



Title of Side Event:

Fighting Food Insecurity and famine: A call for coordinated action and multi-sectoral solutions against global hunger

Sponsors and Organizers:

Organizers: FAO, WFP, World Vision International, Concern Worldwide, Action Against Hunger, IFRC and OCHA

Sponsors: Burkina Faso; Canada; Dominican Republic; Ireland; additional sponsors will be confirmed in the upcoming days

Date and Time:

Wednesday, 22 June – 8:30-10:00am EDT – 2:30-4:00pm CEST

Background and objectives of event:

Globally, acute food insecurity is at a record high, driven by a deadly mix of conflict, climate change related weather extremes, and economic shocks, including those caused by COVID-19. The recently published [2022 Global Report on Food Crises](#) alerts that an alarming 193 million people experienced food insecurity at Crisis level or worse (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification [IPC]/Cadre Harmonisé [CH] Phase 3 or above), across 53 countries or territories in 2021. The impacts of the conflict in Ukraine have significantly worsened an already dire global situation.

Today, an all-time high of up to 49 million people in 46 countries could now be at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions unless they receive immediate life and livelihoods-saving assistance, according to the latest [Hunger Hotspots Report \(May 2022\)](#). Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Sudan, and Yemen remain at 'highest alert' as hotspots with catastrophic conditions, and Afghanistan and Somalia are new entries to this worrisome list since the previous hotspots report in January 2022. These countries all have segments of the population facing IPC Phase 5 'Catastrophe' – or are at risk of deterioration towards catastrophic conditions. A total of 750,000 people are already facing starvation and death in Ethiopia, Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, and Afghanistan. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, the Sahel region, the Sudan, and Syria remain 'countries of very high concern' with deteriorating critical conditions.



The effects of the war in Ukraine have exacerbated the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, steadily increasing food and energy prices, and deteriorating macroeconomic conditions. Disruptions to the Ukrainian agricultural sector and constrained exports have reduced global food supply, further increased global food prices, and are pushing up already high levels of domestic food price inflation. Increased fertilizer costs are likely to affect yields and the future availability of food. Humanitarian organizations are also seeing sharp cost increases for their operations and reduced global attention to contexts experiencing severe food crises. The skyrocketing price of fuel adds additional costs to the production and transport of food and humanitarian assistance. Adding to the economic instability, civil unrest could emerge in some of the most affected countries in the upcoming months.

In today's highly constrained funding environment, where the need for humanitarian assistance is growing dramatically, a coordinated response is more critical than ever to respond to food security needs in an integrated, effective, and efficient manner. New approaches are urgently needed to reverse the alarming increases in acute food insecurity and save lives for those at risk of famine. Urgent humanitarian efforts are essential to meet immediate needs and protect and restore agriculture and livelihoods. However, these interventions alone cannot prevent famine in the long-run or sustainably reverse rising trends in food insecurity. Globally and at country level, UN, NGO and local partners are working together to take comprehensive and coordinated action to strengthen food systems, and increase access to improved and diversified livelihoods, nutrition, healthcare, and clean water, sanitation and hygiene. These efforts seek to support communities, families, institutions and countries to manage multiple interconnected risks through longer-term systems strengthening and a shift to anticipatory action and prevention, alongside humanitarian response.

This event will highlight approaches and best practices that effectively address the multidimensional causes of food insecurity and seek to prevent further deterioration, examining areas for increased investment, ongoing gaps, the linkages between global initiatives and civil society approaches, and identify key policy actions to support an effective response. A dynamic panel discussion will take place featuring voices and perspectives from contexts such as Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, the Sahel region, reflecting on country-level actions and initiatives to fight against growing food insecurity and famine risk.

Discussion points or guiding questions:

- Why are investments in systems strengthening approaches essential to averting famine?
- What are examples of successful multi-sector interventions when tackling global food insecurity?
- What are the gaps to achieving a robust, multi-sectoral response and what exemplifies good practice in coordination?
- How does the work of CSOs and NGOs contribute to the current global initiatives established to address food insecurity?
- What are the key actions for policy makers to support implementing partners to more effectively address the continuing increase in global acute food insecurity?

Key concrete action points and recommendations/take away messages:

- A multi-sectoral approach is key in the fight against rising acute food insecurity and famine risk. A coordinated effort, working together at country and global level with national governments, and implementing partners in the areas of food security, agriculture, nutrition, health and WASH is essential to avert famine.
- At least two-thirds of those experiencing acute food insecurity are in rural areas, making their living from agriculture. In many food crisis countries these figures are even higher. Agriculture is among the most cost-effective humanitarian frontline interventions, and lays the pathway for resilience building, yet allocations to



agriculture have decreased over the years, accounting for only 8 percent of humanitarian funding allocated to tackle acute hunger in 2020.

- Interventions must build on local knowledge and solutions and be deliberate in including community voices in program design and implementation.
- Given the cyclical nature of acute food insecurity and famine in many contexts, investment must be made in long-term solutions, which include system strengthening, early warning, and prevention measures.
- As demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic, local actors are at the heart of humanitarian responses. The involvement of national and local entities is paramount for ensuring a coherent approach to both humanitarian assistance and development efforts.

Format of the side event:

Virtual - Zoom

Chair and moderator:

Moderator: TBC

Panel composition:

The event will include a range of perspective both from policy makers (e.g. Member States) and from implementing agencies and voices from the field, including UN, NGOs and CSOs.

Background Material:

- [Call for Action – to be hyperlinked once published on website](#)
- [2022 Global Report on Food Crises](#)
- [Hunger Hotspots report](#) (June to September 2022)
- [World Vision International. “There is No Place for Famine in the 21st Century: Policy Brief”](#)

Connection details to join the event

https://fao.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bBooKl4_QNWGi43XjcRIhQ

Contact(s):

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