



World Food Programme

THE 2020
NOBEL
PEACE
PRIZE
LAUREATE

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES



Hunger, Conflict, and Improving the Prospects for Peace

“We have made huge strides forward in spotting the early warning signs of famine, in understanding its causes and consequences. But, tragically, we have seen this story play out too many times before. The world stands by until it is too late, while hunger kills, it stokes community tensions, fuels conflict and instability, and forces families from their homes.”

David Beasley, WFP Executive Director, addressing the UN Security Council, Sept 2020.

Conflict is the single biggest driver of hunger in the world today. Two years ago, the United Nations Security Council – the highest global body for maintaining international peace and security - passed an historic resolution acknowledging the link between hunger and conflict. Resolution [#2417 \(2018\)](#) recognizes that humankind will never eliminate hunger without establishing peace in the world.

Food insecurity inevitably worsens when fighting drives large numbers of people from their homes, their land and their jobs. The resolution expresses particular concern for the millions of people who are threatened by famine in countries caught in armed conflict. It condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.

At the same time, it is clear that hunger can exacerbate conflict. Food shortages deepen existing fault-lines, fuelling grievances. This is particularly the case where poverty and inequality are already present.

Despite real gains in defeating hunger over recent decades, food insecurity is on the rise in an alarming number of countries. It is estimated there are now some 690 million hungry people in the world.

October 2020

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2020 to the World Food Programme for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.

Providing assistance to increase food security not only prevents hunger but can also help to improve prospects for stability and peace. WFP has taken the lead in combining humanitarian work with peace efforts through pioneering projects.

Nobel Peace Prize citation 2020

WFP is committed to Zero Hunger by the year 2030, as set out in the Sustainable Development Goals. But there are impediments to this goal being achieved; and the greatest of these is conflict.

CONFLICT AND HUNGER - FACTS & FIGURES

Of the **nearly 700 million hungry** (i.e. chronically food insecure) people in the world, about 60 per cent live in countries affected by conflict. *SOFI 2020/2017**

Some 77 million people - more than half of the 135 million people facing acute hunger in the world - are located in 22 countries affected by conflict and insecurity. *Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) 2020 ***

Some 80 percent of the world's 144 million stunted children live in countries affected by conflict. *SOFI 2020/2019*

In **8 out of 10 of the world's main food crises**, conflict and insecurity are among the key drivers of acute hunger. *GRFC 2020*

About **two-thirds of WFP's life-saving food assistance** goes to people facing severe food crises, most of them caused by conflict. *WFP Annual Performance Report, 2019*



The **three worst food crises in terms of number of people in IPC phase 3 or above** are all in countries affected by conflict: Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Yemen. In terms of proportion of the population in IPC phase 3 and above, the worst affected are **South Sudan and Yemen** with over half of their populations affected by food crisis. *Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 2019 & 2020*

Four conflict-affected countries are now facing an **elevated risk of famine**. They are **Burkina Faso, Nigeria (north-east), South Sudan and Yemen**. *WFP & FAO 2020*

Nearly **a quarter of a million people** have been killed directly by fighting in **Yemen** and indirectly through lack of access to food, health services and infrastructure. *Assessing the Impact of the War on Development in Yemen, UNDP, 2019*

By 2030, **up to two-thirds of the world's extreme poor** could live in areas affected by fragility, conflict and violence. Conflicts also drive 80% of all humanitarian needs.

Fragility, Conflict and Violence, World Bank 2020



WFP has found that countries with the highest level of food insecurity, coupled with armed conflict, have the **highest outward migration** of refugees. Additionally, when coupled with poverty, food insecurity increases the likelihood and intensity of armed conflicts. This is a factor with clear implications for refugee outflows. *At the Root of Exodus, WFP, 2017*

By promoting peace and ending violent conflict, the world could save **billions of dollars** in humanitarian food assistance costs every year. *World of Food Assistance, WFP, 2018*

Research undertaken by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute points to WFP programmes contributing to **creating the conditions for peace** in four areas including 'bolstering social cohesion, strengthening the link between citizen and state, and resolving grievances within and between communities.' *SIPRI/WFP, 2019*

In conflict-affected countries, where agriculture and trade are disrupted, **a simple plate of food can cost more than a day's wages**. WFP research has found that in **South Sudan, people on average would have to spend 186 percent of their daily salary** on ingredients for a basic meal such as rice and beans. If someone in **New York State** had to pay the same proportion of their salary on these ingredients, their **meal would cost US\$393**. *Cost of a Plate of Food, WFP, 2020*

* The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World estimates the scale of chronic food insecurity worldwide.

** The Global Report on Food Crises focuses specifically on the most severe manifestations of acute food insecurity in the most pressing food crises. Acute hunger = IPC Phase 3 and above. [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(IPC\)](#)