People in food crisis or worse
Numbers explained

After several years of increasing food needs, the food crisis also persists in 2023, due to conflict, climate shocks and economic downturns.

The following document, produced by the Research, Assessment and Monitoring Division, aims to clarify the different figures and data used in WFP advocacy initiatives.

How many people are expected to be food insecure in 2023?

Across 78 countries where WFP operates and data is available, **it is estimated that up to 333 million people will be acutely food insecure in 2023** (Global Operational Response Plan, November 2023).

The slight reduction compared to earlier estimates for 2023 is, despite smaller reductions in some countries, mostly due to reduced geographic coverage and methodological adjustments. Also, updates for 2023 for some of the major food crisis – including Ethiopia, Palestine, Syria and Yemen - are still pending.

Taking into account only countries which had new IPC/CH or equivalent data for 2023 available by October 2023, 306 million people are estimated to be in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) in 2023, in 66 countries or territories (Global Operational Response Plan, November 2023).

How many people will be at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions if no action is taken?

In 2023, **47.3 million people across 54 countries are in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity** (IPC/CH Phase 4 or above, including severely food insecure based on CARI). This includes 38.6 million people in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4+) based on IPC/CH data in 41 countries, and 8.7 million severely food insecure people (based on CARI) in 13 countries. Without urgent life-saving action, these populations will be **at risk of falling into catastrophic or famine conditions.** This estimate is based on expected peak numbers for 2023 available by October 2023, or - where not available, latest peak. This number is regularly updated.

How many people were food insecure in 2022?

In November 2022, up to 349 million people were acutely food insecure or at high risk across 79 countries where WFP operates and with data available (Global Operational Response Plan, November 2022). This number included estimates for the ripple

effects of the Ukraine crisis for 49 countries. Changes not only reflect an evolving food security situation on the ground but are also driven by refined accounting for the impact of the war in Ukraine as new information has become available. Compared to early 2020, there has been a global increase in acutely food insecure figures of almost 184 million people.

Why do numbers from different sources differ?

The numbers of people facing acute food insecurity reported in the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) and the WFP Global Operational Response Plan (GORP) are not directly comparable due to **differences in each report's purpose, time references, country inclusion, and coverage of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).**

While the GRFC provides a consensus-based number of people in acute food insecurity based on IPC/CH and equivalent data sources (as agreed by all partners), the GORP aims to provide relevant information for all of WFP operations – also including remote data sources (rCARI). Therefore, when IPC/CH data is not available, the GORP relies on WFP assessments, where CARI/rCARI is used to classify households according to their level of food insecurity. This results in **different country coverage** and thus different figures: in this November 2023 edition, the GORP provides information for 78 countries, while the 2023 GRFC reports data for 58 countries.

The variation in global numbers can also be due to **differences in time references** - while the GORP keeps a forward-looking analysis and provides an estimate of the current year, the GRFC reports on the past year's numbers, or – in the mid-year update – numbers available in the first half of the current year. This is due to the differences in each report's purpose – while the GRFC aims at providing yearly comparable and consensus-based figures of global acute food insecurity, the GORP is used for WFP operational planning and decision-making.

Although population coverage of IPC/CH analyses has been improving over the last years, some analyses cover only part of the population, or exclude refugees. As a result, the 2023 GRFC included food insecure refugee populations in eight countries, while the analysis conducted for the WFP GORP accounts for refugees and IDPs that are not included in IPC/CH or equivalent analyses.

Main sources and other additional resources for tracking acute food insecurity

WFP's Global Operation Response Plan provides three times per year a regular update of the estimated number of people in acute food insecurity across the countries where it operates and where data is available – 78 countries in November 2023. Its main purpose is to inform WFP operational planning. Sources are IPC/CH data, needs assessment data (based on WFP CARI and rCARI methodologies), and HNO/HRP data. The numbers cover displaced populations. Please also see the [methodological note.](#)

The **Global Report on Food Crisis** is a joint and consensus-based analysis of acute food insecurity situations worldwide by 16 partner organizations. It reports acute food insecurity based on IPC/CH data and equivalent data endorsed by all partners. 58 countries were covered by the latest 2023 GRFC report, reporting food insecurity data from 2022, while updates for the first half of 2023 were presented for 48 countries in the Mid-Year Update of the 2023 GRFC.

The **FAO-WFP Hunger Hotspots report** is a forward-looking, early warning analysis of countries and situations where acute food insecurity is likely to deteriorate over the coming months. It is published twice a year. The hotspots are identified through a consensus-based analysis of key drivers of food insecurity, their likely combination and evolution across countries and regions.

The [HungerMapLIVE](#) is WFP's global hunger **monit**oring system that provides near real-time estimates of key food security indicators in over 88 countries. The main metric is the prevalence of insufficient food consumption. The information is comprised of actual data from WFP's remote, near real-time food security monitoring systems for more than 30 countries as well as predictions generated by a machine learning-based predictive model.

Photo 1: WFP/Vincent Tremea