



PRESS RELEASE

IGAD Regional Focus of the 2024 Global Report on Food Crises: Urgent Action Needed as Food Insecurity Worsens Across the IGAD Region

Nairobi, Kenya, August 22, 2024: The IGAD Regional Focus of the 2024 Global Report on Food Crises underscores a deepening food insecurity crisis impacting the IGAD region, encompassing Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. The report highlights a persistent increase in acute food insecurity for the past five years, indicating an urgent need for concerted efforts to address the mounting humanitarian needs.

Key Findings

The report reveals that approximately 62.9 million people, or 25% of the analysed population in seven IGAD countries, are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2024. This figure represents an increase from 61.9 million in 2023, emphasizing the critical nature of the situation and the necessity for immediate action.

In Sudan, Famine is ongoing in Zamzam camp in North Darfur and another 13 areas are at risk of famine.

Frequent and severe climate extremes are significant contributors to regional food insecurity. This includes the lingering effects of a severe drought in the Eastern Horn of Africa from 2020 to 2023 and the recent widespread floods associated with El Niño. Furthermore, persistent dry conditions in 2023 and the first half of 2024 have negatively impacted agricultural production in several other areas of the region.

Economic challenges have further exacerbated the food crisis across the region. The IGAD countries have been hit hard by economic shocks, including currency depreciation, soaring inflation, and the volatility of global food markets, which have intensified food insecurity.

Additionally, the displacement crisis in the region has reached unprecedented levels, with 25 million people forcibly displaced by mid-2024, marking the highest displacement figures on record. Notably, the ongoing conflict in Sudan has internally displaced 7.9 million people since April 2023, making it the world's largest internal displacement crisis.

The worsening conditions across the IGAD region call for an immediate and coordinated response from partners and member states to address the escalating humanitarian needs and mitigate the impacts of the food insecurity crisis.

"These figures illustrate a humanitarian crisis in our region. Climate extremes and economic shocks are leading to unprecedented levels of food insecurity, putting millions of lives at risk. Conflict exacerbates food insecurity, creating a vicious cycle that further destabilizes our communities. To make progress, we must address these interconnected issues by strengthening our collective efforts, building the resilience of our communities, and addressing the root causes of conflict to pave the way for long-term stability and development in our region," stated IGAD's Executive Secretary, H.E Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, emphasizing on the importance of addressing socioeconomic concerns.

"The conflict in Sudan has triggered the world's largest hunger crisis, with more than half the population struggling to put enough food on their plates every day. Violence and insecurity have driven millions of people to seek refuge both within their own country and in neighbouring countries which are already grappling with high levels of food insecurity and instability. This is putting even more pressure on limited humanitarian resources," said Rukia Yacoub, WFP's Deputy Regional Director for Eastern Africa.

FAO's Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa and Representative to the AU and UNECA, Farayi Zimudzi, noted, *"We are witnessing a fifth consecutive year of worsening food insecurity in the IGAD region. It is evident that a shift is necessary - from reactive emergency responses to a proactive, anticipatory approach that mitigates the impacts of shocks, safeguarding livelihoods and food security. Furthermore, the catastrophic impacts of regional conflicts on food security and malnutrition underscore the urgent need for peace-building initiatives and conflict-sensitive programs that protect agricultural production and support rural livelihoods."*

End

Note to editors

Acute food insecurity occurs when a person's inability to access enough food immediately jeopardizes their lives or livelihoods. This is determined using internationally recognized measures of acute hunger, such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). It should not be confused with chronic hunger, which is reported annually in the UN's State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report. Chronic hunger is when a person cannot access enough food over a prolonged period to maintain a normal, active lifestyle.

About IGAD and the Regional Focus Report

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) is a regional institution comprising eight East African countries: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and

Uganda. IGAD assists its member states in achieving food security, environmental protection, peace, security, and economic cooperation.

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 practices 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.

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