

# FOOD INSECURE

## The viral pandemic is bringing a new global hunger crisis

**CONFLICT, CLIMATE SHOCKS**, and economic downturns have caused acute hunger among 135 million people worldwide in 2019, according to the *2020 Global Report on Food Crises*.

The report, now in its fourth year, documents a troubling trend: the number of people facing a food security crisis or worse continues to tick up from 108 million in 2016.

As the pandemic roils economies and strains public health systems, the impact is most prominent in vulnerable countries, where fears of a “hunger pandemic” are growing. More than half of those with acute food insecurity are in Africa, where conflict, weather events, and pest invasions have already taken a toll. In South Sudan and Yemen, more than half the people were in a food security crisis or worse as defined by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification/Cadre Harmonisé (IPC/CH).

A Phase 3 food security crisis, on the IPC/CH scale, means households suffer serious malnutrition

or can meet basic food needs only by depleting essential assets, which in turn requires urgent humanitarian action. Worse yet are an emergency and catastrophe/famine, Phases 4 and 5 on the scale, respectively.

The World Food Programme projects 270 million hungry people in countries where it operates before the end of the year, 82 percent more than before the pandemic.

Global stocks of most staple grains remain adequate, but the pandemic has disrupted food systems already under strain. The United Nations predicts new threats to food security as a result of collapse in demand for internationally produced agri-food products, sellers’ and buyers’ lack of access to small-scale local food markets, and loss of income from remittances and other sources. **FD**

Prepared by **ADAM BEHSUDI**, IMF, based on the Food Security Information Network’s 2020 Global Report on Food Crises.

## A growing food security crisis

**135 million people**



in **55 countries** were in crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)

### Numbers in previous years

**2016**

108 million people in 48 countries

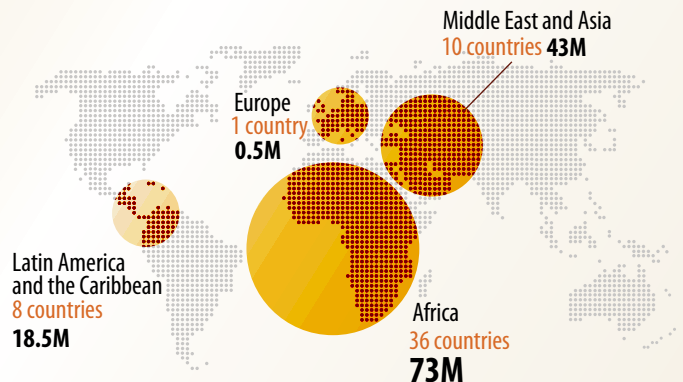
**2017**

124 million people in 51 countries

**2018**

113 million people in 53 countries

**More than half of the affected people were in Africa**

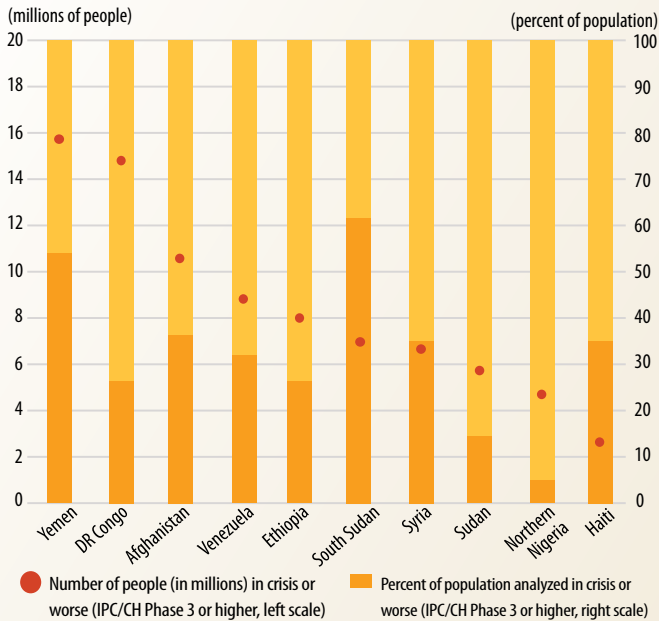


Source: Food Security Information Network, 2020 Global Report on Food Crises.  
Note: M = millions of people.

# Conflict, weather, and economic shocks are the root cause

## Top 10 crises

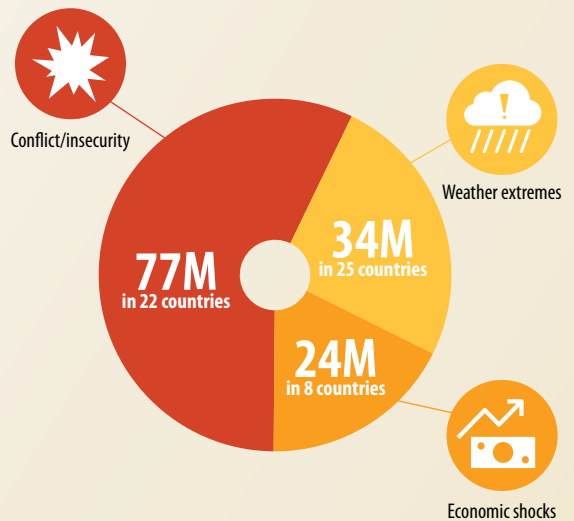
A number of regions were touched by 2019's 10 worst food crises, from Latin America to the Middle East.



**Source:** Food Security Information Network, 2020 Global Report on Food Crises.  
**Note:** DR Congo = Democratic Republic of the Congo.

## Shifting sands

Conflict/insecurity was still the main driver of food crises in 2019, but weather extremes and economic shocks are becoming increasingly significant.

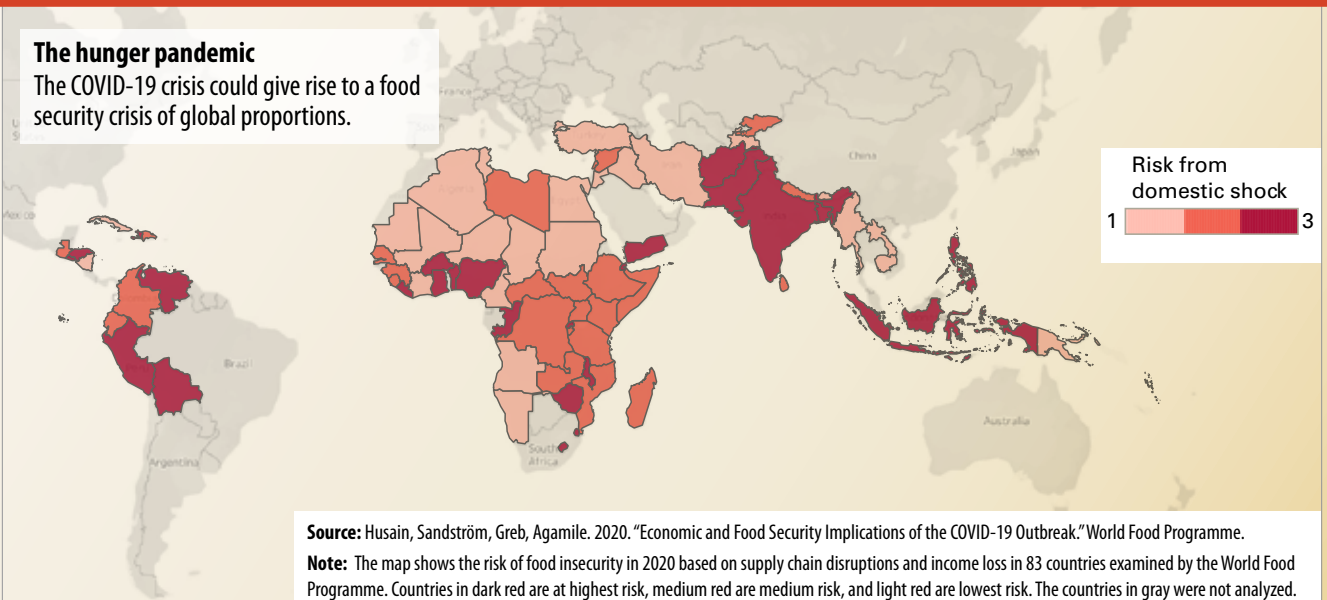


**Source:** Food Security Information Network, 2020 Global Report on Food Crises.  
**Note:** M = millions of people.

# Widespread hunger expected in 2020

## The hunger pandemic

The COVID-19 crisis could give rise to a food security crisis of global proportions.



**Source:** Husain, Sandström, Greb, Agamile. 2020. "Economic and Food Security Implications of the COVID-19 Outbreak." World Food Programme.  
**Note:** The map shows the risk of food insecurity in 2020 based on supply chain disruptions and income loss in 83 countries examined by the World Food Programme. Countries in dark red are at highest risk, medium red are medium risk, and light red are lowest risk. The countries in gray were not analyzed.