

GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES:

NEWS: Nearly 300 million people faced acute hunger in 2024: Report

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

The *Global Report on Food Crises 2025* highlights that over 295 million people across 53 countries faced acute hunger, with conflict, climate shocks, and economic instability being key drivers. It warns of rising child malnutrition, doubling of catastrophic hunger cases, and a steep decline in humanitarian aid, threatening global food security goals.

1. Context and Overview

- In 2024, more than 295 million people across 53 countries faced acute hunger, reflecting a consistent six-year upward trend in global food insecurity.
- This includes a staggering increase of 13.7 million people over the previous year, highlighting growing vulnerabilities due to conflict, climate, and displacement.

2. Key Findings of Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC) 2025

- **Acute Hunger Rising:** Acute food-insecure population rose to 295 million in 2024.
- **Catastrophic Hunger:** 1.9 million people were at IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe/Famine), doubling from 2023 and highest since 2016.
- **Child Malnutrition Crisis:** 38 million children under 5 suffer from acute malnutrition, especially in Gaza, Mali, Sudan, and Yemen.
- **Drivers of Crisis:**
 - **Conflict:** Affects 140 million people in 20 countries.
 - **Climate Extremes:** El Niño-induced droughts and floods triggered new crisis hotspots.
 - **Economic Shocks:** Inflation, debt, and currency devaluation worsened affordability.
 - **Displacement:** 95 million displaced people live in hunger-affected zones.

3. About the Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC)

- Published by the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) — a joint platform of FAO, WFP, EU, and others.
- Focus: Acute food insecurity, not chronic hunger.
- Purpose: Provide data-driven insights for humanitarian and development responses.
- Significance: Acts as an early warning tool and helps coordinate global food security interventions.

4. Concepts and Definitions

- Hunger: Inadequate calorie intake regularly.
- Acute Hunger: Sudden, short-term undernourishment due to crises like war or disasters.
- Chronic Hunger: Persistent low food intake due to poverty and structural inequalities.
- Hidden Hunger: Micronutrient deficiency with no visible signs.
- Acute Food Insecurity: Sharp decline in food access, usage, or availability due to external shocks.
- Food Crisis: A situation where the level of hunger exceeds national coping mechanisms and external aid is urgently needed.

5. International Commitments and SDG 2

- Zero Hunger by 2030 (SDG 2): End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
- The current trajectory shows that SDG 2 is unlikely to be achieved without urgent structural changes.

6. Major Global Initiatives

- FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative: Targets climate-resilient food systems in 20 poorest countries.
- UNICEF's No Time to Waste Plan (2024): Reached 7 million children with nutritional aid.
- World Food Programme (WFP): Assisted 152 million people globally in 2023; key efforts in school meal restoration and climate-resilient agriculture.

- World Bank's Crisis Response Window (2024): Allocated \$1 billion for food system recovery in fragile states.

7. Challenges to Eradicating Hunger

- Conflict Zones: Sudan, Yemen, Gaza remain inaccessible for food aid.
- Climate Change: Recurrent floods and droughts worsen crop yields.
- Economic Shocks: Inflation and high food prices create affordability crises.
- Forced Displacement: Large numbers of hungry people in refugee and IDP camps.
- Funding Crisis: Humanitarian food budgets expected to shrink by 45% in 2025.

8. Way Forward

- Data-Driven Action: Policy must rely on timely, disaggregated, and reliable data to target interventions.
- Local Food System Strengthening: Invest in local agriculture, irrigation, and climate-smart farming.
- Integrated Services: Health, WASH, and food sectors must work together to prevent child wasting and stunting.
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups: Special focus on conflict zones, displaced persons, and women and children.
- Global Solidarity: Fulfil climate finance and hunger funding pledges, strengthen south-south cooperation, and ensure policy coherence.

Source: <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/governance/nearly-300-million-people-faced-acute-hunger-in-2024-report>