below-average rainfall between June and November may affect the 2023 main maize and minor paddy crops,<sup>65</sup> constraining further the availability of staple foods. Food security interventions plan to reach 2 million people under the 2022–2023 HRP.<sup>66</sup>

In the **Gambia** and **Senegal**, acute food insecurity projections for the 2023 lean season (June–August) will reach levels higher than the five-year average, and at the same time as last year. Over 300 000 people in the Gambia and nearly 1.3 million people in Senegal are projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 and above),<sup>67</sup> an increase of 55 and 43 percent respectively compared to the 2022 lean season. The food security situation is likely to deteriorate further over the outlook period, due to very high food prices, macroeconomic challenges, localized impacts of flooding in the previous agricultural season,<sup>68</sup> and elevated currency depreciation in the Gambia.<sup>69</sup> Both the Gambia and Senegal have registered very high inflation rates and considerable increases of prices of imported and local products, which is likely to continue to hinder food access.

### Acute food insecurity trends in hunger hotspots of highest and very high concern 2020–2023<sup>1</sup> peak numbers and prevalence



Source of data: FAO and WFP. 2023. *Hunger Hotspots analysis (June to November 2023)*. Rome.

<sup>1</sup> Data for 2023 is considered as expected peak based on information available as of May 2023. For Ethiopia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen, no peak data is available for 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Prevalence of the population analysed expressed in percentage terms.

<sup>3</sup> The number for 2022 is from HRP report (while previous numbers are from IPC analyses). The 2021 IPC peak number reflects the merger of the October 2020 and May 2021 IPC analysis results. The Government of Ethiopia has not endorsed the May 2021 IPC analysis.

<sup>4</sup> Arid and semi-arid lands region.

<sup>5</sup> Based on WFP rCARI.

<sup>6</sup> 2020-2022 data are based on IPC. The 2023 projection is based on WFP CARI and does not take into account seasonality.

<sup>7</sup> Based on WFP CARI.

<sup>8</sup> The 2022 peak number pertains to IPC analysis released in March 2022. There has not been a new IPC analysis released yet in 2023.

Comparison over time indicates a general trend however comparability issues exist in terms of:

(i) Haiti and Kenya (larger coverage of urban areas in 2020); the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Pakistan (increase geographical and population coverage, respectively from 65 to 94 percent of the population analysed between 2020 and 2023, from 46 to 100 percent between 2020 and 2022, from 51 to 86 percent between 2020 and 2023, and from 2 to 9 percent in 2022); the Central African Republic, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen (increase in country total population estimates between 2020 and 2022/2023);

(ii) analysis time periods for Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

Caution in reading and using this analysis should be observed. Trends of prevalence and total numbers can diverge due to changes in population covered.

# Country risk narratives

## Asia and the Pacific

### Afghanistan

#### Key drivers of food insecurity: macroeconomic crisis, below-average snow and rainfall

The already alarming food security situation is likely to continue in the outlook period. This is due to a possible drop of foreign earnings from humanitarian funding, which had allowed for a precarious stabilization of the Afghan economy in late 2022, and a growing trade deficit.<sup>70, 71</sup>

A potential further reduction of humanitarian funding,<sup>72, 73</sup> which represents the main source of foreign currency, could destabilize the economy, amid ongoing tensions between main donor governments and the de facto authorities, further fuelled by successive bans on female education and employment.<sup>74</sup> In addition, highly concentrated coal and food export revenues could drop if the economic and political crisis in Pakistan – Afghanistan's main trading partner – and the security situation in northwestern border areas deteriorate.<sup>75, 76, 77, 78</sup> As a result, modest recent gains in foreign currency reserves may reverse, as could the recent appreciation of the afghani, eventually restricting much needed imports.<sup>79</sup> Meanwhile, prices of almost all key commodities remain well above the two-year average, which remains a factor in denying the most vulnerable people access to food.<sup>80</sup> The de facto authorities' ban on opium cultivation could reduce income especially of poor rural households who previously engaged in opium cultivation.<sup>81</sup>

Near-average precipitation during spring, which is forecast to continue in summer months, is unlikely to compensate for overall

precipitation deficits and below-average snow depth, and ease drought conditions in the northern, western and southern areas in the country.<sup>82</sup> In addition, even a projected near-average summer harvest is unlikely to compensate for the country's wheat deficit.<sup>83</sup> A recent Moroccan locust outbreak in northern and northeastern regions could significantly reduce food production.<sup>84, 85</sup>

According to the latest available food security analysis, approximately 15.3 million people (35 percent of the population analysed) are projected to face high acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) between May and October 2023, including just under 2.8 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). The levels of acute food insecurity have declined compared to the same season in 2022, largely due to seasonal improvements and the scale-up of humanitarian assistance in 2022, however acute food insecurity could deteriorate, especially where humanitarian assistance faces access constraints. The ban on women's participation in the humanitarian response poses a huge challenge to the delivery of quality humanitarian assistance leading to significant additional access constraints, particularly to the most vulnerable, women and children.<sup>86</sup> Over 3.2 million children and 804 000 pregnant and breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished between November 2022 and April 2023, with almost all provinces facing global acute malnutrition (GAM) prevalence above 10 percent.<sup>87</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Anticipatory actions

- Support the upcoming cultivation of the spring/summer maize, rice and wheat with harvesting packages, while supporting the establishment of green corridors between rural and urban centres to encourage safe spaces to sell produce.
- Implement cash-for-work activities by supporting harvesting activities, to provide income sources, including for those farmers who are expected to be impacted by the below-average winter harvest due to low precipitation.
- Implement locust-control operations in northern and northeastern regions, to mitigate the risk of further Moroccan locust outbreaks.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 2.7 billion for food security and livelihoods, and for USD 287 million for nutrition interventions.

- Sustain humanitarian assistance, including food assistance and agricultural inputs, to ensure people facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) are met with food security, nutrition-related and agricultural livelihoods programmes.
- Provide livestock health and support packages in time for the spring/summer agricultural season.
- Maintain prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition activities integrated with the food security, health, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) package of services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Monitor the consequences of the global food crisis, rising food prices and insecurity impacting humanitarian assistance; ensure that interventions are adapted to anticipate contextual changes.
- Establish a local nutrition surveillance system to monitor a deterioration of the nutrition situation, especially in high-risk areas.
- Advocate for the return of female staff to work across the country to ensure their participation to reach populations in need safely and effectively with principled and quality assistance – be they men, women, boys, or girls.

## Myanmar

**Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict, high prices**

Acute food insecurity could further increase as armed conflict is likely to intensify in the coming months, amid economic uncertainty, lack of humanitarian access, displacement and high food prices.

Over the past six months, conflict further intensified across the country,<sup>88, 89, 90</sup> resulting in movement restrictions, high numbers of civilian casualties and displacement.<sup>91</sup> As of March 2023, an additional 357 000 people have been displaced in the previous six months, resulting in a continuously increasing number of IDPs, estimated at over 1.76 million.<sup>92</sup> The recent expansion of martial-law orders over a growing number of townships indicates a likely intensification of conflict, which could be further amplified if preparations for general elections in the coming months go ahead.<sup>93, 94, 95, 96</sup>

The violence could reverse a fragile economic recovery, undermine agricultural production and lead to new displacement.<sup>97</sup> While the kyat has stabilized, foreign-exchange shortages persist, and the official exchange rate to the dollar is approximately 30 percent lower compared to the parallel exchange rate. The average price of rice in March 2023 was 74 percent higher.<sup>98</sup>

Access to food by poor households will further be constrained during the lean season (peak in July–August).

The situation is compounded by the impact of Cyclone Mocha in mid-May 2023. Heavy rains and winds triggered flash floods and landslides, washing away thousands of homes, and causing widespread damage to infrastructure in northern Rakhine State.

According to the latest Humanitarian Needs Overview, 15.2 million people, or approximately 28 percent of the population, were estimated to be acutely food insecure in 2022, as per WFP's rCARI methodology,<sup>99</sup> representing a sharp deterioration and increase by 2 million people compared to 2021. These populations are expected to require food and livelihood assistance in 2023. In addition, 2.2 million children and women need nutrition assistance in 2023, a 10 percent increase compared to 2022.<sup>100</sup> The November 2022 law,<sup>101</sup> prohibiting any organization from operating without a registration certificate or working with unregistered affiliates, further constrains the ability of humanitarian actors to reach people in need, amid already extreme access constraints.<sup>102</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Anticipatory actions**

- Boost local food production by establishing water-saving community gardens, and provide livestock and poultry support to subsistence and smallholder owners by distributing feed, vaccination and animal-health services, especially for households expected to be impacted by conflict intensification.
- Provide food assistance combined with small gardening packages (seeds, tools and fertilizers) with watertight drums for water collection, for people expected to be affected by the conflict intensification, including IDPs with access to land.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 192 million for food security and USD 48 million for nutrition interventions.

- Engage with humanitarian actors, civil society, international governments and key stakeholders to ensure unhindered humanitarian access for implementation and monitoring of emergency assistance programmes, in line with a principled approach.
- Provide timely agricultural inputs (paddy, pulse and vegetable seeds, fertilizers and tools) to sustain or enhance food-production capacity of crisis-affected people to restore, protect and improve their livelihood opportunities and food security.
- Sustain humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected areas and IDP populations, expanding into areas as humanitarian access becomes possible.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Increase monitoring of economic deterioration, rising food prices, insecurity, displacement, and household food insecurity and malnutrition.

## Pakistan

### Key drivers of food insecurity: economic and political crisis, 2022 floods

Acute food insecurity is likely to further deteriorate over the coming months, if the economic and political crisis further worsens, compounding the effects of the 2022 flooding.

Mounting public debt amid the current global economic slowdown has exacerbated the ongoing financial crisis.<sup>103</sup> Authorities will have to repay USD 77.5 billion of external debt between April 2023 and June 2026, a substantial amount considering a GDP of USD 350 billion in 2021.<sup>104</sup> Growing political instability and lagging reforms prevent the release of a crucial new credit line from the International Monetary Fund and additional support from bilateral partners.<sup>105, 106, 107</sup> The political crisis and civil unrest are likely to worsen ahead of general elections scheduled for October 2023, amid growing insecurity in the northwest. Shortages of foreign reserves and a depreciating currency are diminishing the country's

ability to import essential food and energy supplies,<sup>108, 109, 110, 111</sup> driving steadily increasing food inflation and causing nationwide energy cuts.<sup>112</sup>

The situation is compounded by the effects of devastating floods between July and September 2022, which caused damages and economic losses to the agriculture sector estimated at USD 30 billion.<sup>113</sup>

Over 8.5 million people (43 percent of the analysed population of 19.8 million) were likely to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between September and December 2022.<sup>114</sup> Food insecurity and malnutrition within and beyond the analysed regions is likely to deteriorate in the outlook period, as economic and political crises are reducing households' purchasing power and ability to afford food and essential goods.<sup>115</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The revised 2022 Floods Response Plan Pakistan calls for USD 269.4 million for food security and agriculture, and for USD 91 million for nutrition interventions.

- Enhance coverage of food and livelihood assistance, including in flood-affected areas, through appropriate modalities (food or cash and voucher), to reduce food-consumption gaps and protect assets, especially for populations in Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phases 3 and 4).
- Scale up the restoration and diversification of livelihoods, along with initiating income-generation/employment-creation livelihood opportunities and recovery interventions, particularly for female-headed households.
- Distribute agricultural inputs for the upcoming cereal planting season by providing access to seeds and fertilizers as well as pest and disease control, especially for vulnerable farmers with access constraints.

- Build and rehabilitate animal sheds/shelters, restock livestock, and distribute animal feed and supplements to the most vulnerable households, particularly those still recovering from the 2022 floods.
- Run animal vaccination campaigns in areas prone to diseases such as foot and mouth disease, peste des petits ruminants and lumpy skin disease, through partnerships of government agencies.
- Build and rehabilitate water infrastructure for agriculture and livestock, for better conservation and management.
- Increase coverage and reach of treatment of acute malnutrition programmes, in areas with very high GAM prevalence, and implement prevention of acute malnutrition activities as part of an integrated health and WASH service package.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Monitor the continuing consequences of the global food crisis, rising food prices, inflation trends, deteriorating security environment and political instability on humanitarian needs, ensuring that interventions are adapted to anticipate contextual changes.
- Support the enhancement and development of national multihazard monitoring, forecasting and early-warning systems for anticipatory action, which are grounded in impact-based forecasting. Strengthen the government's early-warning capacity to generate location-specific flood and impact-based forecasting.
- Build the capacity of national and provincial disaster-management authorities on inclusion of forecast-based-financing and risk insurance, as part of disaster management and sectoral contingency plans.
- Strengthen the shock-responsive nature of existing social-protection mechanisms (Benazir Income Support Programme) to ensure effective anticipatory action and humanitarian response through social-protection systems.

## Latin America and the Caribbean

### Haiti

#### Key drivers of food insecurity: organized violence, economic deterioration, reduced rainfall, hurricanes

Worsening macroeconomic conditions, rising insecurity and low agricultural production are likely to continue to drive already critical levels of food insecurity, especially in urban areas.

Inflation and food basket prices are likely to further increase, given the depreciation of the gourde, limited market supply and persistent fuel shortages,<sup>116, 117</sup> further eroding the purchasing power of vulnerable households.<sup>118</sup> Territorial control of armed groups is likely to expand, and the associated violence is expected to disrupt market supplies, access to markets, basic services and humanitarian assistance, while triggering new displacements.<sup>119, 120, 121, 122</sup>

Agricultural activities will also be affected by the presence of armed groups, increasing farmers' difficulties in producing and selling crops, and buying agricultural inputs; this will have potential ramifications on the availability of agricultural products across the country.<sup>123</sup> The potential opening of an electoral process could lead to additional violence.<sup>124</sup> Below-average rainfall between October 2022 and the first quarter of 2023,<sup>125</sup> in combination with reduced rainfall and higher-than-average temperatures, may delay planting in the second rainy season during the second half of 2023, affecting essential crops such as maize and beans, and exacerbating food security concerns.<sup>126</sup>

Latest forecasts indicate a moderate likelihood of an average to slightly above-average hurricane season between June and November 2023,<sup>127</sup> which could result in flooding and crop damage, especially in low-lying areas.

In September 2022, over 19 000 people were recorded for the first time as facing catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 5) in Cité Soleil, one of the capital's neighbourhoods most affected by violence.<sup>128</sup> While improved access and sustained humanitarian assistance prevented Catastrophe outcomes in the March–June analysis, violence and new access constraints remain a risk. In addition, the situation in most of the country continues to deteriorate, reaching a record-high 4.9 million people (half of the population analysed) projected to face Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) during March–June 2023.<sup>129</sup> This includes around 1.8 million people estimated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Over 259 000 children need nutrition assistance.<sup>130</sup> Given the country's level of structural vulnerability and key drivers oriented towards further deteriorations, acute food insecurity levels are likely to further worsen in the outlook period.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Anticipatory actions**

- Strengthen urban community gardens and community seed banks by providing crop seeds and fertilizers, mainly to women-led associations.
- Provide support for water-harvesting and irrigation systems, as well as drought-tolerant crop varieties, to improve the resilience of farming households, reduce rainfall dependence and improve coping mechanisms for below-average rainfall.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 420 million for food security and USD 31.7 million for nutrition interventions.

- Boost delivery of emergency humanitarian support for people facing Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above), prioritizing the most-affected areas of Cité Soleil.
- Scale up the distribution of humanitarian food assistance to the affected population, especially in areas where the situation has further deteriorated (Centre, Nord-Est, Nord-Ouest and Grande-Anse), including in areas affected by armed group violence.
- To alleviate the impact of below-average rainfall experienced since October 2022, provide in-kind livelihoods assistance through the distribution of small livestock (laying hens or goats), seeds, cuttings and agricultural inputs and tools (spring and winter 2023 seasons).
- Protect livestock assets and restore production through the provision of goats, roosters, hens and material to build chicken coops and the treatment and vaccination of cattle.
- Ensure access to basic services and humanitarian assistance to all affected populations, including those in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas. Develop contingency plans to respond to natural disasters, such as floods and droughts, and ensure timely and effective response to emergencies.
- Implement acute malnutrition treatment and prevention activities in areas identified with high GAM prevalence and where the situation is expected to deteriorate, as an integral part of food security, health and WASH services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Enhance the capabilities of actors involved in negotiating humanitarian access and mapping, while also modifying emergency programming methods to better suit urban environments, including ensuring adequate level of assistance through revised transfer values amid a growing inflation rate.
- Assess government capacity to forecast and respond effectively to sudden-onset and slow-onset climate-related shocks, and provide enhanced technical recommendations to national disaster-management agencies.
- Enhance market and price-monitoring systems to provide timely and accurate data on food prices and availability, and take measures to regulate food prices and stabilize markets.
- Strengthen local nutrition-monitoring capacities by establishing surveillance systems to alert and trigger actions in case of further acute malnutrition.

## Central America: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

### Key drivers of food insecurity: dry conditions, high food prices, hurricanes

The impact of the El Niño phenomenon on agricultural production is likely to compound the effects of already increasing prices and drive up acute food insecurity in Central America.

Seasonal forecasts suggest a high likelihood of below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures in the June to August period and onwards in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua,<sup>131</sup> typically associated with the El Niño phenomenon. Dry conditions in this period are likely to affect the 2023 main *Primera* maize crop at critical stages for crop yields, with adverse effects on production. Dryness is expected to persist through the August–October period, possibly also affecting the main *Postrera* bean crop. The decline in basic grain harvests in 2023 could reduce food reserves for consumption and sale, increasing market dependency for 1.9 million small farmers in Central America.<sup>132</sup> The livelihoods of subsistence farmers in the region have been compromised already by a series of shocks, as well as economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine.<sup>133</sup> Additionally, high food and agricultural input prices have threatened agricultural livelihoods. The reduced domestic production of staple crops is likely to provide additional upward pressure on already high food prices. Localised flooding, strong winds, and crop damage due to a forecast moderate likelihood of an average to slightly above-average hurricane season between June and November 2023 could further drive prices.<sup>134</sup>

Throughout 2022, food prices increased in the four countries, limiting vulnerable households' access to food. Although food inflation has plateaued in recent months, it remains high, with annual food inflation rates ranging between 12 and 16 percent in March 2023.<sup>135</sup> Specifically, white maize and bean prices were respectively about 20 and 17–50 percent higher year-on-year in March 2023,<sup>136</sup> due to elevated production and transport costs.<sup>137</sup> If production shortfalls materialize, high food prices are likely to persist in 2023, further eroding households' purchasing power and limiting their access to food, with a detrimental impact on food security.

In Honduras, approximately 2.6 million people (28 percent of the total population) were estimated to face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) during the lean season June–August in 2022,<sup>138</sup> slightly down from 3.3 million in the 2021 lean period. In Guatemala, the number of people facing Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) was estimated at 3.2 million (19 percent of the population analysed) in October 2022–February 2023,<sup>139</sup> representing a sharp increase from 2.5 million a year earlier. The impact of dry conditions on agricultural livelihoods and food security is expected to be significant in the four countries, where rural poverty rate is at least 50 percent.<sup>140, 141</sup> Pre-existing acute food insecurity and a likely increase in displacement may exacerbate the situation further.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Anticipatory actions

- Strengthen joint anticipatory action plans and existing early-warning systems; disseminate early-warning information to mitigate the impact of below-average rainfall.
- Distribute agricultural inputs, such as drought-tolerant bean seeds and fertilizers, and conduct soil conservation works between August–September before the *Postrera* planting season.
- Provide vulnerable farming households with water harvesting and micro-irrigation systems for vegetable production.
- Conduct animal vaccination campaigns to protect livestock health from expected drought impacts.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

The El Salvador 2023 HRP calls for USD 33.9 million for food security and USD 3.22 million for nutrition interventions. The Guatemala 2023 HRP calls for USD 26 million for food security and USD 16 million for nutrition interventions. The Honduras 2023 HRP calls for USD 132.2 million for food and nutrition security and USD 21.2 million for nutrition interventions.

- Complement government-led support following a shock event with the provision of cash, food assistance and nutrition-sensitive activities to affected populations.
- Support the national disaster-management system through capacity strengthening at local level to respond to emergencies and build strong logistic capacities.
- Support the creation and improvement of school gardens and delivery of fruit trees to farming families, to improve the food security of students in rural and urban schools.
- Provide cash transfers and training to families for the recovery of their urban, peri-urban and rural livelihoods.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Foster regional cooperation and coordination to address the root causes of food insecurity and poverty in the Dry Corridor, including climate change, economic inequality, migration and social exclusion, and promote sustainable and inclusive development in the subregion.
- Enhance the monitoring of food security and nutrition, and prepare for interventions in areas with the highest food insecurity levels, especially those affected by drought in the Dry Corridor.
- Regularly monitor the prices of food, fuel and fertilizers. Improve market and economic monitoring to enable adjustments to national and partner cash-based transfer programmes.

## West Africa and the Sahel

### Central African Republic

#### Key drivers of acute food insecurity: conflict, high food prices, floods, drought

Due to rising insecurity, high food prices, low crop production, and flooding and drought, acute food insecurity is expected to worsen over the outlook period.

The country has experienced escalating armed violence, including clashes between the security forces and non-state armed groups with the involvement of foreign combatants,<sup>142, 143</sup> violence against civilians, and increased use of explosive ordnance.<sup>144, 145</sup> The worsening security situation will further restrict humanitarian access and drive displacement. As of February 2023, 483 000 people were internally displaced.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, the country's northeast is expected to be affected by growing refugee inflows from the Sudan.

Several subprefectures have been affected by floods, with serious consequences on livelihoods, while some other agricultural land has been affected by drought.<sup>147</sup> While the annual average inflation rate eased to 8.1 percent in February 2023 from a 9-month high of 10.4 percent in the previous month,<sup>148</sup> the prices of rice, maize and cassava were 47, 30 and 25 percent above their five-year average in the same month.<sup>149</sup>

In the absence of assistance, 3 million people (49 percent of the population analysed) will face Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) from April to August 2023, including 807 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).<sup>150</sup> This marks a slight increase compared to the same period last year (45 percent), albeit with a largely stable proportion of people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), at 13 percent. The most food-insecure people (IPC Phase 3 and above) are conflict-affected and displaced populations, as well as poor households in urban and peri-urban areas with limited access to food.<sup>151</sup> Between October 2022 and August 2023, 298 000 children are projected to be acutely malnourished, a 39 percent increase compared to the same period in 2022.<sup>152</sup>

Armed clashes and direct targeting of humanitarian assets frequently restrict humanitarian operations, in addition to the impact of high fuel prices following the suspension of state subsidies.<sup>153</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Anticipatory actions**

- Distribute vegetable seeds in a conflict-sensitive manner to target the most vulnerable, particularly conflict- and displacement-affected populations, in the event of new conflict outbreaks.
- Distribute small ruminants to support livelihood diversification among conflict- and displacement-affected populations, and support animal health campaigns.
- Provide unconditional cash transfers to displaced populations and host communities in the event of new conflict outbreaks, to anticipate and mitigate the immediate consequences on livelihoods and food security.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

- The 2023 HRP calls for USD 220 million for food security and livelihoods and USD 34.3 million for nutrition interventions.
- Provide life-saving food assistance for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people in Crisis and Emergency (IPC Phases 3 and 4).
  - Encourage the use of multipurpose cash, based on preferences and market functionality.
  - Strengthen nutrition surveillance capacities and scale up prevention interventions against malnutrition.

## Nigeria

### Key drivers of acute food insecurity: conflict, macroeconomic challenges, flooding

Critical levels of acute food insecurity are projected to deteriorate in the outlook period, driven by a multidimensional security crisis, feeble macroeconomic conditions, forecast above-average rainfall in northern areas, a risk of flooding in western areas, and below-average rainfall in the middle belt and southern areas.

Northwest and northcentral areas experienced escalating insecurity and conflict, with the proliferation of non-state armed group activity and continued armed banditry, including kidnapping and killings of civilians.<sup>154, 155, 156</sup> A further deterioration of insecurity is likely to disrupt agricultural activities and markets, and drive displacement. As of February 2023, about 3.1 million people were displaced across northern regions.<sup>157</sup>

This situation has been aggravated by the currency crisis and fuel shortages, leading to high food and transportation costs. Annual headline inflation of 22 percent in March 2023 was at the highest level since 2005, largely driven by food inflation, which stood at 24.5 percent.<sup>158, 159</sup>

Inflation is likely to remain high due to continuous currency depreciation, petrol price deregulation, electricity tariff rises and import restrictions.<sup>160</sup>

Forecasts for the rainy season (June–September) indicate average to above-average precipitation in northern and northeastern areas.

Western areas are likely to experience riverine flooding due to the high probability of above-average rains in the Niger basin. Conversely, the middle belt and southern areas may see an increased risk of below-average rainfall.<sup>161, 162, 163</sup>

Over 24.8 million people are projected to face Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 and above) during the upcoming June–August 2023 lean season, including 1.1 million in Emergency (CH Phase 4).<sup>164</sup>

In areas analysed in both 2022 and 2023,<sup>165</sup> a two-percentage-point increase in the prevalence of people facing acute food insecurity is projected. In Sokoto, Katsina and Zamfara, acute food-insecurity levels are expected to almost double compared to the 2021 lean season period, affecting about 4.3 million people.<sup>166</sup> The nutrition situation in the northeast continues to deteriorate, with 2.1 million children projected to be acutely malnourished throughout 2023, and 3.9 million children affected in the northwest.<sup>167</sup>

Humanitarian access constraints remain very high, in particular in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa, where a major part of the people projected to be in Emergency (CH Phase 4) is located and where at least 31 local government areas are totally or partially inaccessible.<sup>168, 169, 170</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Anticipatory actions

- Disseminate last-mile, tailored early-warning information and advisories on how to protect agricultural livelihoods ahead of, and during, the upcoming season and potential floods.
- Provide unconditional cash transfers to vulnerable populations, particularly in the northwest, in the event of floods, to anticipate and mitigate the immediate consequences on livelihoods and food security.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

- The 2023 HRP calls for USD 470.2 million for food security and USD 133.2 million for nutrition interventions.
- Scale up livelihood support for farmers ahead of the main agricultural season through the provision of seeds and tools.
  - Provide cash transfers to displaced populations and host communities, leveraging national systems.
  - Improve access to timely and appropriate food assistance for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people, including fuel and energy support, to meet the most immediate food needs.
  - Strengthen timely, coordinated and integrated food security analysis and response to enhance local capacity and collaboration with other sectors and sectoral interventions.
  - Scale up acute malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes in areas where the nutrition situation is serious or critical (including the northwest), hard-to-reach areas and areas with large IDP and returnee populations. This should be done in coordination with local government, food security, WASH and health partners.

## Sahel (Burkina Faso and Mali)

### Key drivers of acute food insecurity: conflict, high food prices, flooding

Already catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity are expected to further worsen in the upcoming lean season (June–August), due to a combination of rising conflict and high food prices in parts of northeastern Burkina Faso and northern Mali, particularly in areas under siege by non-state armed groups. Furthermore, if the forecast above-average rainfall were to materialize, this could heighten the risk of flooding and further compound the situation in both countries.

Rising levels of violence and displacement are likely to continue in the outlook, including a growing spillover into coastal countries, especially Benin, Ghana and Togo.<sup>171</sup> During the first quarter of 2023, over 900 violent events were recorded in Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, resulting in 3 270 fatalities – a 10 percent increase in fatalities compared to the same period in 2022.<sup>172</sup> Frequent attacks by non-state armed groups against civilians, and resulting displacement, also remain a high concern in the Niger.<sup>173</sup> By the end of 2023, there were almost 2 million IDPs in Burkina Faso, a 10 percent increase within a year,<sup>174</sup> while 440 000 remain internally displaced in Mali.<sup>175</sup> As of February 2023, at least ten municipalities in northeastern Burkina Faso are under siege by non-state armed groups, which has restricted the movement of goods and people to and from affected areas and has limited access to livelihood activities for agropastoral communities. The impact of these constraints will be further accentuating the effects of the upcoming lean season.<sup>176</sup> Satellite-based analyses, conducted in October 2022 by WFP in hard-to-reach areas, indicated a significant reduction in agricultural activities in conflict-affected areas of Burkina Faso,<sup>177</sup> as well as in Mali.<sup>178</sup>

From June to September, average to above-average rainfall is forecast for southern and central Mali and the Sahelian regions of Burkina Faso. While these rains could lead to a good prospect for crop production, they also heighten the risk of flooding.<sup>179</sup>

Over 4.6 million people are projected to be acutely food insecure in Burkina Faso and Mali between June and August 2023; this includes over 680 000 people in Emergency (CH Phase 4) and a further 45 201 people in Catastrophe (CH Phase 5), in the conflict-affected Boucle du Mouhoun and Sahel regions in Burkina Faso, and Menaka region in Mali.<sup>180</sup> Acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 and 4) improved in most parts of the two countries compared to the same period last year, due to generally conducive weather conditions that boosted production. Simultaneously, siege tactics by non-state armed groups have caused the highest figure of people in catastrophic conditions ever projected for Burkina Faso, and seen projected populations in Mali in Catastrophe (CH Phase 5) for the first time.<sup>181</sup> Also, 630 000 children in Burkina Faso and 1.5 million in Mali are projected to be acutely malnourished in 2023.<sup>182</sup> Potential spillover of violence to neighbouring Benin, Ghana and Togo could further aggravate the food security situation in these countries, where nearly 2.3 million people are already projected to be acutely food insecure between June and August 2023, including over 120 000 in Emergency (CH Phase 4).<sup>183</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Anticipatory actions

- Disseminate last-mile, tailored early-warning information and advisories, including to displaced populations with access to land, on how to protect agricultural livelihoods ahead of and during the upcoming season.
- Pre-position and rapidly distribute agricultural inputs and/or provide unconditional cash transfers to displaced populations and host communities, in the event of new conflict outbreaks, to anticipate and mitigate the immediate consequences on livelihoods and food security. Where feasible, these cash transfers can be delivered through social protection systems.
- Implement cash-for-work activities through food asset creation and rehabilitation works, and ensure cash-based transfers for floods, supporting IDPs and host communities in the regions of Sahel, Nord, Centre-Nord, Est and Plateau-Central.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The Burkina Faso 2023 HRP calls for USD 322.2 million for food security and livelihoods and USD 54.3 million for nutrition interventions. The Mali 2023 HRP calls for USD 274.5 million for food security and livelihoods and USD 71.3 million for nutrition interventions.

- Scale up livelihood support for farmers ahead of the main agricultural season through the provision of seeds and tools.
- Scale up life-saving assistance to meet the vital needs of households in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) to meet their immediate food and livelihood needs, with particular attention to people living in hard-to-reach areas.
- Increase coverage of nutrition programmes and prioritize high-risk areas, jointly with food security, health, protection and WASH partners, to ensure access to a nutritious and affordable diet for pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children.
- Develop and expand nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes, targeting the most at-risk households.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Other actions**

- Strengthen preparedness efforts regarding the risk of flooding, including through initial targeting and registering communities-at-risk for potential cash distribution and delivery of pre-positioned inputs, such as phytosanitary products for crop protection and tools.

## East Africa

### Ethiopia

**Key drivers of food insecurity: drought, subnational conflict, macroeconomic challenges**

Acute food insecurity is expected to persist as a result of subnational conflict, high food prices and the lingering impact of past droughts.

While the peace deal between the federal government and Tigrayan forces has improved the overall security situation, subnational conflicts persist in Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar, Gambela and Oromia regions, where a potential peace deal could halt the escalating, multifaceted violence. As of February 2023, an estimated 4.6 million people were internally displaced across the country.<sup>184</sup>

While the peace deal has slowed down the macroeconomic deterioration and improved the market situation in Tigray region,<sup>185</sup> the continued depreciation of the Ethiopian birr and high inflation reflect the overall economic fragility. In March 2023, the food-inflation rate was estimated at 34.2 percent, more than three times higher than pre-pandemic levels.<sup>186</sup> Food prices are expected to remain high due to foreign-currency shortages, drought conditions and high international prices.<sup>187</sup>

The situation in pastoral areas of southern Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region, southern Oromia and southern Somali region remains of concern.

Above-average March-May "Gu/Genna" rains improved water, pasture and crop conditions, though it is unlikely to significantly improve the food security situation due to the severe impact of the past, consecutive droughts, which will require several rainy seasons for household livelihoods to recover.<sup>188</sup> For example, over 6.8 million livestock have died in the pastoralist Somali region since 2021.<sup>189, 190, 191</sup>

In 2022, 20.1 million people were estimated to be food insecure, and to require food and livelihood assistance in 2023.<sup>192</sup> This includes about 11 million people in drought-affected regions in the southern part of the country.<sup>193</sup> The nutrition situation remains dire, as around 7.4 million children and women need nutrition assistance in 2023, and assessments in drought-affected areas continue to report very high prevalence of child acute malnutrition above 15 percent.<sup>194, 195</sup>

While humanitarian access in the Tigray region continues to improve,<sup>196</sup> humanitarian operations continue to face very high constraints in several parts of the country, especially in the Benishangul-Gumuz and Oromia regions.<sup>197</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 276.5 million for agriculture, USD 2.16 billion for food and USD 359.2 million for nutrition interventions.

- Prioritize and support drought- and conflict-affected populations through life-sustaining food and nutrition assistance, particularly to vulnerable populations, including unconditional cash.
- Provide access to seeds, fertilizers and tools to the most vulnerable households to increase crop production, including in Tigray region.
- Invest in animal health, restocking and water point rehabilitation activities to protect livestock health, particularly in drought-affected areas.
- Continue coordinated efforts on humanitarian access and advocate for fast-track authorizations to import agricultural inputs, to leverage every opportunity to scale up food and nutrition assistance to people in worst-affected areas.
- Scale up nutrition prevention-and-treatment activities for women and children in areas with high malnutrition rates, and reinforce integration with food security, WASH and health partners.

## Kenya

**Key drivers of food insecurity: recurrent drought, high food prices**

A three-year drought, high food prices and localized conflict have driven record levels of food insecurity in the arid and semi-arid lands, with food insecurity likely remaining high in the outlook period.

A prolonged drought has driven a humanitarian crisis in northern and eastern Kenya, characterized by the death of 2.6 million livestock, consecutive seasons of poor harvests, record-breaking severe acute malnutrition admissions into treatment programmes, and cholera and measles outbreaks.<sup>198</sup> The first two months of the 2023 long rains have been mostly above average except for the southeast,<sup>199</sup> resulting in flash floods across some areas, negatively impacting livelihoods and critical infrastructure.<sup>200</sup> Though there remains some uncertainty about rainfall performance for the remainder of the season,<sup>201, 202, 203</sup> regardless of its performance, livelihood recovery will take years.<sup>204</sup> The drought, along with small arms proliferation, commercialization of cattle raiding, and a fragile political environment, has contributed to increased cattle raids and other violence in northern Kenya. From 1 January to 24 March 2023, a 55 percent increase in conflict-related fatalities was

recorded compared to the same time last year.<sup>205</sup> This, combined with insecurity in the northeast, is disrupting livelihoods and driving high humanitarian access constraints.<sup>206</sup> A deteriorating economy, depreciation, a lack of foreign currency and reduced crop production have also caused above-average food prices,<sup>207</sup> a trend likely to continue.<sup>208</sup>

From March to June 2023, 5.4 million people are projected to face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above), – an increase from 27 to 32 percent of the population analysed compared to the same period last year – including 1.2 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Turkana, Marsabit, Mandera, Wajir and Garissa are the worst-affected counties – all classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).<sup>209, 210</sup> The nutrition situation is expected to deteriorate, with four areas within Turkana, Marsabit and Mandera counties projected to face Extremely Critical levels of acute malnutrition (GAM WHZ  $\geq$  30 percent); a total of 970 215 children and 142 179 pregnant and breastfeeding women are expected to be acutely malnourished.<sup>211</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Emergency response**

The 2023 Kenya Drought Response Plan calls for USD 122.3 million for food security and livelihoods and USD 75 million for nutrition interventions.

- Provide life-saving food and nutrition assistance (including cash-based assistance) to meet the immediate food needs of populations at high risk and protect the livelihoods of those affected by the drought.
- Safeguard the livelihoods of farmers, pastoralists and agropastoralists, and support the quick recovery of seasonal food production and self-reliance. Context-specific livelihood packages should be provided, consisting of cash, productive inputs and subsidies for basic productive services (e.g. tractor and irrigation hours).
- Support infrastructure rehabilitation, including water points and feeder roads.
- Support national social protection systems, including the Kenya Hunger Safety Net Programme, to respond to the impact of the drought on the most vulnerable categories of the population.
- Provide nutrition assistance – including through malnutrition-prevention activities – to women and children in areas with high malnutrition rates and reinforce integration with WASH interventions and health partners.

## Somalia

### Key drivers of food insecurity: recurrent drought, high food and water prices, conflict

Alarming acute food insecurity is projected to deteriorate through June 2023, bringing 40 350 people to Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), facing starvation and death, due to the impact of a three-year drought, high food and water prices, and persistent conflict.<sup>212</sup>

The devastating effects of the drought, the longest and most severe in recent history, are far from over. Over 43 000 excess deaths were estimated in 2022 alone, half of whom were children under five years of age, with excess mortality projected to persist due to the continued effects of the three-year drought.<sup>213, 214</sup>

Six consecutive below-average harvest seasons and the death of over 3.8 million livestock contributed to the displacement of over 1.3 million people. Poor access to water, sanitation and nutrition has led to cholera and measles outbreaks; severe acute malnutrition admissions were higher than the three-year average in March and April across most areas.<sup>215, 216, 217</sup> The drought's evolution in 2023 will depend on the performance of the April to *June Gu* rains. Above-average rainfall was recorded in March and April,<sup>218</sup> and forecasts point towards average to slightly above-average rains for the rest of the season.<sup>219, 220, 221, 222, 223</sup> Recovery from the drought, however, will take years.

Conflict in Laas Caanod displaced between 154 000 to 203 000 people from late December 2022.<sup>224</sup> Violence related to al-Shabaab and government counteroffensives, which caused twice as many deaths as in 2021, will likely continue in southern areas, where fighting could become protracted due to stronger al-Shabaab resistance and lower cooperation between local clans and the government.<sup>225</sup> Humanitarian access constraints remain very high.<sup>226</sup> Elevated global food and fuel prices, combined with poor domestic cereal production, have also contributed to above-average local food prices, which are likely to remain elevated.<sup>227, 228</sup>

About 6.6 million people are projected to face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) between April and June,<sup>229</sup> a 26 percent increase compared to the same period last year.<sup>230, 231</sup> This includes 40 350 people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) and 1.85 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Acute malnutrition remains very high, with around 1.8 million children estimated to be acutely malnourished in 2023, including 477 700 severely malnourished.<sup>232</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 1.1 billion for food security and livelihoods, and USD 431.3 million for nutrition interventions.

- Scale up integrated life-saving emergency food, cash+ emergency livelihoods, health, WASH and nutrition services through more proactive approaches, including mobile health and nutrition services in hotspot districts. This should particularly support populations exhibiting acute food insecurity and who are at risk of Emergency or Catastrophe levels of food insecurity (IPC Phases 4 and 5), and vulnerable rural communities whose livelihoods have been devastated by the drought.
- Expand delivery of life-saving food and nutrition assistance to populations living in hard-to-reach areas and areas that have remained inaccessible so far, through rapid response mechanisms.
- Scale up nutrition assistance to women and children in areas with high malnutrition rates, and reinforce integration WASH interventions with health partners, including prevention of gender-based violence.
- Support the government, through the Ministry of Labour and Social and Affairs, in scaling up its shock-response efforts to alleviate the suffering of people. This involves leveraging the shock-response delivery systems of the Safety Net for Human Capital Development Project, for the delivery of cash-based humanitarian assistance.
- Augment logistics coordination and services, in particular the transportation capacity of government and partners to deliver urgent humanitarian assistance, especially to rural areas.
- Maintain and scale up school meal programmes to keep children in schools, increase girls' enrolment and learning, improve health and nutrition, provide a safety net for vulnerable households, and mitigate the impact of the drought.

## South Sudan

### Key drivers of food insecurity: floods, dry spells, subnational conflict, macroeconomic challenges

Soaring food prices and macroeconomic difficulties, resurging subnational conflicts and potential new flooding will likely contribute to a dire food insecurity situation in the outlook period.<sup>233</sup>

Average to above-average rains between March and May were reported across most of the southern areas of the Greater Equatoria region.<sup>234</sup> Looking forward, though the forecasts for the June–September period indicate below average rainfall in eastern areas and on average in western areas, the outlook is uncertain due to poor forecast skill.<sup>235</sup> Further, heavy rains in the Lake Victoria basin earlier in the season should lead to a resumption of an increase in flood extent leading to new displacement, asset losses and limited humanitarian access.

Preparations for 2024 national elections are likely to increase tensions and provoke higher levels of violence.<sup>236, 237</sup> Intercommunal violence and clashes in Upper Nile, Unity and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area already resurged in the second half of 2022 and triggered new displacement. As of December 2022, 2.23 million people were estimated to be internally displaced.<sup>238</sup> Growing returnee and refugee movements from the Sudan, as well as disruptions of cross-border trade, critical supply lines from and oil export through Port Sudan are likely to add additional pressure on an already fragile situation and further drive prices.<sup>239</sup>

Food inflation continues to erode households' purchasing power. Conflict, foreign-exchange shortages causing high import prices, and insufficient cereal supplies led to record prices of maize and sorghum across the country in February 2023.<sup>240, 241</sup> While net cereal production increased by 12 percent in 2022 compared to the previous year, the cereal deficit is still substantial, with net production in 2022 representing only about two-thirds of the estimated cereal requirements in 2023.<sup>242</sup>

About 7.8 million people, 63 percent of the population – one of the highest prevalence levels globally – are projected to face Crisis or worse acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) during the April–July 2023 lean season, including 2.9 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 43 000 people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).<sup>243</sup> The highest prevalence of acute food insecurity is reported in Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile and Jonglei states, including Greater Pibor Administrative area, where between 70 and 77 percent of the population are projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above).<sup>244</sup> Moreover, 57 percent of counties are projected to be in Critical levels of acute malnutrition (IPC AMN 4).<sup>245</sup> Access constraints remain very high due to insecurity and new administrative requirements for international humanitarian actors, introduced by the government in April 2022, which continues to delay humanitarian assistance.<sup>246</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Anticipatory actions

- Disseminate last-mile, tailored and gender-sensitive early-warning information and advisories on how to protect lives and livelihoods during the 2023 rainy season, given the potential for flooding.
- Provide unconditional cash and distribute flood-proof storage systems to protect valuables and agricultural assets if a flood is forecast during the rainy season.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

- The 2023 HRP calls for USD 650 million for food security and livelihoods and USD 230 million for nutrition interventions.
- Maintain unconditional food and cash transfers and emergency livelihood assistance to vulnerable populations, returnees and IDPs, particularly women and children, in areas with populations in Emergency and Catastrophe (IPC Phases 4 and 5).
  - Maintain nutrition assistance to women and children in areas with high malnutrition rates, and reinforce integration with WASH, health and protection partners, including prevention of gender-based violence.
  - Maintain multisector humanitarian assistance in all locations in Emergency and Catastrophe (IPC Phases 4 and 5), complemented by effective nutrition, WASH and health services.
  - Advocate and negotiate for humanitarian access in conflict-affected areas, to enable households to receive humanitarian assistance and services, and aid agencies to operate freely and safely.
  - Support infrastructure rehabilitation and conclude pre-positioning of food commodities ahead of the rainy season.

# Southern Africa

## Democratic Republic of the Congo: northeastern provinces

### Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict

The intensification of the conflict in the northeastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri is likely to drive further displacement and market disruptions in the outlook period, worsening acute food insecurity.

An increase of armed clashes in early 2023, due to the expansion of non-state armed groups, drove a further increase in already high displacement figures – 2.35 million in North Kivu and 1.6 million in Ituri, as of February 2023.<sup>247</sup> Displacement has prevented completion of the harvest, likely reducing food availability in the months to come.<sup>248, 249</sup> Limited agricultural production, market access and transport disruptions are likely to result in a further surge of already elevated food prices.<sup>250, 251</sup> Insecurity and targeted violence further constrain access to humanitarian assistance, with 60 percent of incidents reported in North Kivu and Ituri.<sup>252, 253</sup> The situation is likely to worsen in the outlook period.<sup>254, 255</sup>

A total of 24.5 million people – 24 percent of the population analysed – are projected to face Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) from January to June 2023, including 2.8 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).<sup>256</sup> While this marks a slight improvement for the same period in 2022, the projection could not fully account for the later impact of the intensified conflict, which is highly likely to further increase acute food insecurity in the northeastern provinces in the outlook period. These provinces already have higher prevalence of people experiencing acute food insecurity compared to the national average, and a significant portion (almost 30 percent) of the people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).<sup>257</sup> Acute malnutrition is set to deteriorate and affect 3.6 million children and women in the country, with Ituri among the most-affected regions.<sup>258</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Anticipatory actions

- Distribute cereal and vegetable seeds and tools in a conflict-sensitive manner, targeting the most vulnerable IDPs, returnees and host communities, in the event of new conflict outbreaks during the 2023/24 main cropping season.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 1.1 billion for food security and USD 272.2 million for nutrition interventions.

- Scale up food and livelihood assistance in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to address increasing needs owing to the upsurge in conflict, with particular focus on North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri.
- Provide cash and training to the most vulnerable people, in areas where markets are functioning.
- Distribute small ruminants, poultry or fishing kits to sustain livelihoods for conflict-affected and food-insecure people.
- Sustain and adapt conflict-sensitive approaches, to ensure continuity of humanitarian assistance to populations facing acute food insecurity.
- Enhance emergency coordination, humanitarian-military interaction and humanitarian-access negotiation, particularly for unobstructed flow of humanitarian and commercial food stocks in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- Scale up nutritional support interventions, including treatment and prevention of malnutrition among children and pregnant and breastfeeding women in conflict-affected areas.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Other actions

- Strengthen interagency contingency planning and preparedness to anticipate risks, namely large-scale displacements and acute food insecurity caused by conflict and other crises within a shrinking humanitarian space context.

# Malawi

## Key drivers of food insecurity: flooding, high food prices, reduced crop production

Due to the impact of flooding caused by Cyclone Freddy and the ongoing economic crisis reflected in extremely high food prices, acute food insecurity is expected to increase in the outlook period.

In mid-March 2023, Cyclone Freddy caused widespread flooding, inflicting significant damages and losses, particularly in the agriculture sector in the southern region; over 2.3 million people were affected.<sup>259</sup> An interagency assessment concluded that the flood waters submerged large swathes of cropland in southern districts and caused the loss of about 1.4 million livestock (mainly poultry). High agricultural input prices, insufficient fertilizer supplies and earlier dry spells had already diminished production prospects for the 2023 crops in the southern region.<sup>260</sup> Consequently, the affected farming households (approximately 468 000) are likely to harvest a well below-average cereal crop. The flooding also increased the transmission risks of cholera, especially in IDP camps. Elevated prices, due to unsustainable debt levels and foreign-exchange shortages,<sup>261</sup> are expected to constrain households' access to

food and farmers' ability to purchase agricultural inputs for the upcoming winter season. While overall food inflation stood already at 32 percent in March 2023,<sup>262</sup> certain items experienced record levels, with maize prices – the main staple – at 300 percent above the 2022 levels in the southern region in March 2023.<sup>263</sup>

Despite high uncertainty due to the long lead time, early signs in forecasts suggest below-average cumulative rainfall for the November 2023 to March 2024 rainy season, which could lead to crop failure and insufficient grazing as the main maize cropping season takes place during this period.

The number of people facing acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) was projected to reach 3.8 million until March 2023, and 1.8 million children and women need nutrition assistance.<sup>264</sup> The highest prevalence of acute food insecurity was in the southern region, where five districts were classified in Crisis (IPC Phase 3), owing to the effects of elevated food prices and poor harvests in 2022.<sup>265</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Anticipatory actions

- Implement cash-for-work activities by building and rehabilitating water storage and water-source infrastructure, to provide water access and income sources for the most vulnerable if a drought forecast is confirmed before the planting season in October.
- Distribute drought-tolerant seeds, inputs and micro-irrigation kits ahead of the planting season in October, to mitigate potential drought impacts.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Emergency response

- Provide emergency life-saving food assistance to people affected by Cyclone Freddy and subsequent flood impacts.
- Distribute post-harvest storage equipment to mitigate potential harvest losses, and conduct training on managing food stocks.
- Provide inputs such as short-cycle crops and vegetable seeds for off-season and winter crop production, to protect the food security of the most vulnerable in the south of the country.
- Increase the scope of nutritional support interventions, including the treatment of acute malnutrition and the prevention of malnutrition.
- Improve early identification, referral and treatment of malnourished children, and strengthen integration of nutrition activities into health, WASH and food-security activities.
- Scale up common logistic-services provision to the government and humanitarian community, for a more effective and coordinated response to the cyclone.
- Continue unconditional cash transfers for food-insecure refugees impacted by rising food prices.
- Scale up school meals to keep children in schools, improve girls' enrolment and learning outcomes, improve health and nutritional status, and provide a safety net for vulnerable households.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Other actions

- Scale up preparedness and operational efforts in support of farmers at risk of future flooding, through cash distribution and pre-positioned inputs such as phytosanitary products for crop protection and tools.
- Ensure that early-warning predictions are utilized to inform pre-positioning and cash readiness of in-country actors and cooperating partners, for the effective rollout of the direct delivery of anticipatory actions for dry spells and drought scenarios.

# Near East and North Africa

## Lebanon

### Key drivers of food insecurity: economic crisis, political instability

Lebanon's economic crisis is likely to further deepen, driven by ongoing political uncertainty and continuing macroeconomic deterioration. Increasing prices of essential goods are exacerbating the deterioration of food security and livelihoods for both Lebanese and refugee communities.<sup>266</sup>

The economy contracted by 21.4 percent in 2020 and by 7 percent in 2021; it is estimated to have contracted by a further 5.4 percent in 2022.<sup>267</sup> The Lebanese pound, which prior to the crisis was pegged to the US dollar at a rate of 1 507 Lebanese pounds/USD 1, has lost over 99 percent of its value on the informal market.<sup>268</sup>

Lebanon imports nearly all its food and energy needs, making the country highly vulnerable to shocks that affect global markets.<sup>269</sup> The nearly complete depletion of foreign-exchange reserves has exacerbated currency depreciation and pushed inflation rates to almost 190 percent in February 2023.<sup>270</sup> The combination of income losses amid high unemployment, currency depreciation, and skyrocketing inflation will further strain the livelihoods of both Lebanese citizens and the 1.5 million refugees residing in the country.<sup>271</sup>

Despite over three years of sharp economic deterioration, the continuous political gridlock remains a significant barrier to resolving the crisis.<sup>272</sup> The situation has not been resolved following the 2022 general elections, with the stalemate reducing the probability of closing a new deal with the International Monetary Fund which could unlock economic recovery and financial support from external donors.<sup>273</sup>

Between January and April 2023, 2.3 million people (42 percent of the population analysed), including 1.5 million Lebanese residents and 800 000 Syrian refugees, were projected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) conditions, including 354 000 in Emergency (IPC Phase 4),<sup>274</sup> as a result of the ongoing economic deterioration and the multifaceted crisis the country is facing. This represents a significant deterioration compared to the September–December 2022 period, when the first IPC analysis in the country indicated that the population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) was estimated at about 2 million (37 percent of the population analysed).<sup>275</sup>

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

The 2023 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan calls for USD 1.3 billion for food security and agriculture, USD 248 million for livelihoods and USD 45 million for nutrition interventions.

- Restore agricultural livelihoods, including the livestock sector, to improve food production.
- Support agricultural cooperatives, and small and medium-sized agricultural enterprises, for improved production and productivity.
- Support employment and employability, to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable populations.
- Provide cash-based food assistance, complemented by nutritionally balanced in-kind food support, to vulnerable populations, including through the expansion of the government's National Poverty Targeting Programme for improved access to food.
- Provide emergency cash and vouchers to increase households' purchasing power, restore agricultural livelihoods and productive capacities, and strengthen their resilience to future shocks.
- Provide matching grants to small-scale farmers for land reclamation and water reservoirs construction, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture's Green Plan.
- Continue to expand the provision of cash-based assistance, and to adjust the value of transfers to ensure households' meet increasing food and other essential needs (e.g. education, health, shelter) in a context of currency depreciation, price spikes, subsidy removals and reduced livelihood opportunities.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Other actions

- Conduct seasonal analysis of food production, to meet local food-consumption needs, and identify the gaps that may require advance disbursement of cash-based interventions.
- Engage in national-level discussions to develop consensus-based triggers for anticipatory action plans.
- Expand and develop national wheat production, in line with government plans.
- Regularly monitor food security, vulnerability indicators, prices, the value of the Survival/Minimum Expenditure Basket, and the adjustment of transfer values accordingly, to ensure that the most vulnerable can meet their essential food and non-food needs without resorting to negative coping strategies.

## Sudan

### Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict, economic collapse

The eruption of armed conflict has severely affected the availability of, and access to, food, amid serious macroeconomic challenges and periodic intercommunal violence, as the country is about to enter the typical lean season from June to September. Despite the unpredictability and highly volatile situation, the conflict is likely to have a dramatic impact on already high levels of acute food insecurity, with the risk of a very sharp deterioration in both rural and urban areas.<sup>276</sup>

In mid-April, armed conflict erupted in Khartoum, quickly spreading to cities and towns across the country.<sup>277, 278</sup> The violence included airstrikes and artillery shelling, and has concentrated in densely populated areas.<sup>279</sup> As of 5 May 2023, over 500 people have been killed,<sup>280</sup> and an estimated 730 000 individuals have been internally displaced countrywide,<sup>281</sup> many more have been caught up in the violence, running out of stocks including food.<sup>282</sup> Despite significant mediation efforts,<sup>283, 284</sup> repeated promises of a ceasefire have failed as of 5 May 2023, and fighting is likely to continue amid rising levels of insecurity and criminality, including the looting of humanitarian stocks.<sup>285</sup>

The fighting has resulted in the disruption of basic services, markets and supply chains,<sup>286</sup> driving an increase in the price of basic commodities by 40–60 percent or more.<sup>287</sup>

The disruption of trade in particular, due to the conflict, risks exacerbating the deteriorating macroeconomic situation, leading to shortages of key items and further depleting already low foreign reserves.<sup>288</sup>

The conflict will likely have a dramatic impact on the main agricultural season in 2023, if farmers are prevented from preparing agriculture inputs and plant key staples (sorghum and millet) between May and July, further increasing food prices.<sup>289</sup> Flooding and droughts are recurrent hazards and remain a risk in June–September.

Projections based on the March 2023 CFSVA results using WFP's CARI methodology indicate that a minimum of 19.1 million people will likely be acutely food insecure through September. West Darfur, West Kordofan, Blue Nile, Red Sea and North Darfur states will likely see the highest levels of acute food insecurity. This marks a sharp increase of hunger as a result of the conflict.<sup>290</sup>

The May 2022 IPC analysis projected 11.7 million, or 24 percent of the population analyzed, to be facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above), including 3.1 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) during the 2022 lean season between June and September 2022.<sup>291</sup> An IPC analysis is planned for June 2023 and will take into account the effects of the current conflict on acute food insecurity in the country. Before the escalation of the conflict, 3 million children were expected to be acutely malnourished in 2023, a 9 percent increase from 2022.<sup>292</sup> Despite a gradual resumption of many humanitarian operations,<sup>293</sup> conflict and insecurity could trigger new suspensions, including of life-saving assistance.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Anticipatory actions

- Share early-warning messages if an early-warning threshold has been surpassed, including agricultural advice ahead of a potential flood or drought.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

- The revised 2023 HRP, which takes into account the escalating violence since April 2023, calls for USD 581.2 million for food security and livelihoods, a 33 percent increase compared to the 2023 HRP, launched in December 2022, and USD 350.1 million for nutrition interventions, an 83 percent increase respectively .
- Provide and scale-up immediate lifesaving assistance to IDPs, refugees and those vulnerable from host communities. This includes general food assistance as well as preventive and nutrition treatment for children under five years of age and pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls.
  - Resume life-saving assistance and scale up response to meet new humanitarian needs, where feasible. This includes seed distribution to support the May–July season in areas where planting can be conducted safely, as well as the provision of livestock asset protection, including feed distribution and animal health treatments, where suitable.
  - Negotiate humanitarian access and ensure assurances from all parties to safeguard and facilitate humanitarian operations, especially the safety and security of staff and assets.
  - Ensure full operationality of Port Sudan as primary entry point into the country for humanitarian goods. Explore the establishment of key hubs and corridors from neighbouring countries to ensure a diversified and resilient humanitarian supply chain. Provide critical common services to humanitarian actors.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Other actions**
- Conduct rapid risk assessments to i) identify states where the security situation will permit the resumption of farming activities; ii) evaluate risk attached to procurement and distribution of agriculture inputs; iii) identify implementing partners to support distribution of agriculture inputs; and iv) identify prevailing prices of agricultural inputs due to ongoing armed conflict.

## Syrian Arab Republic

### Key drivers of food insecurity: protracted economic crisis, earthquakes, conflict, erratic rainfall

Chronic fuel shortages,<sup>294</sup> rapid currency depreciation and the repercussions of devastating earthquakes have compounded the difficulties of Syrians in accessing essential items, and strained the capacity of relief organizations.<sup>295, 296</sup>

In February 2023, two magnitude (Mw) 7.8 and (Mw) 6.3 earthquakes hit southern Türkiye and the northwestern Syrian Arab Republic, causing the death of almost 6 000 people in the Syrian Arab Republic, and widespread destruction of physical assets, infrastructure and service delivery.<sup>297</sup> Physical damages and losses due to the earthquakes are estimated at USD 5.2 billion.<sup>298</sup> Major disruptions to crop- and livestock-production capacity are threatening immediate and longer-term food security.<sup>299</sup> Despite the temporary opening of two additional border crossing points following the earthquakes,<sup>300</sup> the viability of cross-border assistance depends on the extension of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2672, which is due in June.<sup>301</sup> Air- and ground-based strikes in the northeast and northwest,<sup>302</sup> including following the earthquakes, highlight the persistent risk of new military escalations.

The impact of the earthquakes will exacerbate the prolonged economic crisis, with real GDP projected to contract by a further 2.3 percentage points in 2023.<sup>303</sup> The Syrian pound has depreciated rapidly, reaching an all-time low on the informal market in spring 2023,<sup>304</sup> while food-price inflation exacerbates the economic pressure on citizens.<sup>305</sup> Fuel shortages are likely to persist,<sup>306</sup> further affecting energy provision and agricultural activities, especially in irrigated areas. The 2023 crop production will be constrained by lack of affordable inputs, and potentially affected in some areas by erratic rainfall between November 2022 and April 2023.<sup>307, 308, 309</sup>

Between August and October 2022, 12.1 million people were assessed to be acutely food insecure (55 percent of the total population), based on WFP's CARI methodology.<sup>310, 311</sup> Acute food insecurity is likely to increase further due to deteriorating economic conditions and the effects of the earthquakes. Around 5.9 million children and women require nutrition assistance in 2023 – an increase of 18 percent compared to 2022.<sup>312</sup>

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Emergency response

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 1.872 billion for food security and livelihoods interventions.

- Distribute agriculture inputs and provide training on climate-smart agriculture to the most vulnerable farmers, to support the 2023/24 agricultural season affected by the drought and consequent effects of the earthquake.
- Protect and restore livestock assets.
- Continue the provision of in-kind food assistance to food-insecure families across the country and increase hybrid cash assistance to the most vulnerable among them, to support their eroded purchasing power.
- Continue to increase cross-line food delivery into the northwest to complement cross-border modalities.
- Support livelihoods and resilience activities through communal assets rehabilitation (food assistance for assets and rehabilitation of agrarian assets), food assistance for training, market access support and financial inclusion support.
- Integrate earthquake-affected beneficiaries into the in-kind programme, following the first phase of the earthquake response with the provision of ready-to-eat rations and hot meals.
- Conduct a full damage and needs assessment for the agriculture sector in the earthquake-affected zone in the Syrian Arab Republic, and produce a fully costed early-recovery plan.
- Provide food packages/cash-based transfer vouchers to earthquake-affected Syrians under Temporary Protection and International Protection Applicants and Status holders.
- Assess the current displaced settlements in Türkiye (where applicable) and ensure the necessary food storage facility and/or cooking essentials are provided.

# Yemen

## Key drivers of food insecurity: economic crisis, conflict

Acute food insecurity in Yemen will remain at critical levels, amid elevated fuel and food prices, and an anticipated funding shortfall.

While access constraints have eased since the truce in 2022, they remain a key impediment to humanitarian operations.<sup>313</sup> Despite the expiration of a truce in October, warring parties have largely remained in an informal state of ceasefire. Clashes in March indicate that the security situation remains highly volatile as internal conflict dynamics persist.<sup>314, 315, 316</sup>

The economic crisis is expected to continue due to persistent political instability, insufficient external revenues, and elevated global commodity prices.<sup>317</sup> These factors compound the ongoing depletion of foreign-exchange reserves, which in turn drives currency volatility and elevated retail food prices in areas controlled by the Internationally Recognized Government (IRG).<sup>318</sup> In the latest countrywide analysis, nearly 17 million people (over 53 percent of the population) in Yemen were estimated to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above) levels of acute food insecurity, including 6.1 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), between October and December 2022.<sup>319</sup>

A scale-up in food assistance, aided by improved access facilitated by the truce, contributed to relief from catastrophic conditions that were previously projected for 161 000 people between June and November 2022.<sup>320</sup>

Funding shortfalls might result in a significant scale-down of humanitarian food assistance in the coming months.<sup>321, 322</sup>

In addition, in case of a resumption of full-scale hostilities and a subsequent decline in assistance levels, the ability of humanitarian organizations to prevent catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity would severely be hampered.

Acute malnutrition remains the main cause of child mortality, with 2.2 million children affected in the country in 2022.<sup>323</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Emergency response

The 2023 HRP calls for USD 2.2 billion for food security and agriculture and USD 398 million for nutrition interventions.

- Provide emergency livelihood support and season-specific cash transfers to protect and restore livelihoods, while stimulating economic recovery to increase availability and access to secure, safe and life-saving food for the most vulnerable households.
- Continue the provision of life-saving multipurpose cash assistance to IDPs affected by both natural and human-induced disasters, and to refugees and mixed migrants.
- Strengthen the humanitarian–development–peace nexus through linkages between humanitarian multipurpose cash assistance and shock-responsive social protection, via intercluster referral.
- Promote localization of cash assistance by carrying out capacity-building initiatives with local actors.
- Continue to provide quality and timely life-saving curative and preventive nutrition services for children under five years of age, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and schoolchildren, in areas where prevalence of acute malnutrition is a major concern (GAM prevalence above 10 percent).
- Improve access to livelihood opportunities and rehabilitate food security assets and infrastructure in areas with high levels of acute food insecurity.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Other actions

- Engage with different governorates and hydrometeorological authorities to determine possible flood impacts and identify critical provisions requiring rehabilitation, community engagement and investments.

# Glossary

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## Acute food insecurity

Acute food insecurity is any manifestation of food deprivation that threatens lives or livelihoods regardless of the causes, context or duration. The IPC/CH Acute Food Insecurity scale categorizes acute food insecurity into five phases of severity, ranging from IPC/CH Phase 1, corresponding to No/Minimal acute food insecurity, to IPC/CH Phase 5, corresponding to Catastrophe/Famine. Each of these phases has important and distinct implications for where and how best to intervene.

## Chronic food insecurity

Chronic food security refers to food insecurity that persists over time, largely due to structural causes. Chronic food insecurity has relevance in providing strategic guidance to actions that focus on the medium- and long-term improvement of the quality and quantity of food consumption required for an active and healthy life.

## Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

The IPC results from a partnership of various organizations at the global, regional and country levels, and is widely accepted by the international community as a global reference for the classification of food insecurity. (For further details, please see [www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC\\_Famine\\_Factsheet\\_2020.pdf](http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Factsheet_2020.pdf))

## Cadre Harmonisé (CH)

The Cadre Harmonisé is the multi-dimensional analytical framework used by the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), for the analysis and identification of areas and groups at risk of acute food insecurity in the Sahel, West Africa and Cameroon. (For further details, please see <http://ecoagris.cilss.int/index.php/analyse-cadre-harmonise>)

## Emergency – IPC/CH Phase 4 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) is a level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale at which households either 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 by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. Households face critical levels of acute food insecurity/critical acute food insecurity. Urgent action is needed to save lives and livelihoods. If nothing is done, the population could face starvation or death.

## Catastrophe – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5) is a level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale at which households face 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. Urgent, immediate action is needed to stop widespread starvation and death, and the total collapse of livelihoods. Households can be in Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5) even if areas are not classified in Famine (IPC/CH Phase 5).

## Famine – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Famine is the highest level of the Acute Food Insecurity scale. Famine exists in areas where at least one in five households has, or is most likely to have, an extreme deprivation of food and face starvation, death, destitution. Extremely Critical levels of acute malnutrition (at least 30 percent of children malnourished) and significant mortality, directly attributable to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease (at least 1 person for every 5 000 dies each day), are occurring. Urgent action is needed to stop widespread starvation and death.

## Famine Likely – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Famine Likely is the highest level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale (Phase 5), used to classify situations when Famine is likely occurring. If there is insufficient data for Famine classification, usually because either nutrition or mortality data are lacking, but the available information indicates that Famine is likely occurring or will occur, then the Famine classification is called Famine Likely. Famine and Famine Likely are equally severe; the only difference is the amount of reliable evidence available to support the statement.

## Risk of Famine

Risk of Famine refers to the reasonable probability of an area going into Famine in the projected period. While this is not perceived necessarily as the most-likely scenario, it is a worst-case scenario that generally has a realistic chance of occurring.

## Food security

A situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. There are usually four dimensions of food security: food availability, food access, food utilization and stability over time.

## Food access

Access by households/individuals to adequate resources for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.

## Food availability

The availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports.

## Livelihoods

People's capabilities, assets – both material and social – and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and future well-being; and the policies and institutions that shape or constrain access to assets and choices about activities.

## Coping strategies

Activities to which people resort in order to obtain food, income and/or other essential goods or services when their normal means of livelihood have been disrupted or other shocks/hazards affect their access to basic needs.

## Malnutrition

Malnutrition is an umbrella term that covers undernutrition and overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer. Undernutrition is a consequence of inadequate nutrient intake and/or absorption, and/or illness or disease. Acute malnutrition, stunting, underweight and micronutrient deficiencies are all forms of undernutrition.

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## Global Network Against Food Crises

The Global Network Against Food Crises brings together the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United States of America, the World Bank and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) in a unique partnership to improve analysis, evidence and consensus on the prevalence and severity of food crises; improve collective efforts to prevent and respond to these crises; and improve understanding of the underlying causes and interlinkages between food crises and other shocks beyond food.

Within the Global Network's approach and framework, FAO and WFP, together with relevant partners, have established a coordinated monitoring system for food security, livelihoods and value chains in order to identify and inform critical anticipatory actions.

This report is part of a series of Global Network's analytical products contributing to the generation and sharing of consensus and evidence-based information for preventing and addressing food crises.

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