



**HUNGER IS NOT
INEVITABLE
IF WE STEP UP
IMMEDIATELY**

A global economic crisis, continuous conflicts and climate shocks are driving an unprecedented food crisis. Yet, funding is not keeping up with the growing needs, forcing humanitarian operations to cut response in nearly half.

As the global food crisis looms, the most vulnerable are already grappling with catastrophic hunger levels. Food crises are escalating at an alarming pace, raising needs to record highs: conflict and climate shocks have pushed millions to the brink of starvation. The food security situation particularly worsened in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel region, South Sudan and Yemen, where the severity of needs has sharply intensified, including in some instances pockets of populations already facing famine-like conditions. Other countries such as Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Haiti continue to face extreme food insecurity, further compounded in the latter two by fresh violence.

The Horn of Africa is facing its fifth consecutive season of drought while Somali households' purchasing power is at its lowest since 2011 and Ethiopia's pastoralists purchasing power is down to 60 percent. Unfortunately, the region will not recover quickly enough for food security to improve before mid-2023 irrespective of upcoming rainfall levels. Syria is also facing one of its worst water crises, severely impacting the population's access to both drinking and irrigation water. Earthquakes and flashfloods further compounded the dire level of needs in Afghanistan. Floods are expected in South Sudan for the fourth year in a row, as well as in the Sahel region, more particularly in Niger where over 3 million people and 1.2 million hectares of croplands are at risk. Ongoing conflicts and increased insecurity continue to challenge and disrupt humanitarian access

and livelihoods. In the Horn of Africa, 4.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) have been registered in Ethiopia, whereas Somalia has recorded 800,000 IDPs since January 2022. The last months, DRC has seen close to 700,000 people newly displaced due to extreme violence, including burning of villages and killing of civilians.

The latest wave of climate shocks and conflicts is adding layers of vulnerability to a world grappling with a global economic crisis fueled by the lingering impacts of COVID19 and more recently by the consequences of the war in Ukraine. Crisis indicators – food and energy shortages, soaring inflation, disrupted supply chain and distribution, and lack of agricultural inputs – had already reached alarming highs prior to the war in Ukraine. They have now exceeded all previous records: in Mali, local cereal prices have doubled compared to the five-year average, while in Burkina Faso, they increased by 60 percent in one year only (2021-22). In the Horn of Africa, fertilizer prices have reached all-time highs casting a serious shadow on 2022 cereal harvests and food insecurity: in Ethiopia, maize prices in some regions were 60 and 85 percent higher than one year earlier.

**A WORLD OF HUNGER IS A
WORLD OF INSTABILITY**



THE HUMANITARIAN COMMUNITY MUST CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS TO MOBILIZE AND OPTIMIZE THEIR RESOURCES TO RESPOND TOGETHER AND AT SCALE.

Therefore, **millions of extremely vulnerable people have seen their conditions further aggravated.** In Somalia alone, 7.1 million people face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above), among whom 2.1 million are languishing in Emergency conditions (IPC Phase 4), and 213,000 people are struggling to survive catastrophic hunger conditions (IPC Phase 5). Among the 7.74 million acutely food-insecure people in South Sudan, 2.89 million are already living in Emergency conditions (IPC 4) and 87,000 in Catastrophe (IPC 5). The number of people on the brink of starvation across West Africa's Sahel region is at least ten times higher than in pre-Covid 2019, with nearly 182,000 people living in IPC4 conditions in 2018 projected to rise up to over 2.8 million in July/August 2022. DRC remains the country with the highest number of acutely food insecure people, with 27 million in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, out of which 6.1 million people facing emergency conditions (IPC4).

Soaring needs are not the only challenge faced by the food security actors. They are also hit by an exponential rise in operational costs. Providing humanitarian assistance has become significantly more expensive over the past 6 months only. At global level, major exporting countries where food aid is sourced are facing internal conflicts – namely Ukraine and Russia as they enter the sixth month of conflict –

severely impacting the capacity of food security partners to procure and supply essential food items. Partners' interventions are also constrained by fuel and energy price inflation and shortages, impacting transportation costs and disrupting supply chains. Furthermore, the cost of assistance is to be aligned with price inflation: food items are no longer available or too costly to be included in the food basket. Investments are urgently needed in cost-effective humanitarian interventions, especially in safeguarding and rapidly increasing food production among rural communities. Cash-based transfer values need to be coherent with increased prices: a voucher or the transfer value no longer covers the minimum daily food requirements or the costs of fertilizers and essential agricultural inputs. In Nigeria, the June 2022 the food component of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) has increased by 26 and 17 percent in Borno and Yobe states respectively. At the end of June, the level of resources was not aligned with the initial humanitarian financial requests, which aimed at covering a certain level of needs and operational costs. The sharp increase in the latter has only further stretched the alarming gap between the level of resources available and the response.

Meanwhile, people are suffering. As the scale of acute needs and costs outstrips the available resources, assistance is becoming largely

THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY CLUSTER (GFSC) IS SOUNDING THE ALARM AGAIN, STRESSING CONCERNS ABOUT THE UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF PEOPLE FACING IPC PHASE 4 EMERGENCY AND IPC PHASE 5 CATASTROPHE FOOD SECURITY LEVELS WHO REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE.

PEOPLE IN NEED IN AFGHANISTAN, THE HORN OF AFRICA, THE SAHEL REGION, SOUTH SUDAN AND YEMEN INCREASED FROM 81 MILLION TO 98 MILLION – WITH NUMBERS DOUBLING IN NIGER AND SOMALIA – REPRESENTING A 21 PERCENT INCREASE BETWEEN 2021 AND 2022.



inadequate. Already in most operational contexts, food security partners have no alternative but to reduce the quantity, quality, and frequency of assistance. **As a result, millions of people in need are not receiving any assistance.** In Nigeria, 1.4 million people are now left out of food assistance. In Ethiopia, food baskets are incomplete, and the number of people targeted has been reduced by nearly half. In South Sudan, the affected population is receiving only 50 percent of the food basket and 1.7 million have been cut out of food assistance. In Yemen, 5 million people facing Emergency conditions are provided with less than 50 percent of their daily caloric requirement. In Burkina Faso, partners were able to reach only 31 percent of the targeted population at the end of June 2022 and had to resort to ration cuts to be able to do so. In Chad, food security actors faced similar conditions. Likewise, in Mali, over half a million people received food rations reduced by 50 percent. **Reduced rations and suspension of assistance are dangerously becoming the new norm. The Food Security actors will inevitably no longer meet the standards of humanitarian food assistance. The result could be malnutrition and further impoverishment.**

While food security partners fail to address the level of food emergency needs, funding for humanitarian livelihoods assistance is staggeringly low. **Vulnerable households are often struggling to source quality seeds, tools, fertilizers and other key inputs such as fodder at affordable prices.** Planting seasons are missed leaving communities entirely dependent on external assistance as their livelihoods are eroded and they face a higher risk of destitution. It is estimated that the Sahel region will face a fertilizer deficit of between 1.2 and 1.5 million tons, or between 10 and 20 million tons of

grain equivalent. On average, the region is projected to experience a 20 percent decline in agricultural production in 2022 compared to the 2017-2020 averages¹. In Burkina Faso and Mali, a meagre 3 and 2.3 percent respectively of the agriculture response were achieved, as we are already mid-way into 2022. Prospects for the upcoming planting season do not look more promising: if farmers do not receive agricultural inputs within the upcoming three weeks, the next planting season will be missed, again. In Nigeria, the costs of fertilizer kits have increased by 64 percent for the 2022 rainy season compared to 2021. In addition, partners witnessed a significant shortfall of fertilizer supplies. As a result, deliveries were not sufficient to support the planting season – which eventually was missed. In South Sudan only 50 percent of the planned households have received livelihood support due to shortage on funding. Similar challenges apply to all countries of concern.

In 2022, the FSC requires 15 billion USD to provide humanitarian food and livelihood assistance to 150M people across 31 operations, and more than half of them (approx. 8,5 B) to tackle the needs of acutely food insecure people in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, South Sudan, and Yemen, where there are pockets of IPC5 conditions or sharp deterioration of food security conditions. **Too many lives are at stake. We cannot condemn them to further suffering. It is time to mobilize all resources, coordinate and respond to reverse the glooming trend of hunger.**

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/assessment-risks-and-impact-russian-ukrainian-crisis-food-security-ecowas-region-key-findings-june-2022>