

What is the Global Report on Food Crises?

The Global Report on Food Crises 2023 (GRFC 2023) provides an overview of the world's worst food-crisis countries for which external humanitarian assistance was necessary in 2022.

It refers more specifically to a subset of these countries that had available data on which GRFC partners agreed. Its purpose is to be a useful and evidence-based reference document for food security and nutrition analysts, policymakers, decision-makers and advocates.

To inform policies and programming that respond to these multidimensional crises, policymakers require clear, timely and reliable data and analyses. However, information is often conflicting and derived from various sources and based on different methodologies that lack a consensus-based standard. The GRFC responds to these constraints by providing information based on a rigorous methodology and a highly consultative process.

It provides detailed information about regions, countries and populations experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2022, and projections for 2023. It examines the main drivers of these food crises, and provides analysis of seven years of GRFC data and the latest available information on displacement and nutrition.

This global report (GRFC 2023) is part of an annual suite of products, which includes the GRFC 2023 IGAD regional

report and the GRFC 2023 Mid-Year Update. In 2023, we anticipate producing a GRFC 2023 regional report for West Africa and the Sahel.

The GRFC as a global public good: partnership, consultation and consensus

The production of the GRFC is coordinated by the Food Security Information Network in support of the Global Network Against Food Crises. It is the product of a collaboration among 16 partners consisting of regional intergovernmental bodies, donors, technical bodies, clusters and UN agencies. The result is an independent reference document that aims for consensus-driven analysis and that has been validated and endorsed by global and regional experts in the fields of food security, nutrition and displacement.

All 16 partners participate in the following:

- **Technical Working Groups** (displacement, food security, nutrition) consisting of technical experts from each of the partner agencies who contribute data and analysis, participate in the review of content, and make recommendations to the Senior Committee for endorsement.
- **Senior Committee** consisting of senior representatives from each partner agency who make the final decision on content and coordinate institutional clearance.

What is a food crisis?



A food crisis occurs when levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition rise sharply at local or national levels, raising the need for emergency food assistance. The GRFC processes aim to distinguish a food crisis from chronic food insecurity based on the interaction of shocks experienced in 2022, and that affect one or more of the pillars of food security: food availability, food access, food utilization and food stability. Food crises are more likely among populations already suffering from prolonged food insecurity and malnutrition, and in areas where structural factors increase their vulnerability to shocks.

HOW TO READ THE REPORT



The GRFC provides several levels of analysis in each chapter. In this 2023 edition, there are three 'Spotlights' to provide a more in-depth analysis and draw the reader's attention to three major issues: the impact of the war in Ukraine on global food crises; the importance of timely humanitarian action in food-crisis contexts; and countries of concern with data gaps.

Chapter 1 | A global overview of food crises

This section presents a thematic analysis of the global food crises of 2022 and projections for 2023, based on the peak estimates for both years. It provides aggregate figures on acute food insecurity, identifies the key drivers and factors contributing to food crises, and presents a focused analysis of the most severe acute food insecurity situations since the GRFC began publication in 2017. In a table, it provides 2021, 2022 and 2023 peak estimates for all GRFC selected food crises. A global brief on displacement and nutrition is also included.

Chapter 2 | Regional overviews of food crises

This section presents a consolidated food security analysis for six regions – Central and Southern Africa; East Africa; West Africa and the Sahel, and Cameroon; Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; and the Middle East and North Africa – for 2022 and projections for 2023 where available. It also presents nutrition and displacement analyses. Europe is not included since Ukraine is the only country selected and it is included as a major food crisis in chapter 3 while the global impact of the war in Ukraine is included as a spotlight within chapter 1.

Chapter 3 | Major food crises in 2022

This chapter features individual analyses of the 42 countries/territories identified as 'major food crises'. All of them have at least 1 million people or 20 percent of their country population or migrant/refugee population in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above or equivalent. These country briefs present the 2022 peak estimate of populations in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above or equivalent, and the highest available projection for 2023. They include maps, a brief narrative on year-on-year changes and seven-year trends where possible, key drivers, as well as information on forcibly displaced populations and nutrition.

Technical Notes

This section provides the technical details regarding the information described in the GRFC including key terminology, data sources and methodologies, GRFC processes and protocols, as well as comparability challenges and limitations. It also contains references for the categorization of undernutrition and acute food insecurity indicators.

Appendices

All key terms and terminology used in the GRFC are listed in the Glossary for easy reference.

As the GRFC refers to peak estimates of acute food insecurity, appendix 2 provides all available IPC/CH results for specific countries/territories dating back to 2016 where available thus providing additional information to the chapter 3 country briefs, which helps the reader consider the seasonal aspect of acute food insecurity.

The foundation of the GRFC: an evidence-based public good



A strong partnership



A highly consultative process



A compilation of multiple consensus-based food security and nutrition analyses



A technical document of reference on food crises

Country selection and coverage

The GRFC follows a specific process to identify countries and populations within a country for inclusion in the report, to identify which faced food crises and which are major food crises.

The **consideration** of countries/territories for potential inclusion in the GRFC 2023 identified those that experienced a shock in 2022 and for which there was evidence that the magnitude and/or severity of the food crisis exceeded local resources and capacities to respond. Reference is made to countries that requested assistance, as monitored by FAO-GIEWS, or hosted refugee populations. As in past years, the GRFC 2023 did not list high-income countries, even if they had populations facing high levels of acute food insecurity, nor did it include countries that did not request humanitarian assistance for populations facing high levels of acute food insecurity.

A rigorous selection process has been employed over the seven years of the GRFC's existence. The selection process for the GRFC 2023 considered 73 qualifying countries/territories for potential inclusion. Following a review of the evidence, the GRFC Technical Working Group validated acute food insecurity estimates for 58 countries/territories, of which 42 were identified as major food crises. In all seven years, 38 countries consistently qualified as food crises, of which 19 were identified as major food crises. See *Technical Notes*.

The **selection** of countries/territories for inclusion in the GRFC 2023 was based on the availability of data and their methodology meeting the GRFC partners' specific requirements for acute food insecurity estimates, further described in the *Technical Notes*. **Major food crises** were then identified based on the magnitude and severity of acute food insecurity. See *table, right*.

1 PRE-SELECTION OF QUALIFYING COUNTRIES/TERRITORIES

48 countries/territories that requested external assistance for food and/or faced shocks as assessed by FAO-GIEWS:

- in 2022 or
- at least once in the past 3 years or
- for at least 3 years in the past 10 years

25 low- or middle-income countries/territories were not selected for analysis by FAO-GIEWS, but requested external assistance as a result of:

- hosting refugee populations who were assisted by UNHCR and WFP
- having over 1 million or at least 20 percent of its population forcibly displaced
- having populations affected by conflict and insecurity, weather extremes and/or economic shocks

Countries were excluded if they were high-income countries, if they did not ask for FAO or WFP assistance, or if the shocks had little impact on food security.

73 countries/territories identified

2 SELECTION AND GROUPING OF COUNTRIES/TERRITORIES

15 of the 73 countries/territories identified had data gaps or did not meet GRFC partners' requirements to produce estimates of people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent.

The remaining **58** food-crisis countries/territories are grouped into 7 regions:

- Central and Southern Africa
- East Africa
- West Africa and the Sahel, and Cameroon
- Asia
- Europe (Ukraine)
- Latin America and the Caribbean
- Middle East and North Africa

58 countries/territories identified

3 IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR FOOD CRISES

42 of the selected countries/territories were identified as major food crises in 2022 based on meeting one or more of the following criteria:

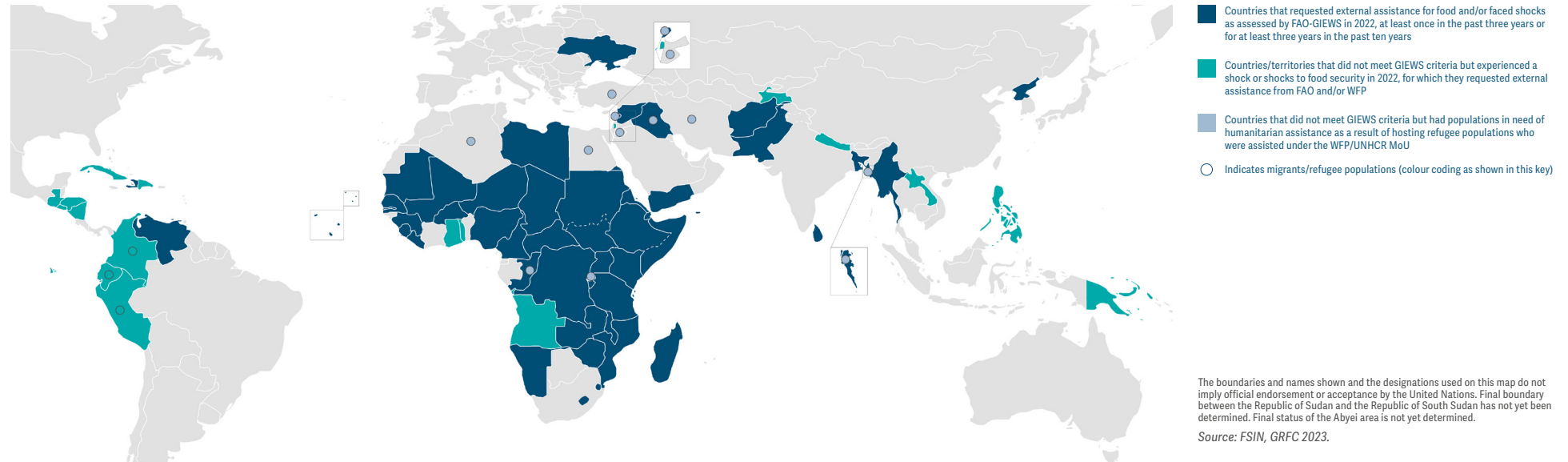
- at least 20 percent of the country population in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent
- at least 1 million people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent
- any area in Emergency (IPC/CH Phase 4) or above
- included in the IASC humanitarian system-wide emergency response level 3

42 countries/territories identified

Geographical coverage

MAP 1.1

Countries/territories that were considered for inclusion in the GRFC 2023



■ **Countries that requested external assistance for food and/or faced shocks as assessed by FAO-GIEWS in 2022, at least once in the past three years or for at least three years in the past ten years**

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon (residents and Syrian refugees), Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Uganda, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

■ **Countries/territories that did not meet GIEWS criteria but experienced a shock or shocks to food security in 2022, for which they requested external assistance from FAO and/or WFP**

Angola, Colombia (residents, refugees and migrants), Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador (residents, refugees and migrants), El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Nicaragua, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Peru (residents, refugees and migrants), Philippines, Tajikistan, Togo, Tonga.

■ **Countries that did not meet GIEWS criteria but had populations in need of humanitarian assistance as a result of hosting refugee populations who were assisted under the WFP/UNHCR Memorandum of Understanding**

Algeria (Sahrawi refugees), Egypt (Syrian refugees), Iran (Afghan refugees), Jordan (Syrian refugees), Rwanda (refugees), Türkiye (Syrian refugees).

Acute food insecurity data sources

Since food security data are derived from varied sources based on different methodologies, the GRFC relies primarily on data from Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre Harmonisé (CH) analyses.

These are government-endorsed, multistakeholder, consensus-based processes that result in a classification of the magnitude and severity of acute food insecurity based on a convergence of evidence and are comparable across countries, i.e. phase classification in one country is equivalent to phase classification in another.

They categorize populations into five phases of severity, from Phase 1 (no or minimal acute food insecurity) to Phase 5 (Catastrophe/Famine). See table, right. Through a consensus-based process, country IPC/CH multistakeholder Technical Working Groups generate an estimate of populations in each phase, based on a convergence of available evidence. The GRFC primarily presents populations in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above), who face high levels of acute food insecurity and need external humanitarian assistance to reduce food consumption gaps, and to protect and save livelihoods and lives.

Non-IPC/CH sources

When an IPC/CH analysis is not available, the Technical Working Groups evaluate the use of other sources of evidence. These include: FEWS NET analyses which are IPC-compatible; WFP Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators (CARI), which uses household-level analysis to report moderate and severe levels of acute food insecurity, but without comparable disaggregation into Phases 3, 4 and 5 (populations that face 'moderate acute food insecurity' and 'severe acute food insecurity' as per WFP's CARI methodology are reported as an approximation to populations facing IPC/CH Phase 3 or above); and food insecurity data contained in Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs), which are based on different methodologies and on government-endorsed multistakeholder processes. Not all these methodologies underlying the HNOs 'Population in Need' (PIN) estimates

IPC/CH acute food insecurity phase description and response objectives

Phase	Phase description and priority response objectives
Phase 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. Action required to build resilience and for disaster risk reduction.
Phase 2 Stressed	Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies. Action required for disaster risk reduction and to protect livelihoods.
Phase 3 Crisis	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; or • are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies. URGENT ACTION required to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.
Phase 4 Emergency	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. URGENT ACTION required to save lives and livelihoods.
Phase 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.)* URGENT ACTION required to revert/prevent widespread death and total collapse of livelihoods.

* A Famine classification requires evidence on food security, nutrition and mortality at or above IPC Phase 5 thresholds. If there are insufficient data for Famine classification but the available information indicates that Famine is likely occurring or will occur, then the Famine classification is called 'Famine Likely'. It is important to note that Famine and Famine Likely are equally severe.

are endorsed as acute food insecurity estimates by the GRFC partnership: for example, in the case of Myanmar and Palestine, estimates of acute food insecurity were based on data that did not meet GRFC partnership requirements. However, the partnership gave more weight to the HNO multistakeholder endorsement of PIN estimates for those two countries/territories, which resulted in their inclusion in the report. The GRFC does not include information based on other methodologies

that have not been endorsed by the GRFC partnership. These include Household Economy Assessments, the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, rCARI (remote data collection) and single indicators, such as the Food Consumption Score, that only report on one dimension of food insecurity. Desk research complements this acute food insecurity data with other information sources to provide a more comprehensive analysis of each country's food, nutrition and/or displacement crisis. The global and

regional overviews, presented in chapters 1 and 2, collate the country/territory-level data and, in doing so, illustrate the regional and global interconnectedness of the drivers and consequences of food crises.

Peak estimates

The GRFC 2023 reports the highest estimate of people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) for each country/territory included in the GRFC – also known as the peak estimate – out of all potential analyses available during the year.

As acute food insecurity can be seasonal or the consequence of a shock, the peak figure does not necessarily reflect the situation throughout the year in that country and can be based on a projection. In some cases, the analysis spans two calendar years, therefore the peak estimate may straddle both 2021 and 2022, or 2022 and 2023.

Data gaps

Some countries were considered for inclusion but not analysed for the GRFC 2023 because they faced data gaps, as in the case of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Eritrea. Data gaps can also be driven by lack of processes to systematically collect information and lack of funding to conduct assessments, as well as lack of access due to insecurity.

Projections for 2023

IPC, CH and FEWS NET methodologies 'project' the acute food insecurity situation based on the most likely expected scenario by developing assumptions on the evolution of food security drivers and their impacts on food security outcomes. As of March 2023, projections were available for 38 of the GRFC 2023 countries/territories. Six countries had analyses for which the 2022 peak came at the end of the year and extended into 2023. All data presented in the GRFC 2023 are the latest available as of 17 March 2023.