



# Fighting Famine

Issue # 1

## A Special Update from the UN's Famine Prevention and Response Coordinator Global Food Crises - A Snapshot

No one should be fighting famine in 2023. The world produces enough food, and the actions required to prevent famine are known. Despite this, millions face starvation today. We can do better. The international community has prevented famine before and can do so again.

The world is facing a global food crisis caused by the impacts of climate change, conflict and, increasingly, economic shocks driven by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the war in Ukraine. Fighting the global food crisis must be a top priority for the international community. 2023 cannot be the year when we continue business as usual.

### Global food insecurity is on the rise

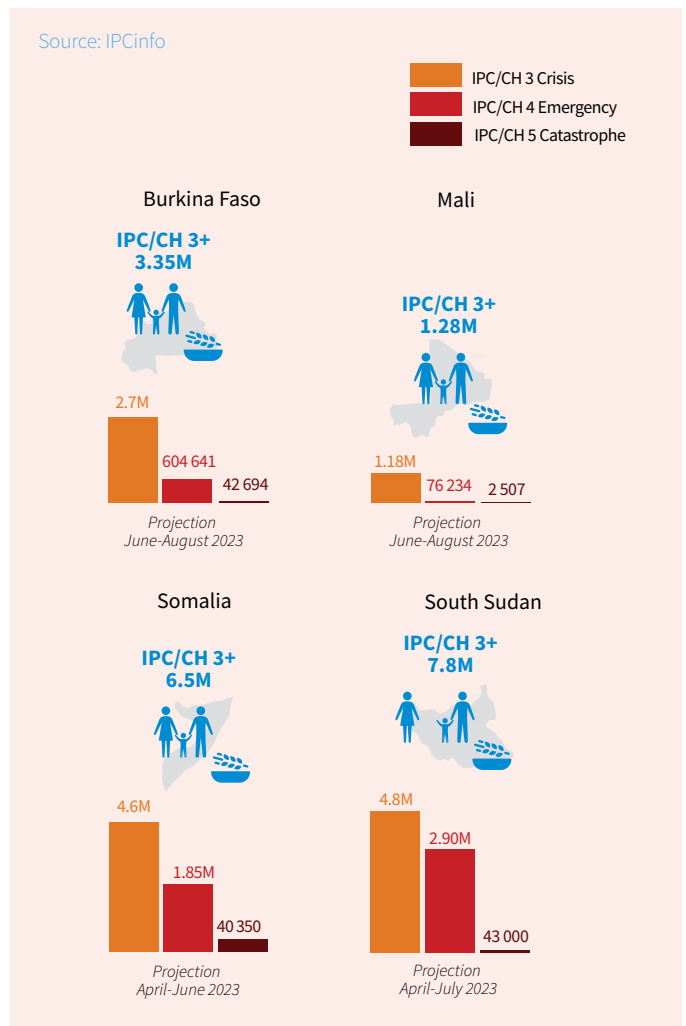
The [Global Report on Food Crises \(GRFC\) 2023](#) estimates that 258 million people were acutely food insecure and required urgent food assistance in 58 food crisis countries/territories in 2022. This is the highest number in the seven-year history of the GRFC.

The situation in 2023 is even more difficult. [The Hunger Hotspots](#) report warns that acute food insecurity is set to potentially increase in 18 hunger "hotspots" from June to November 2023. In particular, by mid-2023, four countries - Burkina Faso, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan - have people projected to face starvation (Catastrophe, IPC/CH Phase 5) and require urgent action to prevent widespread death and a total collapse of livelihoods. Afghanistan, Haiti, Nigeria, Sudan and Yemen are also countries of highest concern and require urgent attention.

They all have populations facing or projected to face emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4) thus at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions during the outlook period.


The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-stakeholder initiative to improve analysis and decision-making on food security and nutrition. The IPC classification and analytical approach help determine the severity and extent of acute and chronic food insecurity and acute malnutrition situations within countries, according to internationally recognized standards.

Read more at: <https://www.ipcinfo.org>



## Fighting Famine - Achievements in 2022


Throughout 2022, development and humanitarian partners delivered life-saving assistance and implemented resilience programmes to avert famine. Historic levels of international aid meant that **157 million people** were reached in countries affected by food crises. However, needs continue to outpace donor support, which amounted to only 50% of global humanitarian requirements.

 **National and international aid efforts** encompassed life-saving food, nutrition and livelihood support as well as water and sanitation, health, education, shelter, and protection services. [Read more.](#)

 **Anticipatory action** and timely financing helped neutralize the 2019 desert locust outbreak across the greater Horn of Africa and Yemen, protecting **41.5 million** people from food insecurity, preventing significant losses of crops and pasture, and avoiding **US\$ 1.8 billion** in economic losses. [See the 2020-2021 Desert Locust Upsurge: How Anticipatory Action Prevented a Full-Blown Humanitarian Crisis.](#)

 **Humanitarian negotiations** supported truce agreements in Ethiopia and Yemen and facilitated the Black Sea Grain Initiative, bolstering efforts to fight food insecurity and enhance access to communities.

 Around **80 million** people were reached in 6 countries where segments of the population are **facing starvation or death** as of early 2022 (IPC phase 5/Catastrophe) – Afghanistan, Ethiopia\*, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen, thanks to more than **US\$ 10 billion** in donor contributions. [See Financial Tracking Service.](#)  
\*IPC Analysis, May 2021, covering July-September 2021.

 Multi-year **resilience programming**, such as climate-smart water harvesting and land rehabilitation, has boosted capacities to withstand shocks. In the Sahel, this has meant that **500,000** people in targeted areas did not require food assistance in 2022. [See evidence from WFP's Integrated Resilience Programme in the Sahel – 2023.](#)

 The **Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)** unlocked early funding in February 2023 through a record **US\$ 250 million** allocation to stave off famine. [Read more.](#)





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## Spotlight - A conversation with Nimo Hassan, Director, Somali NGO Consortium



Nimo Hassan, Somali NGO Consortium Director at Health & Nutrition facility in Baidoa operated by GREDO (National NGO). Baidoa, February

“Discussing famine should not be the focus of the 21st century, but it is, so we need to rethink and collectively decide what we are trying to achieve. One child dying from hunger is one too many.” stated Ms. Nimo Hassan.

She added: “Viewing food insecurity through a protection lens is key to moving away from a drip-feeding approach to feed the hungry to giving people dignity and choice to decide what to do with their lives.”

“In Somalia, where people have been living in crisis for the past 30 years, localization and gender equity should not be an afterthought,” says Ms. Hassan.

Local NGOs, including women’s rights organizations, are generally multi-mandated with a solid understanding of community needs and are, hence, best placed to help build resilience. However, Ms. Hassan believes that they are unable to realize their potential in the absence of longer-term and multi-dimensional programming. What

this has meant is that small NGOs and women-led organizations that often have better access to communities have been unable to do long-term planning or retain staff.

While huge strides have been made to ensure local NGOs have a seat at decision-making forums in Somalia and globally, there need to be mechanisms in place to effectively engage them in programme design and enable them to access longer-term financing, including climate financing.

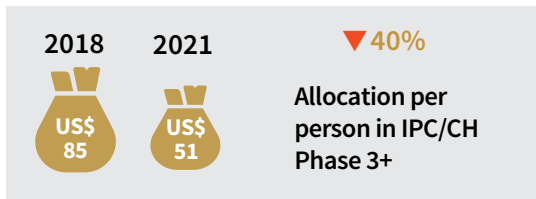
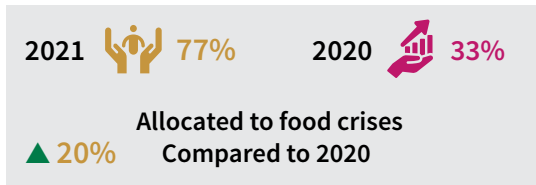
Ms. Hassan concluded: “This approach will help us address the root causes of food insecurity and strengthen people’s resilience to withstand recurrent shocks. It will also enable us to deliver better outcomes and move toward durable solutions.”

## Financing Flows and Food Crises

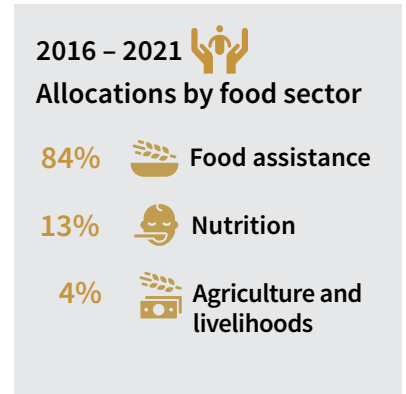
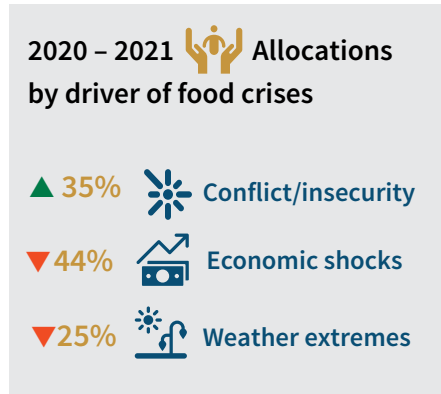
Taking action against food crises is a top priority for the international community, as evidenced by the significant levels of humanitarian and development assistance going to food crisis countries. This is according to a recent [report](#) from the Global Network Against Food Crises, which makes clear that the international community remains focused on addressing immediate hunger, building long-term resilience, and strengthening national food systems.

But despite the efforts being made, the evidence shows levels of acute food insecurity are still increasing and outpacing these record-setting financial allocations. Protracted crises continue to be a key challenge.

### Humanitarian Assistance (US billion)



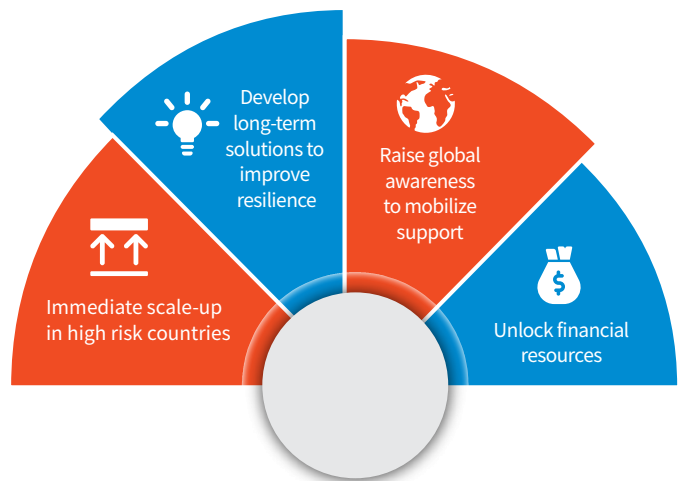
### Development Assistance (US billion)



The Global Network Against Food Crises gathered humanitarian and development partners at a roundtable earlier this year to discuss critical areas of improvement. Rethinking the way food crises are addressed and enhancing the enabling environment for investments are among the key priorities identified to better coordinate financing mechanisms. [Read the roundtable chair's summary.](#)

## No More Business as Usual

On 29 November 2022, the UN Secretary-General announced the appointment of Ms. Reena Ghelani as United Nations Famine Prevention and Response Coordinator to galvanize the world to end famine once and for all. Together with key partners, the Coordinator is working to scale up timely emergency response and resilience programming, raise awareness, unlock early financing, and enhance global-level coordination.



### For more information:

- <https://www.fao.org/home/en/>
- <https://www.fightfoodcrises.net/>
- <https://www.unocha.org/>
- <https://www.wfp.org/fight-famine>

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