



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
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People in acute food insecurity

Numbers explained

After several years of increasing food needs, the food crisis continues to persist in 2024, due to the compounding effects of conflict, climate shocks and economic downturns.

The following document, produced by the WFP Analysis, Planning and Performance Division, aims to clarify the different figures and data used in WFP advocacy initiatives.

How many people are expected to be acutely food insecure in 2024?

The number varies not only according to updated analyses on food insecurity, but also according to number of countries where WFP has operational presence and where data is available.

Across 74 countries where WFP operates and data is available, it is estimated that 343 million people will be acutely food insecure in 2024. ([WFP 2025 Global Outlook](#), November 2024).

Compared to the June 2024 11th edition of the WFP Global Operational Response Plan, when 309 million people were facing acute food insecurity, significant deteriorations are witnessed in the Southern Africa

region (Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe), and Sudan. Mali, Haiti, the Gaza Strip, Sudan, and South Sudan host populations facing Catastrophe (IPC/CH Phase 5). Country coverage increased from 69 countries in the June Global Operational Response Plan to 74 as estimates became available for Bolivia, Cuba, Caribbean islands, Nicaragua, and Venezuela.

How many people are facing critical levels of acute food insecurity?

In 2024, **44.4 million people across 49 countries** are expected to be in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4 or above, including severely food insecure based on CARI). This includes 40.3 million people in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4+) based on IPC/CH data in 40 countries, and 4.1 million severely food insecure people (based on CARI) in 9 countries. These populations require **immediate emergency assistance to save lives and livelihoods.**

This estimate is based on expected peak numbers for 2024 available by early November 2024, or - where not available, latest peak. This number is regularly updated.

How many people were acutely food insecure in 2023?

In November 2023, up to 333 million people were acutely food insecure across 78 countries where WFP operates and with data available (WFP [Global Operational Response Plan #9](#), November 2023). Compared to early 2020, there has been a global increase in acute food insecurity of more than 189 million people. Based on the 2024 Global Report on Food Crisis, 281.6 million people were estimated to be in food crisis or worse in 2023 in 59 countries ([Global Report on Food Crises 2024](#), April 2024).

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 Outlook, and formerly in the WFP Global Operational Response Plan, 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 number shared in the WFP Global Outlook 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 number shared in the WFP Global Outlook 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 2024 edition of the WFP Global Outlook, the number shared covers information for 74 countries, while the 2024 GRFC reports data for 59 countries.

The difference in global numbers is also due to **differences in time references** - while the WFP Global Outlook has a forward-looking perspective and provides an estimate for 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 because of 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 number reported in the WFP Global Outlook is intended for operational planning, decision-making and advocacy.

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 2024 GRFC included food insecure refugee populations in nine countries, while the analysis conducted for the WFP Global Outlook **accounts for refugees and IDPs** that are not covered by IPC/CH or equivalent analyses.

Produced by WFP Analysis, Planning and Performance (APP) Division

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Photo 1: WFP/Vincent Tremea.

Main sources and other additional resources for tracking acute food insecurity



WFP's **Global Outlook** forms part of WFP's continuous commitment to strengthen awareness and resource mobilization efforts to meet the needs of the most vulnerable and food insecure people. The report is published twice a year (November and subsequent mid-year, first edition Nov 2024). The report includes an update on the estimated number of people in acute food insecurity across the countries where WFP operates and where data is available – 74 countries in November 2024. Before November 2024, the number of acutely food insecure people was published in the discontinued Global Operational Response Plan. Data sources for acute food insecurity numbers 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. 59 countries were covered by the latest [2024 GRFC report](#), reporting food insecurity data for 2023, while updates for the first half of 2024 were presented in the [Mid-Year Update of the 2024 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 latest Hunger Hotspot ([November 2024 to May 2025 outlook](#)) was published in late October 2024.

The **HungerMapLIVE** is WFP's global hunger monitoring system that provides near real-time estimates of key food security indicators in over 30 countries. The main metric is the prevalence of insufficient food consumption. The information is based on actual data from WFP's remote, near real-time food security monitoring systems.

TABLE 1: OVERVIEW OF FOOD SECURITY NUMBERS BASED ON IPC/CH AND OTHER SOURCES

	282 MILLION PEOPLE IN FOOD CRISIS OR WORSE (2023)	333 MILLION PEOPLE IN ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY (2023)	343 MILLION PEOPLE IN ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY (2024)
Source	Global Report on Food Crises 2024	WFP Global Operational Response Plan November 2023	WFP 2025 Global Outlook November 2024
Purpose	Consensus-based joint analysis of acute food insecurity situations in countries requiring external food assistance by 16 partner organizations.	Estimate the number of people in acute food insecurity across countries with WFP operations and where data is available.	Estimate the number of people in acute food insecurity across countries with WFP operations and where data is available.
Time reference	Peak figures for 2023 (highest estimate recorded during the calendar year) – backward looking.	Expected peak figures for 2023, if not available, latest peak – forward looking.	Expected peak figures for 2024, if not available, latest peak – forward looking.
Number of countries	59 countries (14 of the considered 73 countries had data gaps or did not meet GRFC partners' requirements to produce estimates for the report).	78 countries with WFP operations and data available – ensuring global coverage of needs.	74 countries with WFP operations and data available – ensuring global coverage of needs.
When to use	As a context baseline and to compare populations in food crisis over time.	For WFP global operational planning, advocacy for countries in food crisis, and strategic decision-making.	For WFP global operational planning, advocacy for countries in food crisis, and strategic decision-making.
Data source/ methodology	IPC/CH Phase 3+ or equivalent for 2023 (highest 2023 estimate during the calendar year), endorsed by 16 partners.	IPC/CH Phase 3+ and equivalent (as per GRFC) for 2023 for 47 countries, CARI/rCARI for 27 countries, HNO/HRP for 4 countries.	IPC/CH Phase 3+ and equivalent (as per GRFC) for 2024 for 51 countries, CARI/rCARI for 19 countries, HNO/HRP for 4 countries.
Population groups covered	Refugee data included for nine countries (where already covered by IPC/CH or equivalent analysis).	Refugee and IDPs data included from additional data sources (UNHCR, IDMC) where not covered by IPC/CH or equivalent analysis.	Refugee and IDPs data included from additional data sources (UNHCR, IDMC) where not covered by IPC/CH or equivalent analysis.
Population in IPC4+ (or equivalent)	37.2 million people in 39 countries (from 41 countries with IPC/CH data).	47.3 million people in 54 countries with populations in IPC/CH 4+ (includes severely food insecure based on WFP CARI data). This includes 38.6 million people based on IPC/CH data in 41 countries, and 8.7 million based on CARI in 13 countries.	44.4 million people in 49 countries with populations in IPC/CH 4+ (includes severely food insecure based on WFP CARI data). This includes 40.3 million people based on IPC/CH data in 40 countries, and 4.1 million based on CARI in 9 countries.
Frequency of update	Yearly publication in April/May. Mid-Year Update in September.	Three times per year (Feb, Jun, Nov).	Twice a year (November and subsequent mid-year)
Publications/ references	https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crisis-2024/	https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-global-operational-response-plan-update-9-november-2023	WFP 2025 Global Outlook, November 2024