

Regional Focus of the Global Report on Food Crises 2023 – Number of people facing acute food insecurity rose to over 55 million across the IGAD region in 2022

Food crises are forecast to escalate across the region in 2023, particularly in Kenya and Somalia
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Nairobi, Kenya – 14 June 2023 – The Member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) continued to grapple with severe food crisis in 2022, with over 55 million people facing acute hunger and requiring urgent food, nutrition, and livelihood assistance - an increase of over 13 million from 2021 - according to the latest [IGAD Regional Focus](#) of the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) 2023.

The Regional Focus on IGAD Member States is a by-product of the annual [GRFC](#) produced by the [Food Security Information Network](#) (FSIN) in support to the [Global Network Against Food Crises](#) (GNAFC). The fifth edition of the report was officially released today by IGAD in Nairobi, unveiling the alarming escalation of acute food insecurity in the region over the years.

Key findings

In 2022, an alarming 55.45 million people across seven out of the eight IGAD member states needed urgent food assistance (Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda, while no data was available for Eritrea), marking the highest number of acutely food-insecure people in the region over the past five years.

The report highlights the devastating reality faced by 301,000 people who experienced Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in 2022, with Somalia and South Sudan accounting for 214,000 people and 87,000 people respectively.

The population facing acute food insecurity in the IGAD Member States has rapidly increased since 2020, by over 10 million additional people each year.

The worsening situation is attributed to the compounding effects of multiple shocks, including an unprecedented three-year drought in the Horn of Africa, record-breaking flooding in South Sudan, protracted conflicts, and macroeconomic challenges driven by the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and exacerbated by the war in Ukraine.

“Hunger levels in our region are at an unprecedented high. This situation is inextricably linked to climate extremes and disasters, conflict and insecurity, and economic shocks, which are increasingly intertwined with spiralling negative consequences for tens of millions of children, men, and women”, IGAD Executive Secretary, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, wrote in the report’s foreword.

2023 Projections

Projections for 2023 paint a grim picture. Up to 30 million people are expected to require humanitarian food assistance in five countries for which projections are available - Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Of these, an estimated 7.5 million people in Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and the Sudan are projected to face large food consumption gaps and adopt emergency coping measures (Emergency, IPC Phase 4), and more than 83,000 individuals are anticipated to face extreme food lack of food (Catastrophe, IPC Phase 5) in the most severe drought and conflict-affected areas of the region, particularly in Somalia and South Sudan. These projections do not account for the recent clashes in the Sudan, which will undoubtedly exacerbate the already poor food insecurity situation.

Even if the March-May 2023 rains bring some relief from the Horn of Africa's worst drought in more than four decades, the region will continue to deal with its catastrophic consequences in 2023 and beyond. The recovery of pastoral and agropastoral livelihoods from the devastating three-year drought will take years and humanitarian assistance continues to be critical until households and communities can recover.

In the Sudan, the impact of the ongoing conflict on food availability and access is expected to drive a rapid deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation, with Khartoum and the region of Darfur most affected. By mid-May, more than 1 million people had fled their homes with around 843 000 people newly displaced internally and more than 250,000 people displaced to neighbouring countries.

"The conflict in Sudan is sending hunger shockwaves across an already fragile region, as hundreds of thousands of people continue fleeing to neighbouring countries – pushing up already alarming food insecurity and malnutrition levels, and further stretching scarce humanitarian resources," said Rukia Yacoub, WFP's Deputy Regional Director for Eastern Africa.

Looking ahead

The urgency and magnitude of the challenges that the Eastern Africa region faces calls for immediate and coordinated action to alleviate the suffering of millions affected by acute food insecurity, as stated in the [IGAD communique on the process of addressing food crises in the region](#).

"This crisis calls for a paradigm shift. To make advancements towards SDG 2 to End Hunger, we must take bolder action to build resilience against future shocks, including transforming our agri-systems to become more efficient, inclusive, and sustainable. In addition, we must increase our efforts to build and sustain peace. Conflict and food insecurity are intertwined, and this has never been clearer", the IGAD Executive Secretary continued in the foreword.

The message was echoed by FAO's Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa and Representative to the African Union and to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Dr Chimimba

David Phiri, who stated: *“This report should serve as a wake-up call for us to take immediate and collective action to change our ways of working to address the root causes of food insecurity. The recent three-year drought across the Horn of Africa highlights the urgent need to upscale and institutionalize anticipatory action and climate adaptation strategies to prevent, rather than just respond to, future climate emergencies. Meanwhile, food insecurity caused by conflicts and the knock-on effects of global economic shocks highlights the critical need for efforts that sustainably build peace, increase domestic production, and reduce post-harvest losses in the IGAD region.”*

Addressing the dire food crises in the IGAD region requires urgent and coordinated efforts from international organizations, governments, the private sector, regional organizations, civil society, and communities. All actors are called to align efforts and share evidence and information which extend beyond immediate relief measures, and encompass long-term strategies to achieve sustainable food security in the region.

Note to editors

Acute food insecurity is when a person's inability to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger. It draws on internationally accepted measures of acute hunger, such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and the *Cadre Harmonisé* (CH). It is not the same as chronic hunger, as reported each year by the UN's annual State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report. Chronic hunger is when a person is unable to consume enough food over an extended period to maintain a normal, active lifestyle.

About IGAD and the Regional Focus Report

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is a regional economic community (REC) that forms one of the building blocks of the African Union and is comprised of eight Member States, namely Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. IGAD seeks to assist and complement the efforts of its Member States, through increased cooperation, to achieve food security and environmental protection, peace and security, and economic cooperation and integration.

The IGAD regional report is a by-product of the annual Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC), a multi-partner and consensus-based process involving commitment and contributions from a multitude of agencies and individuals facilitated by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN). The Regional Report provides a comprehensive assessment of acute food insecurity and malnutrition in the IGAD's member states, including major food crises, trends over time, key drivers, populations of highest concern, and forecast of peak estimates of acute food insecurity based on a rigorous methodology and a highly consultative process. The report serves as a key reference for governments, policy makers, and development and humanitarian actors in their efforts to tackle the root causes of food crises in the region.

About the Food Security Information Network (FSIN)

Founded by FAO, IFPRI and WFP, the Food Security Information Network (FSIN) facilitates the exchange of technical expertise, knowledge and best practice among food security and nutrition practitioners. Its purpose is to promote timely, independent and consensus-based information about food crises, while also highlighting and addressing critical data gaps. As a key partner of the Global Network Against Food Crises, FSIN coordinates the publication of the Global Report on Food Crises.

About the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC)

Founded in 2016, the Global Network Against Food Crises brings together the European Union, FAO, UNICEF, the United States of America, WFP, and the World Bank in a unique partnership to improve analysis, evidence and consensus on the prevalence and severity of food crises; improve collective efforts to prevent and respond to these crises; and improve understanding of the underlying causes and interlinkages between food crises and other shocks beyond food.