WFP Global Operational Response Plan 2022

Update #5

June 2022

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Executive Summary

The world is grappling with catastrophic food insecurity and unprecedented humanitarian needs, fuelled by conflict, climate shocks, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The increasing costs of food, fuel, and fertilizer have driven millions of people closer to starvation and triggered a wave of hunger. Meanwhile, the repercussions of the war in Ukraine are echoing globally, leaving many families struggling to put food on the table. **There is a very real risk that global food and nutrition needs may soon outstrip WFP's—or any organization's—ability to respond.**

In 2022, up to **345 million people are estimated to be acutely food insecure or at high risk** across 82 countries with WFP operational presence and where data is available, an increase of almost 200 million people compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic. Hunger has also grown more deeply entrenched, with up to 50 million people facing Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4 and above or equivalent) across 45 countries.[1] This number includes 401,000 people facing catastrophic food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 5) in **Ethiopia**, 213,000 people in **Somalia**, 161,000 people in **Yemen**, 87,000 people in **South Sudan**, and 20,000 people in **Afghanistan**. Together, these figures tell an alarming story: **the world is in the midst of a global food crisis, the largest in recent history.**

In response, WFP is **activating a global corporate emergency,** scaling up its direct food and nutrition assistance to prevent famine and death. Faced by funding gaps and rising prices, WFP is leveraging data and analytics to adapt and optimize its operations, implementing mitigation measures and shifting programme modalities to prioritize those most in need.

WFP is increasing its technical assistance to support governments to manage and mitigate the impacts of the crisis, reinvigorating its support to national social protection systems, including school feeding programmes. Finally, WFP is focusing on enabling the continued functioning of food systems and related supply chains to prevent the current food access crisis from becoming an even worse food availability crisis in 2023.

WFP is targeting to support a record 151.6 million people in 2022, a significant increase from the already record-high 128 million people reached in 2021. In the first quarter of 2022 alone, WFP has already reached 83 million people. Expectedly, operational requirements are also at an all-time high: as of June 2022, **WFP's total annual operational requirement is US$ 22.2 billion,** but the global funding forecast only provides for less than half this requirement.

WFP has a plan for 2022—its most ambitious in history—but needs a step-change to help deliver millions from disaster. WFP is facing a triple jeopardy: operational costs are going up, the numbers of the acutely hungry are rising to unprecedented levels, and yet funding for humanitarian operations is dwindling. **WFP calls for coordinated action** to address its funding gap, build an all-inclusive multi-stakeholder approach in partnership with governments and food systems actors, ensure trade is open, invest in strategic development solutions, and commit to political solutions to secure stability and peace. **We are at a critical crossroads:** either we rise to the challenge, or we will be forced to face the consequences in the future.

1 This includes severely food insecure populations based on WFP's Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators (CARI) of food security methodology.

Section I: The Global Food Crisis

A FOOD SECURITY AND MALNUTRITION STORM

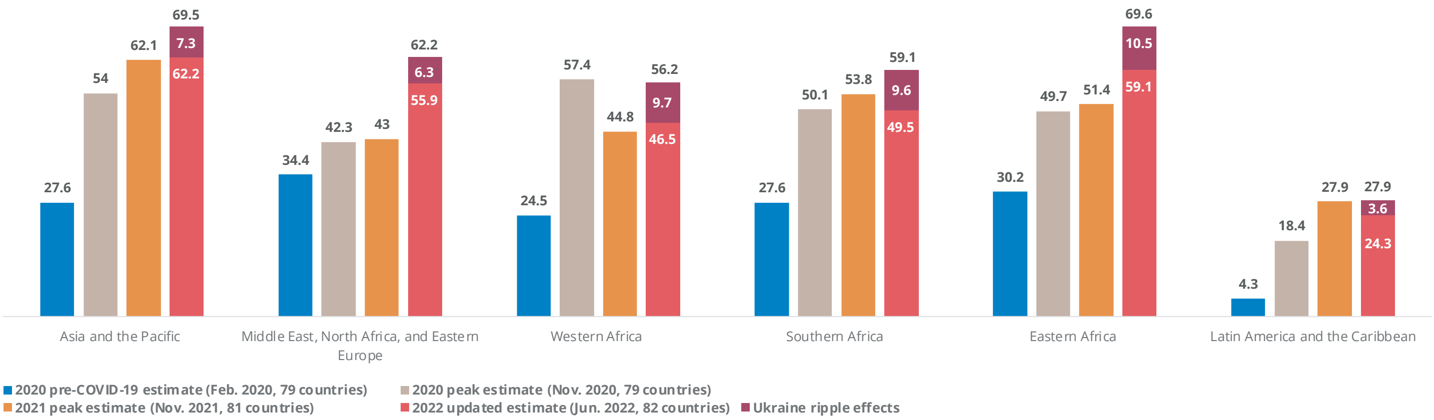
Global food security is enduring a storm of staggering proportions. Increasing climate variability and shocks—including back-to-back droughts and landscape-changing floods—have piled on to the devastating economic fallout caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused massive income losses, record inflation, tumbling currencies, and a global debt burden. Meanwhile, the conflicts in Ukraine and elsewhere have taken an already strenuous situation to a new level of severity, with dramatic ripple effects on food security and energy markets.

Driven by the ripple effects of the conflict in Ukraine, the number of people who are acutely food insecure or at high risk will soar to a record high of **345 million people in 2022 in 82 countries** with WFP operational presence and where data is available.

This is an increase of almost 200 million people compared to pre-pandemic levels. An estimated **50 million people across 45 countries** are in Emergency or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4+ or equivalent)[2] based on most recently published IPC/CH or equivalent analyses. Without urgent life-saving action, these populations will be at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions.[3]

The number of acutely malnourished people is also increasing, reaching record highs in some contexts. Globally, 60 million children are acutely malnourished as of 2022, compared to 47 million in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic.[4] In the **Sahel**, 6.3 million children are affected by acute malnutrition in 2022, the highest figure ever recorded for the region.[5] Meanwhile, in the **Horn of Africa**, 7 million children are acutely malnourished due to the combined effects of the drought and conflicts.[6]

Ukraine ripple effects drive record food insecurity
Number of people acutely food insecure or at high risk, in millions



2 Ibid.

3 This June 2022 estimate is the sixth update of WFP's acute food insecurity estimate for its Global Operational Response Plan, starting in June 2020, covering 82 countries with WFP operational presence. Ukraine was added in this edition, the Pacific Islands were added in February 2022, and Venezuela was added in May 2021. This estimate is based on most recent assessment data and projections for 2022 (or latest available) from Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), Cadre Harmonisé (CH), WFP CARI or comparable analyses for 63 countries, available before May 31. Only IPC/CH exercises with population coverage of above 50 percent were considered, expected peak-numbers for 2022 (or latest available) are used. For countries without recent data available, it relies on estimates of COVID-19's impact on acute food security conducted in June 2020 (see methods paper). The additional increase in acute food insecurity due to the war in Ukraine is estimated through a global model, taking into account price increases and ensuing access to food by those who could barely afford a minimal diet before (see methods paper). The numbers are supposed to give a comprehensive estimate of people in need of food assistance for 2022, in countries where WFP operates. The analysis covers rural and urban populations, and refugees.

4 Act now before Ukraine war plunges millions into malnutrition, Osendarp et al. 2022.

5 West and Central Africa Regional Working Group, March 2022.

6 WFP RBN Regional Food Security and Nutrition Update, May 2022.

Economic risks

Food prices have been on the rise since mid-2020. The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Food Price Index reached a new all-time high in February 2022 and then took another leap in March 2022 (159.7 points, around 30 percent above its value in the corresponding month last year) and has only slightly reduced since.[7] Domestic food prices rose by 15 percent or more in 51 countries over the past year, making essential purcahses unaffordable for many people.[8] Similarly, crude oil prices have steadily increased since the spring of 2020, after recovering from a pandemic-triggered plunge and even surpassing the levels of previous years.[9]

At the same time, incomes remain depressed as labour markets are struggling to recover from pandemic-induced shocks. After large-scale losses in working hours in 2020 and 2021 (equivalent to 125 million full-time jobs) the International Labour Organization projects further working hour deficit of 52 million full-time jobs in 2022.[10]

Governments around the world are tightening their belts after draining their coffers and racking up debt since the beginning of the pandemic. About 60 percent of low-income countries are at high risk of or already in debt distress, compared with 30 percent in 2015.[6] Meanwhile, high inflation is causing central banks in advanced economies to tighten their monetary policies, resulting in less cheap credit and access to financial flows. Growing credit costs are adding pressure, which is likely to be compensated by austerity policies affecting the vulnerable first and foremost.

Conflict risks

Conflict and insecurity remain the prime driver of food insecurity globally. It continues to displace populations, disrupt agricultural value chains, and drive income losses and food price hikes. In 2021, around 139 million people were facing Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phases 3 or above) across 24 countries/territories where conflict and insecurity was considered the primary driver. Major violent hotspots include the **Central Sahel**, **northern Nigeria**, **Central African Republic**, **eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, **northern Mozambique**, **Ethiopia**, **South Sudan**, **Yemen**, **Afghanistan**, **Myanmar**, and, most recently, **Ukraine**. In many of these contexts, conflict and insecurity continue to present severe challenges to humanitarian access resulting in operational cutoffs and delays.

Natural hazard risks

Climatic shocks impairing agricultural production globally have curbed domestic supplies in numerous countries and contributed to increasing prices. Extreme climate events are becoming the new normal in many of the most vulnerable areas of the globe, with recurring extreme climate events affecting the same spots.

Consecutive *La Niña* weather events since late 2020 have affected agricultural activities, causing crop and livestock losses in many parts of the world. Forecasts indicate a 58 percent likelihood for *La Niña* conditions to continue through August–October before slightly increasing later in the year through early 2023,[11] putting some countries in the Greater Horn of Africa, Asia, the Sahel, and the Caribbean at high risk of deteriorating food insecurity conditions. The desperately needed rains in the Horn of Africa have so far failed to materialize as the peninsula faces one of its most severe droughts in recent history. In Southern Africa, **Angola** has experienced a fifth consecutive year of drought conditions in southern provinces, with the 2020–21 season being the worst in the last 40 years in some areas. Forecasts also suggest a high risk of isolated flooding throughout the **Sahel**. In **South Sudan**, above-average rainfall is largely expected to continue until the end of the season, increasing the risk of consecutive flooding in south-eastern areas from July to September.

THE "TRIPLE F" CRISIS: FOOD, FUEL, AND FERTILIZER

The conflict in **Ukraine**—one of the world's major breadbaskets—is compounding what is already a year of catastrophic hunger. **Ukraine and Russia together supply 30 percent of globally traded wheat, 20 percent of maize and 70 percent of sunflower supplies**. A shortfall in export supplies is driving prices up, leaving import-dependent countries with higher food import bills—or less food to eat. Since the beginning of the crisis in Ukraine, food shipments from the Black Sea have been reduced and costs have grown significantly, with immediate impact on import-dependent economies. Military operations have further disrupted Ukrainian agricultural production, leading to lower production for the 2022–23 season. While the harvested amounts will exceed Ukrainian needs, global grain supply will remain low unless shipping from the Black Sea resumes.

7 FAO Food Price Index, May 2022

8 WFP RAM, Prices & Currencies Monthly Update, June 2022

9 Trading Economic – Brent crude oil

10 World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2022

11 El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Diagnostic Discussion

In addition, **Russia** is one of the most important suppliers of the three major groups of fertilizers. Fertilizer prices are increasing to record levels, which will significantly affect countries' ability to grow food, increasing food insecurity far beyond 2022 levels. Russia is also a critical player in global energy markets; the conflict has significantly affected energy costs, which is also likely to put additional pressure on food prices, as fuel represents a key agricultural input and natural gas is an important feedstock to produce nitrogen-based fertilizers. At the same time, rising energy costs are likely to reduce households' purchasing power and slow down economic recovery from the pandemic.[12]

Finally, decreasing international supplies are already causing some producing countries to limit or ban exports with the aim to stabilize domestic prices.[11] **Current export restrictions affect 17 percent of globally traded calories**. A rapid drop of available supplies induced by a domino of export bans would accelerate price increases and prevent import dependent economies from securing food supplies. These bans have major implications on global economic dynamics: during the 2007–2008 financial crisis, export restrictions caused 40 percent of the price surges.[13]

In combination, **these factors threaten to transform the current crisis of food access into a future crisis of food availability.** Because of the key fertilizer issue, global food production in 2023 may not be able to meet rising demand. This will be compounded by export restrictions, which may prevent the trade needed to bring essential food supplies and fertilizers to where they are most required. Time is short to prevent an even worse global food crisis in 2023.[14]

HUNGER RISKS FIRING CONFLICT AND UNREST

Conflict drives hunger, and hunger can likewise be a cause of conflict. Food insecurity, especially when caused by higher food prices, heightens the risks of democratic breakdown, civil unrest, protests and riots, communal conflict, and even interstate war. This was seen in 2007–2008 and 2009–2010, when large-scale political unrest and instability or so-called "food and hunger riots,"[15] coincided with big spikes in food prices. These riots left hundreds dead, triggered government reshuffles, and forced major towns to shut down. In **Syria**, **Libya** and **Yemen**, food price inflation even contributed to protracted armed conflicts.

The current global food crisis is significantly worse than 2008 or 2010. In those years, there were no pandemic-related shocks, no massive income losses, no record inflation, no supply chain disruptions, and no major record debt burden. There was no war in **Syria**, **Yemen**, **Nigeria**, or **Ethiopia**. Furthermore, there were less frequent and less intense climate-related shocks.

Since March 2022, protests over the increase of food prices have already erupted in several countries, highlighting the pace and severity of the repercussions just months into the conflict in **Ukraine**. The overlap of price increases with existing political instability, violence, and extreme weather shocks could fuel conflict by increasing food insecurity in terms of both availability of and access to food. Food insecurity-driven unrest also raises the risk of looting and vandalism targeting WFP operations.

WFP STRUGGLES TO MAKE ENDS MEET

As the frontline fighter of global hunger, WFP has been heavily affected by increasing food prices and decreasing international attention for food security crises.[14] The cost of WFP commodities such as wheat and wheat flour, vegetable oil (sunflower and palm oil), peas, and specialized nutritious foods have increased by US$ 27.1 million per month. Fuel prices have increased WFP's operational costs by another **US$ 5.5 million per month.**[16] This is on top of the pandemic-related price increases of **US$ 42 million** compared to the 2019 average monthly cost. The global supply chain disruptions also impact WFP's shipping operations through longer lead times (on average an additional 1–2 months) and higher ocean freights. Overall, the crisis in Ukraine has increased **WFP's monthly costs by US$ 73.6 million above their 2019 average (an increase by 44 percent)**.[17]

Due to the unprecedented overlap of crises, WFP's annual operational requirements are at an all-time high of US$ 22.2 billion, with confirmed contributions at US$ 4.8 billion (22 percent). This low percentage in secured funds threatens WFP's ability to reach its beneficiary target of **151.6 million people in 2022**, with particular concern for refugee operations and other protracted crises. Across all regions, the lack of sufficient resources is forcing WFP to take drastic measures by reducing the number of beneficiaries or the size of their rations—or both:

- In **Asia and the Pacific**, WFP is facing a US$ 1.2 billion shortfall in **Afghanistan** through the end of the year and will be forced to choose whether to feed people in IPC Phase 3 and 4 now, or preposition food for the winter, when they will be cut off from aid altogether. Meanwhile, in **Myanmar**, funding for urban operations is expected to run out in July, while cash-based operations in crisis-affected areas will face interruptions in August, leaving internally displaced persons and other vulnerable people without food assistance.

12 Global Food Prices Face Upward Pressure on Crude Oil Rally

13 From bad to worse: How Russia-Ukraine war-related export restrictions exacerbate global food insecurity

14 Global impact of the war in Ukraine: Billions of people face the greatest cost-of-living crisis in a generation

15 Food Riots: From Definition to Operationalization

16 Daily price updates are done to update these costs.

17 Food security implications of the Ukraine conflict

- In **Eastern Africa,** the Horn of Africa is experiencing its worst drought in 40 years; however, WFP is being forced to prioritise who receives assistance and who goes hungry. Elsewhere, in **South Sudan,** resourcing shortfalls have forced WFP to suspend assistance to 1.7 million people, and even populations living in IPC Phase 5 areas are only receiving 70 percent of a full ration.
- In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, weather forecasts confirm an earlier, more active, and intense hurricane season for 2022. Areas in the northern Caribbean and eastern Central America are at particular risk and critical funding is required for WFP to support emergency preparedness and response efforts at regional and country levels. WFP's net funding requirements for the region, however, stand at 65 percent for the next six months.
- In the **Middle East, North Africa and Eastern Europe**, WFP is facing significant resourcing shortfalls in **Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Syria**, and **Yemen**; in Yemen, WFP's assistance to 6 million people will be reduced to 55 percent of caloric needs between July and December if no additional funding is received; meanwhile, in Jordan, WFP has been forced to prioritize assistance to only target refugees in camps and extremely vulnerable refugees in communities as of June.
- In **Southern Africa**, resourcing remains insufficient to meet even the very basic needs of vulnerable households forcing WFP to implement reductions in food rations for refugee operations in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, **Malawi**, **Mozambique** and **Tanzania**, as well as reductions in programme implementation in some countries including **Zimbabwe**.
- In **Western Africa,** as the **Sahel** enters the annual lean season WFP is being forced to reduce the number of people that will receive assistance, cut rations, and prioritize activities. Even before the conflict in Ukraine, WFP was forced to cut rations up to 50 percent in **Nigeria,** the **Central African Republic, Chad, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali and Niger** due to funding shortfalls. Now, WFP will be forced to take from the

Staff deployment during emergencies to ensure critical posts are filled

The growing number and complexity of emergencies has put a strain on experienced personnel and leadership available to rapidly deploy. In many cases, WFP staff are being pulled out from existing emergency operations to support sudden onset emergencies.

To tackle this challenge, WFP established a Global Surge Coordination Unit (GSCU) to build a pool of emergency responders equipped to support current and future emergency responses, working closely with stakeholders to identify and deploy staff around the world. As of the end of May, the GSCU deployed 442 personnel across multiple WFP operations in 2022. Of this figure, 416 and counting were deployed to the Ukraine emergency, building the operation from the ground up. Other deployed staff are augmenting WFP's responses in Afghanistan, Haiti, Madagascar, and Somalia. In addition, the GSCU is identifying personnel to immediately fill staffing requests from Sri Lanka.

The GSCU mobilizes a diverse pool of qualified professionals with 62 percent and 38 percent of emergency response staff coming from developed and developing countries respectively. The staff deployed so far in 2022 are 41 percent female and 59 percent male. The GSCU is expecting to deploy approximately 200 more personnel in 2022, taking into consideration the number of protracted crises today as well as foreseeable risks in the Sahel and the upcoming hurricane season. WFP also maintains agreements with NGOs and government entities to provide specialized personnel to augment WFP's response, with 122 personnel working alongside WFP in 2022 thanks to this network.