

177th Session of the FAO Council

Item 6: FAO emergency interventions in crisis settings

Acute hunger remains alarmingly high despite global efforts. Since 2020, the proportion of people facing acute food insecurity has remained largely unchanged. In 2023, more than 282 million people in 59 countries/territories faced high acute food insecurity. Accordingly, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)'s work in emergencies and resilience, embedded within the Programme Priority Areas of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, is an integral part of the Organization's work at global, regional, subregional and country levels.

FAO plays a key role in interagency and multilateral fora and instruments that drive, shape and frame system-wide coordination in food crisis settings, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the global Food Security Cluster and country-level cluster, the Global Network Against Food Crises, among others. FAO also collaborates with the World Food Programme (WFP), other United Nations agencies and partners in this space.

Globally, the major drivers of acute hunger – conflicts, climate extremes and economic downturns – are expected to persist in 2025. The latest FAO-WFP Hunger Hotspots Report projected worsening acute food insecurity in 16 hunger hotspots, spanning 22 countries/territories, from November 2024 to May 2025. FAO aims to assist 49 million people in over 30 countries in 2025, requiring USD 1.9 billion – just 4 percent of the total global Humanitarian Response Plan funding needs.

Reducing acute food insecurity requires a balanced response, yet humanitarian financing remains heavily skewed, with only 3 percent of humanitarian food sector funding allocated to emergency agriculture assistance. This underfunding undermines efforts to help rural communities exit hunger, rebuild food stocks and stabilize food supply chains. In crisis settings, FAO's work is vast, impactful and a cost-effective means, providing direct assistance for vulnerable households, generating and analysing data, and leading global and transboundary initiatives.

Council document CL 177/6 provides country-specific updates on hunger hotspots, summarizing the food insecurity situation and FAO's activities and emergency interventions in those crisis settings. Updates on Gaza and Ukraine are covered separately in Council document CL 177/5.

As requested in the Report of the Joint Meeting of the 140th Session of the Programme Committee and 203rd Session of the Finance Committee, the following provides a summary of the current landscape of data analysis on acute food insecurity and malnutrition, along with some implications when looking ahead.

Data collection and analysis are fundamental to understanding food crises, designing effective interventions and informing policies, priorities and funding allocations. This activity takes many forms – from household surveys, crop and livestock production assessments, key informant interviews, remote sensing and modelling, data consolidation and multi-partner data analyses – and is conducted by a wide range of actors at local, national and global levels. This complex data and analysis ecosystem is impacted by the evolving funding landscape. Additionally, with diminished data availability and analytical capacity, the international community may struggle to allocate resources efficiently and effectively, exacerbating an already constrained funding environment.

The main food security and nutrition partners involved in data collection and analysis are already affected by funding reductions. For example, some data collection exercises are being cancelled, and some countries are being prioritized over others. Key implications for some organizations/entities include:

- **FAO's leadership in food security analysis in countries with food crises is at risk due to limited data availability and reduced analytical coverage, impacting policies and programmes aimed at reducing acute food insecurity and transforming agrifood systems. For example, the FAO's Data in**

Emergencies information system has been reduced by 50 percent – from covering 29 food crisis countries with 58 sample surveys in 2024, to 15 countries and 30 surveys in 2025. In addition, the ability of FAO (and WFP) to conduct Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions will also be compromised without adequate funding.

- **The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and Cadre Harmonisé (CH)** – key systems for assessing acute food insecurity and malnutrition – are also affected. Reduced or withdrawn IPC partners are limiting expertise and perspectives, while other partners report declining capacity in the areas of food security, nutrition and rapid multisectoral humanitarian needs assessments. Although the full impacts of reduced funding have not yet been fully assessed, after June 2025, a number of the IPC/CH data sources are likely to be impacted.
- Without sustained financial support, critical technical **national and international non-governmental organizations** would be forced to scale back data collection, reducing data considered in key analytical processes (*inter alia* IPC Technical Working Group) and in programme effectiveness.

The absence or interruption of FAO and partner data streams will create significant data gaps, limiting the capacity to anticipate deteriorating conditions and respond effectively. This would also impact the international community's ability to track food insecurity and nutrition trends, identify emerging hotspots and design effective interventions. Additionally, the inputs from food security actors to the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) produced by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will be impacted, potentially affecting the comprehensive scope of the 2026 GHO.