



PRICE SHOCKS

Economic gains masking a growing hunger and malnutrition crisis for the world's most vulnerable children

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Wilmer from Agua Blanca, Copán Ruinas, Honduras, lives on a farm with his parents and three siblings. His family participated in a community training programme on agricultural techniques and best practices to help improve and diversify their production to enhance their community's economy and counteract food insecurity.

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ACRONYMS

CAR	Central African Republic
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross domestic product
GNI	Gross national income
HDP	Humanitarian-development-peace [nexus]
IDP	Internally displaced person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPC	Integrated phase classification [for acute food insecurity]
KG	Kilogramme
oPt	occupied Palestinian territory
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PPP	GDP per capita
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
US\$	United States dollar
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2021 World Vision issued a dire warning about how rising food costs were affecting people around the world and called on governments and others to strengthen food supply chains and empower parents and caregivers with the economic tools they need to provide nutritious food.¹ Yet, despite years of investment pre-pandemic, and an overall reduction in food prices since 2022, it has not been enough. **While food costs have dropped globally, people living in the most vulnerable contexts consistently spend the most.**

Today we are living with the ramifications of 2022's historic price peaks while **we continue to pay higher prices for the same food.** This inflation does not exist in a vacuum; it coincides with emerging, escalating, and protracted conflicts; climate change; extreme weather events; and an uneven socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 alone is estimated to have resulted in 13.6 million more wasted children,² although conflict also remains the biggest driver of hunger, with 70% of the world's hungry people living in areas afflicted by war and violence.³ The impacts of some conflicts also reach far beyond their borders; since the start of the conflict in Ukraine in 2022, global food supply has been disrupted, increasing hunger risks for one-fifth of the global population — around 1.7 billion people — due to rising food prices, climbing energy prices, and growing financial constraints.⁴

Furthermore, these uneven international food price trends contradict the world's rosy outlook of a stabilising global market and improving hunger situation due to economic gains and improved livelihoods in some areas. In direct opposition of this misperception, World Vision's research found that even though the change in the price of a food basket was evenly mixed, with some contexts improving and others seeing a continual rise in costs, the poorest countries were hardest hit and **the price of a food basket rose the most in countries experiencing fluctuating or devalued currency, sustained or worsening conflict and violence, and/or where the effects of climate change are wiping out food producers.**

Today, a basic food basket is entirely out of reach for many living in the most vulnerable contexts. In Burundi, it takes more than a month – 36 days – for the average person to earn enough money to buy 10 common food items. To buy the same food basket in the Central African Republic (CAR), one must work for 25 and a half days – to earn more than

double (US\$71) what a Canadian must earn in just 1.5 hours (US\$31.15).

Even though fewer people are experiencing the most severe 'famine-like' conditions (IPC 5),⁵ the phenomenon has spread to include five countries of highest concern (i.e. Burkina Faso, Mali, the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Sudan, South Sudan)ⁱⁱ and eight additional countries of very high concern (i.e. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen, Syrian Arab Republic) as of October 2023.⁶ This is up from seven in May⁷ and five in January 2023.⁸ The number of people affected by acute food insecurity continues to grow, and billions of people now lack access to an affordable, healthy diet.⁹ Nearly one-third of the world's population (2.4 billion people) did not have enough to eat in 2022,¹⁰ and the number of people facing extreme hunger has nearly doubled since 2019 to 258 million people living in 'crisis' conditions or experiencing more severe food insecurity (IPC 3+) in 58 countries in 2023.¹¹ Children are the ones paying the price – malnutrition, wasting, starvation – we cannot turn away.

However, funding for lifesaving food and nutrition programmes is still not a global priority. Nutrition and food security in humanitarian response plans in 2023 have only been 32% and 35% funded, respectively.¹² And **it is children in the most fragile contexts and difficult situations who suffer from this failure to address the drivers of hunger.** Global government leaders joined together to establish nutrition targets in 2015, but have failed to invest in them time after time. Just one-tenth of the estimated US\$39–50 billion needed annually¹³ to avoid 3.7 million deaths of children under age 5 and prevent stunting in 65 million children has been put towards interventions to achieve these goals since 2015.¹⁴ In contrast, Americans spent 2.5 times that amount (US\$9.8 billion) on holiday shopping in just one day this year.¹⁵

How long can governments and decision makers stand by and point to these so far empty promises, while leaving the most vulnerable of our future generations to bear the brunt of their inaction?

ⁱ The integrated food security phase classification (IPC) is a system allowing governments, United Nations (UN) agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society, and other relevant actors to work together to determine the severity and magnitude of acute and chronic food insecurity, and acute malnutrition situations in a country, according to internationally-recognised scientific standards.

ⁱⁱ The updated list of hunger hotspots of highest concern also considers other factors when IPC figures are unavailable, such as 'people in need'.

About this report

In 2021, World Vision analysed global food prices to highlight how the pandemic was fuelling rising food prices and creating a child malnutrition pandemic with a much higher death rate than COVID-19.¹⁶ The report was informed by a survey of prices of 10 common food items (raw chicken, cooking oil, corn cobs, eggs, milk, raw sugar, rice, sweet bananas, tomatoes and wheat flour) in 28 countries across Asia and the Pacific, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The survey revealed drastic surges in food prices in every country around the world, with the poorest hardest hit.¹⁷ It found that even though everyone was affected, with millions being pushed into poverty, the health and well-being of children were the most at risk.¹⁸ However, when compared to the following year's results, the 2021 findings feel drastically understated.

Every year, we revisit food sellers in similar settings to get a clear picture of how food prices are evolving by comparing year-on-year results, whilst adding more locations to discover whether global trends correspond across these new contexts. In drawing trends based on small, yet diverse contexts, we aim to portray the challenges and situations faced by the most vulnerable people in a variety of places around the world.

A follow-up report released in 2022, *Price shocks: Rising food prices threaten the lives of hundreds of thousands of children*, revealed that a confluence of crises – conflict, climate change, ongoing economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and supply chain shocks from the fallout from the war in Ukraine – had all come together to create new and worsen existing hunger hotspots around the world.¹⁹

Now in our third year, we are starting to see a slight dip from the highest costs of living for some; yet others remain at crisis levels. The consequences of these conditions can be severe and long-lasting, often driving children out of school or into other exploitative situations, such as child labour, or – in extreme cases – child marriage or death.

“I believe that hunger is not only happening in some specific countries like Africa or Asia, but in every country. Of course, on a different level. Hunger is not a problem only in developing countries; it’s a problem in all nations, like the UK, Brazil, Bangladesh, and India. So, it’s a common topic for everyone, so if we get this campaign, we can make it worldwide and work together. If we get a chance to work together, it will be great for us, every young leader, and every child.”

– Dola, age 18, Bangladesh²⁰

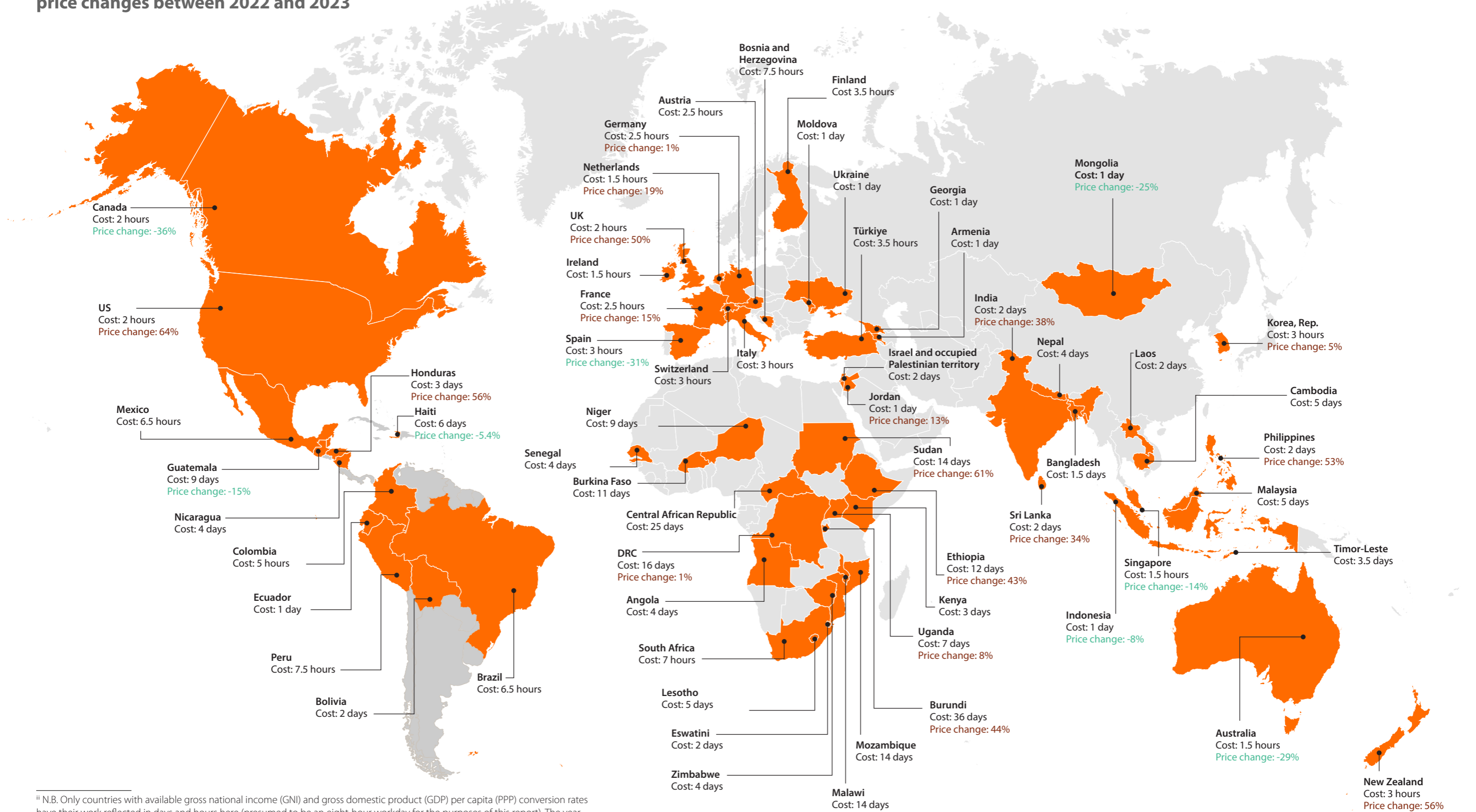
Today, there has been a slight reduction in global food prices in the past year, but we are still far above 2020 levels. This year's analysis continues to underscore the uneven recovery from the socioeconomic shocks from COVID-19, inflation, and extreme weather and indicates a disparity of food prices, both in the current cost of the basket of 10 common food items and in the year-on-year comparisons. In particular, changes in food prices in the most developed countries show mixed results (such as in Singapore, Australia and the Netherlands), while the most extreme price shocks are in countries experiencing intensifying conflict, violence, and climate shocks, like Burundi, Sudan, and Honduras, who are already experiencing extreme hunger.

This report deepens the investigation into existing barriers, such as violent conflict, climate extremes, and lasting economic ripples from COVID-19 that prevent food price improvements and food access to certain parts of the globe and seeks to provide recommendations on how to mitigate these impacts.

PRICE SHOCKS: THE GLOBAL PICTURE

Uneven food prices coupled with improved livelihoods and economic gains in some parts of the world depict a deceptive outlook of the global hunger crisis improving. Yet, situations are far worsening for hundreds of thousands of the most vulnerable children, particularly those living in the poorest countries.

Distribution of costs for a typical food basket (by hours)ⁱⁱⁱ and food price changes between 2022 and 2023



ⁱⁱⁱ N.B. Only countries with available gross national income (GNI) and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita (PPP) conversion rates have their work reflected in days and hours here (presumed to be an eight-hour workday for the purposes of this report). The year-on-year percentage change of the cost of food baskets was only available in countries that submitted data for consecutive years. The annual percentage of change in food basket prices was calculated based on US\$ PPP.

PRICE SHOCKS: THE NUMBERS

International food price trends bely perceptions and the deepening hunger crisis

1/2

A recent survey found that amongst those people who have had to put a child to bed hungry, nearly half (46%) said that inflation and increased cost of living were the reason.²¹

↑ prices

New research in nine countries across the world found four-fifths (82%) people said climate change was worsening their economic situation.²²

🚫 food

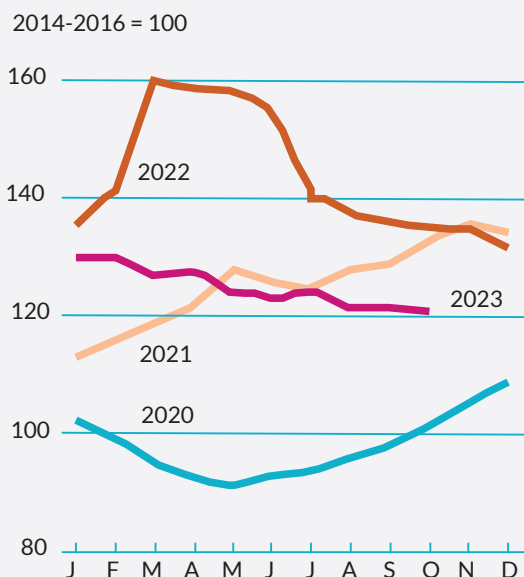
A 2022 global consultation on issues affecting children shows that most children agreed that COVID-19 has changed their lives as they felt they had become poorer and had less access to good and nutritional food.²³

“Poverty has increased due to the pandemic and the rise in prices. These facts affect families who cannot afford resources and materials for their children.”

– Karina, age 15, Peru

Although there have been some improvements to the global economy since the impacts of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, secondary data indicates a deepening hunger crisis. Economic gains are not being felt by all, and **the poorest countries facing simultaneous crises suffer compounded levels of hunger.** This is consistent with our analysis of food prices; the highest food prices were found in Sudan, Ethiopia and Burundi – countries facing weather extremes, violent conflict and economic strains – mutually reinforcing drivers.

Figure 1. Year-over-year changes in Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) food price index by month²⁴



After food prices soared, reaching historic heights in March 2022, global food prices have steadily improved throughout 2023 (see figure 1). Yet, even though levels have dropped significantly overall – global food prices declined by 21% from May 2022 to May 2023²⁵ – **average food prices remain substantially higher than before the pandemic** (see figure 1). The World Bank reports that food price inflation was higher than overall inflation rates in three-quarters (76%) of the 161 countries analysed with many experiencing double-digit inflation,²⁶ a pattern also clearly visible in our price survey. Furthermore, interagency analyses predict that food prices will ‘come under increased upward pressure in the coming months due to oil price dynamics and the impact of El Niño conditions on agricultural production.’²⁷

As these issues continue to pressure communities, we can see the immediate impacts on families and children; the number of people facing extreme hunger – more than a quarter billion – has doubled since 2021,²⁸ and the numbers living in acute food insecurity (IPC3+) have grown for the fourth year in a row.²⁹ Over 40% of the population living in IPC 3+ ‘crisis’ conditions or worse resided in just five countries: the DRC, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Yemen, all of which are also experiencing conflict and violence, climate change, and/or protracted humanitarian crises.³⁰

The cascading effects of overlapping and escalating crises puts the world at an important juncture. Especially in regions with fragile contexts, lack of food availability and affordability is mounting due to lasting violent conflict, the climate crisis, and economic shocks.³¹

The poorest countries continue to be the most affected by higher food prices and growing costs.³²



Relatively unchanged global hunger in 2022 hides significant differences of hunger at the regional and subregional levels.³²

90%

9 out of the top 10 countries experiencing the highest food prices by hours worked are located in sub-Saharan Africa.

25% ↑

In Sudan, a family has to work more hours than they did last year to afford the same basic food basket.

1+ month

to buy an average food basket

In Burundi, a family has to work for 36 days
In the CAR, a family has to work for 25 days

Figure 2. Food basket price changes between 2022 and 2023, by hours worked^v

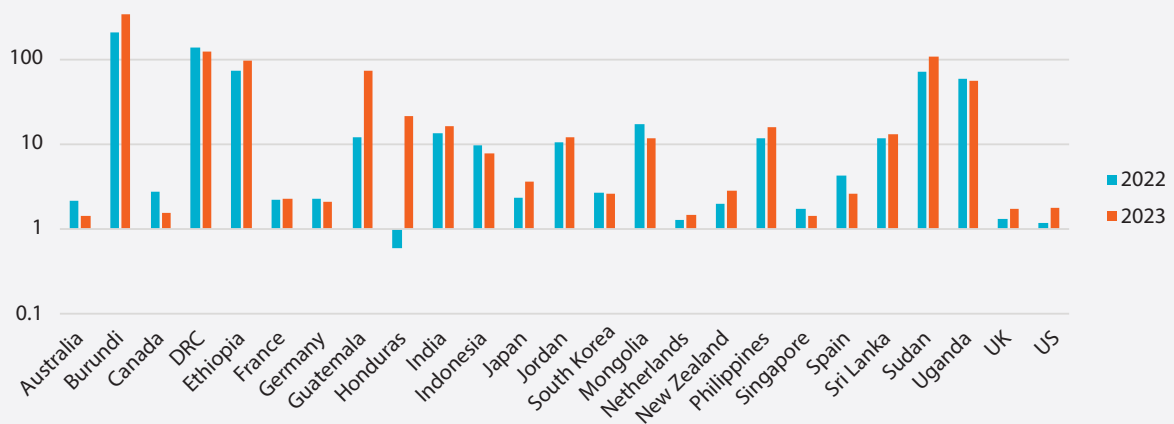
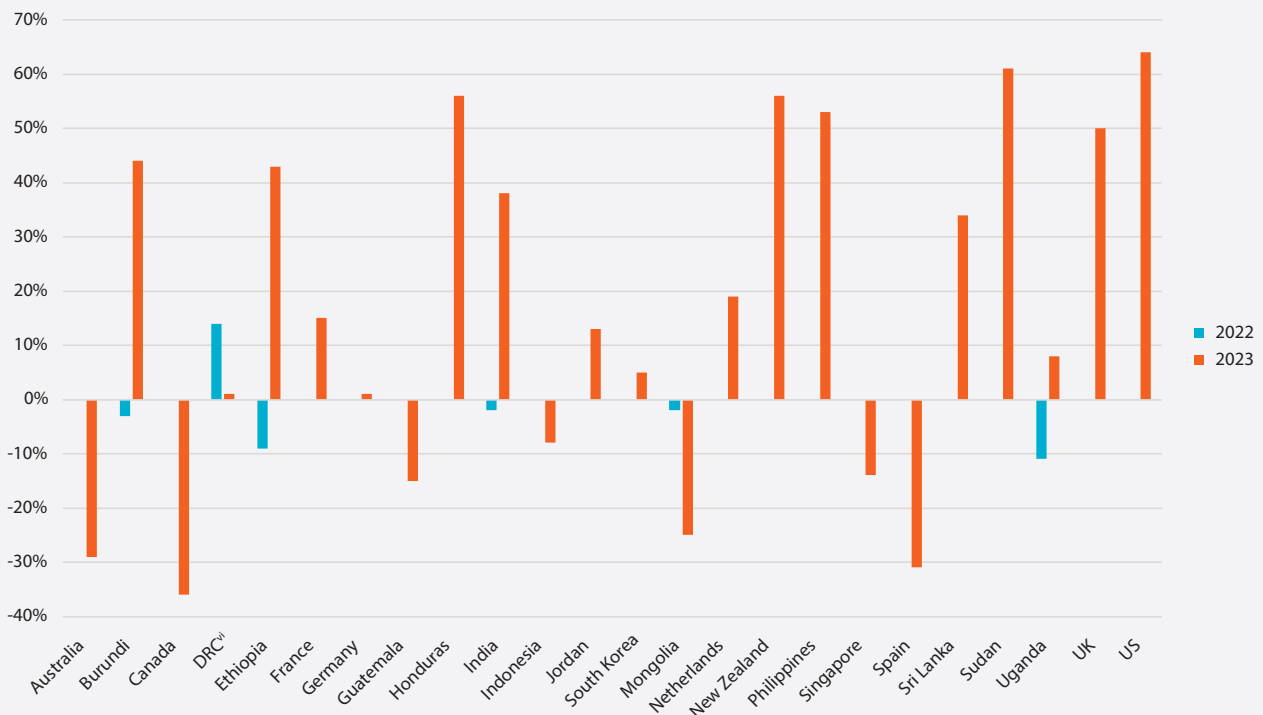


Figure 3. Food price changes between 2022 and 2023 (%)



^{iv} presumed to be a 48-hour (6 day) workweek for the purposes of this report

^v includes participating countries with available GNI PPP for 2022 and 2023

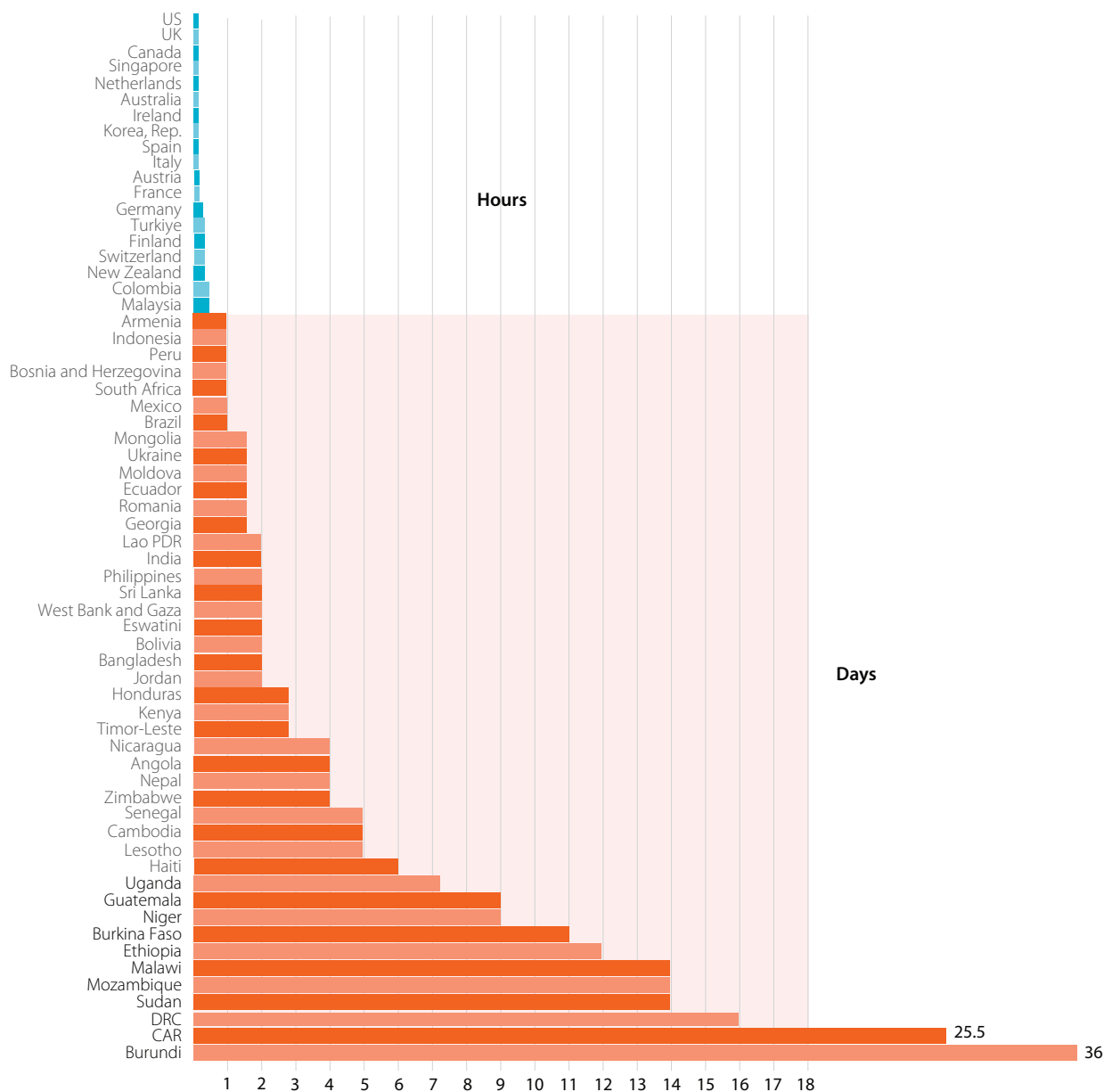
^{vi} Although the DRC sees a 1% increase in the cost of the food basket, their cost in hours worked decreased. This is due to an increase in GNI and an increase in value of the Congolese Franc between 2022 and 2023.

The 24 countries with data available for a year-on-year comparison of food basket costs according to hours worked reflects a relatively even, mixed result (figure 2). Seven countries experienced overall decreases in food prices and 17 countries had overall increases. **Out of the five countries with historical data where food prices are the highest, none have seen any improvement in food prices since 2022, and all would require more than a full week of work in order to afford a basic food basket.** All five are also classified by the World Bank as either a low-income or lower-middle income economy.³³ In comparison, of the high-income countries³⁴ (i.e. Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, the US, and the UK), three had the largest decreases in prices from last year and seven of the 11 had a change in food prices that cost the equivalent to or less than one and a half hours of labour.

World Vision research found that change in the price of a food basket was evenly mixed, with some improving and others continuing to rise, but it was the poorest countries who were hardest hit.

Figure 4. Food basket costs

To purchase the same basket of 10 food items in 2023, one would need to work:^{vii}



^{vii} includes countries with available GNI and US\$ PPP conversion rates for 2023

According to World Vision research, a food basket of 10 common food items costs:

1.5 hours of work in Australia compared to **36 days** in Burundi

2 hours of work in Canada compared to **25.5 days** in the CAR

1.5 hours of work in Ireland compared to **14 days** in Sudan

1.5 hours of work in Singapore compared to **4.5 days** in Cambodia

2 hours of work in the US compared to **5.5 days** in Haiti

2.5 hours of work in Germany compared to **3 days** in Kenya

2 hours of work in the UK compared to **3.5 days** in Timor-Leste

3 hours of work in New Zealand compared to **1.5 days** in Ukraine

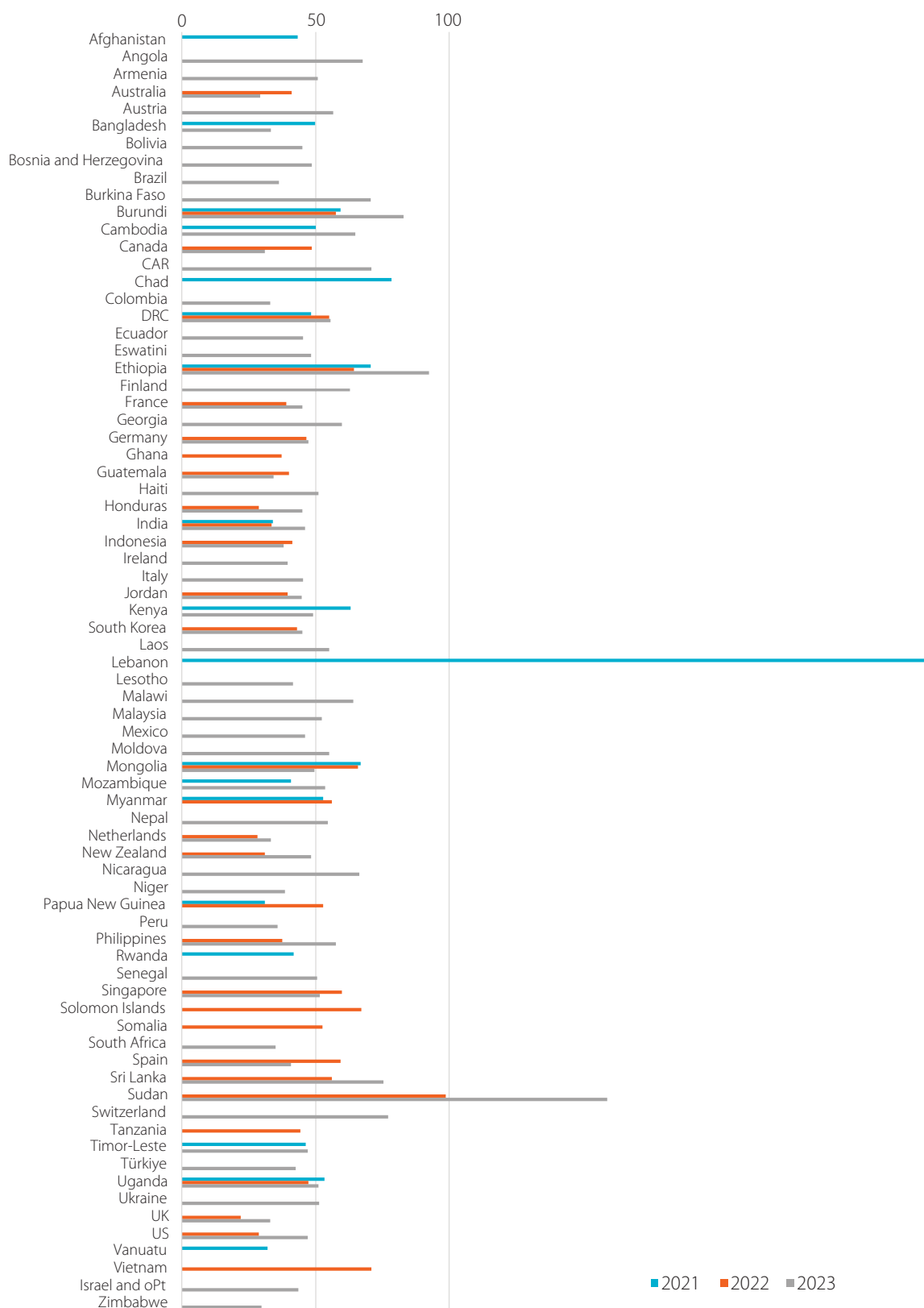
3 hours of work in Switzerland compared to **1.5 days** in Ecuador



In a Danli, Honduras park, a woman prepares arepas to feed those seeking refuge in a World Vision Child Friendly Space, established for the more than 4,000 people migrating through the country to reach the United States. © World Vision/ Andre Guardiola

Food costs have dropped globally, but people living in the most vulnerable contexts consistently spend the most.

Figure 5. Food basket prices between 2021 and 2023, by country (US\$)^{viii}



^{viii} N.B. Values are conversions from local currency to US\$ using PPP adjusted conversion rates; however some countries did not have this available (i.e. Afghanistan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela, South Sudan, and Yemen).

World Vision research found that the price of a food basket of 10 common food items rose the most in countries experiencing conflict, violence, and the effects of climate change.

Recent conflicts, such as the war in Ukraine, unrest in Sudan, the coup in Niger, and the escalation of violence in Israel and the oPt, alongside protracted crises, are disrupting global and regional food markets.

Even as protracted conflicts continue to be the main drivers of hunger across the Middle East, it is also one of the world's most vulnerable zones to climate extremes. The Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, and the oPt are conflict-affected countries of the most concern in this region. However, the regional situation is more fragile than ever due to the recent escalation of hostilities across Israel and the oPt in early October. This conflict has intensified the already dire food insecurity for 1.5 million people in oPt and is likely to continue to severely deteriorate.³⁵

Data submitted for this report initially indicated that it took two days' worth of work to earn enough money to purchase a food basket in the oPt. However, the developing situation has most certainly exacerbated the situation, widening the divide and preventing people who are experiencing violence and/or displacement from accessing food, regardless of their purchase power.

Nine out of the top 10 countries experiencing the highest food prices compared to average wages are concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 4), where there exists a calamitous intersection between protracted violent conflicts, climate extremes, and displacement.

Half of the African countries experiencing the highest food prices in this report are located in East Africa (Burundi, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda). After five failed rainy seasons,³⁶ which pushed millions of families and children into 'crisis' levels of hunger or above,³⁷ heavy rainfall in East Africa is now causing deadly flooding and displacing more than three-quarters of a million people.³⁸ Simultaneously conflicts and violence continued to worsen, displacing 9 million new people and accounting for 45% of the global total of internally displaced persons (IDPs).³⁹

The other half of sub-Saharan African countries shown to be suffering from price shocks in this report are situated in west and central Africa (i.e. the CAR, Burkina Faso, Niger, Senegal) where years of lasting violence in the Sahel region are spilling over, inducing a broader crisis.⁴⁰ **It takes people living in the CAR over 25 days of work to earn enough money to buy the same 10 food items**, making it the second most expensive food basket out of all 62 countries,^{ix} and more than double the next highest priced basket (see figure 4). This is the first year the CAR has participated in

this research, so a year-on-year comparison is not possible, but the World Bank reports that in the past five years, the country saw a more than 20% increase in key food prices.⁴¹ Nearly two out of every five people in the CAR – 2.4 million people – are struggling with acute food insecurity (IPC 3+).⁴² The country ranks amongst the world's lowest in the Human Development Index, and has endured decades of lasting violent conflict, including a sectarian coup in 2013 that triggered a 36% GDP collapse. The CAR suffers some of the highest levels of hunger in the world.⁴³

With a food basket costing the equivalent of 10.5 days' worth of work (see figure 4), Burkina Faso is facing a myriad of difficulties. Climate hazards and conflict in particular work together and independently to compound poverty and drive economic tensions and hunger within this context. Escalating violence concentrated are causing disruptions to trade and agriculture and have left 45,200 people to face starvation across regions in Burkina Faso and Mali as of August of this year.⁴⁴ Recent research, in Burkina Faso's Centre Est region, highlights how even regions less affected by the conflict are struggling under the influx of displaced families from the conflict-ravaged north, creating stress in the face of dwindling resources.⁴⁵ Changing patterns of grazing due to the effects of climate change cause additional tensions over resource pressures,⁴⁶ and droughts have reduced crop yields and damaged livestock health,⁴⁷ which leads to decreased incomes as well as reduced food supplies.

More than 3 million people in Niger are facing acute food insecurity (IPC 3+) and the situation is expected to worsen due to the ongoing conflict, political instability, high food prices, and challenges in providing humanitarian assistance.⁴⁸ Following the military coup, the suspension of commercial and financial transactions, border closures, and freezing of government assets has caused shortages of essential and non-essential goods and electricity which will in turn result in food price spikes.⁴⁹ Someone living in Niger will have to work more than nine days just to be able to buy a typical food basket.

Global food commodities in flux

There has been a 23% decrease in wheat prices year on year – after hitting a record high in 2022 – as well as a 21% decrease in maize prices. However, the price of rice has risen by 14% since June 2022.⁵⁰ A recent ban on rice exports in India and trade restrictions caused by the conflict in Ukraine have triggered disturbances in global food markets that destabilises food prices and the general food-trade system.⁵¹

^{ix} a subset of the data that compares food basket prices with countries' PPP, where available



RICE

10 years ↑

The global price of rice is at its highest in a decade and is expected to stay high until 2024.⁵²

< 8.7 tonnes

There was a global shortfall of 8.7 tonnes of rice for 2022–2023.⁵³

“Sometimes there is no work, [but when] my husband is paid [he earns] 50 quetzales [approximately US\$6.40] a day, but the basic food basket products are very expensive; a pound of rice costs 5 quetzales [approximately US\$0.64]; the money is not enough.”

– Emilia, Guatemala



© World Vision

Global rice production for 2023 was already predicted to experience its largest deficit in 20 years,⁵⁴ and in July 2023, in an effort to regulate domestic prices, India (the world’s largest exporter of rice)⁵⁵ laid restrictions on the export of broken rice and increased the export tax by 20%.⁵⁶ Uneven monsoon rains in India and floods in Pakistan have affected supply, in addition to a rise in fertiliser prices,⁵⁷ due to lasting impacts of war in Ukraine.⁵⁸

About 40% of global rice exports are supplied by India to over 150 receiving countries,⁵⁹ with more than 3.5 billion people across the globe affected by this spike in global rice prices. Importers are strained to pay inflated prices, due to devaluation of local currencies while price inflation increases borrowing costs of the trade,⁶⁰ meaning rice importing countries will be forced to rely on their own stockpiles, with

the most impact being felt by those already suffering food shortages, such as the Syrian Arab Republic, Türkiye, Pakistan, and some African countries, including Nigeria.⁶¹ However, it will especially be felt by people living in the Asia Pacific region where 90% of the world’s rice is consumed.⁶² Between 40%–67% of a person’s daily caloric intake comes from rice in these top rice consuming countries, like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. India’s ban on non-Basmati rice, floods and droughts induced by El Niño, and an unstable fertiliser market produces a perfect storm in this rice-based region. Rice is an especially sensitive crop with a volatile market that is difficult to replace. The added pressure of India’s ban on rice creates a perfect storm that threatens poor countries where hunger is already a concern.⁶³

However, the situation across the region varies, for example, in Indonesia, it takes one day of work to earn enough to buy a typical food basket, but in Cambodia it takes 4.5 days (37.25 hours). This spike in rice prices may have a long-term impact on people’s purchasing power and could also lead to unbalanced diets or micronutrient and caloric deficiencies.



WHEAT

33% ↓

in wheat prices since November 2022⁶⁴



wheat exported from Ukraine⁶⁵. 40% of WFP’s wheat sources going to countries facing starvation, like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Somalia



wheat prices nearly reached a three-year low in September 2023, but the market remains fragile with risk of escalating tensions in Ukraine⁶⁶

While wheat prices are subdued and the trajectory may be steady, prices remain volatile largely due to other indirect impacts from the conflict in Ukraine, including a rise in fertiliser prices.⁶⁷ Pre-pandemic, over a quarter of the world’s wheat came from Russia and Ukraine.⁶⁸ However, Ukraine is producing 35% less wheat this year than pre-war levels, which is unlikely to increase in 2024, and wheat markets continue to be disrupted by attacks on export infrastructure.⁶⁹

Being one of the most produced and consumed grains worldwide, the volatility of the production and price of wheat has a significant impact on people whose diets rely on it. The improvements in wheat prices do not correlate to the levels of hunger seen in wheat-dependent countries.

CONFLICT, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND RISING COSTS ARE STRAINING FOOD SYSTEMS

“After COVID, the effects hit us so hard. Our livestock were affected so much by drought and there was no business that could thrive well. Drought leads to a lack of money. Children drop out of schools due to a lack of fees.

The economy fluctuates and lives become so hard. Some kids also lack proper clothing as there is no money to meet their needs. Sometimes there was no food to eat. The children had to sleep without having any food and our livestock couldn't be sold.”

– Hellen, mother of two, Kenya



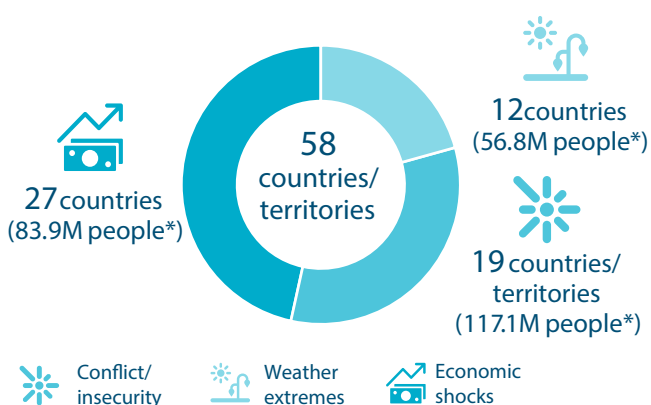
Food crises are a product of simultaneous interrelated global issues, including economic shocks, extreme weather events brought on by climate change, and conflict and insecurity (see figure 6). In the following section we will explore how each of these issues coalesce and interact to worsen hunger.

Hunger and violence are mutually reinforcing.

“Due to the economic crisis, families are getting poorer and poorer. We do not have access to food, especially in rural areas. This causes violence against children, and parents are stressed and unable to provide for the family, so the cases of violence increase.”

– James, age 15, Ghana

Figure 6. Primary drivers of acute food insecurity in countries with food crises⁷⁰



Food crises are the result of multiple drivers. The GRFC has based this infographic on the predominant driver in each country/territory.

* Number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above or equivalent.

Source: FSIN, GRFC 2023.

1 out of 5

A recent survey found that amongst those people who have had to put a child to bed hungry, 19% said that conflict was to blame.⁷¹

70%

Conflict remains the most powerful driver of food crises globally, with more than two-thirds of the world's hungry people living in areas affected by war and violence.⁷²

2x

Children in conflict zones are 'more than twice as likely to suffer from malnutrition' than those who do not.⁷³

Conflict continues to be the leading driver of hunger and starvation. For 117.1 million people, conflict remains the leading cause of hunger (see figure 6). Six of the seven countries suffering from IPC 5 conditions also are dealing with protracted conflicts, while in Haiti hunger is due to intensifying gang violence.⁷⁴

The situation in Haiti is complex and has received limited media attention or aid funding.⁷⁵

Notwithstanding the current crisis, this year's data from Haiti shows that the cost of a food basket has dropped by almost half; in 2022, a Haitian had to work seven days in order to buy the 10 items in the food basket, compared to 3.7 days this year.

However, inflation and food basket prices are expected to increase due to the limited market supply and persistent fuel shortages, which will consequently impact the purchasing power of vulnerable households.⁷⁶ A combination of violence-driven displacement, economic crisis, below-average agricultural yields, and weather extremes makes progress particularly tenuous.⁷⁷ And, although Haiti saw a slight reduction of hunger levels this year, almost half of Haitians (44%) were still facing 'crisis' levels of hunger or higher (IPC 3+), and of those, 1.4 million children and families are expected to be in 'emergency' on the verge of starvation (IPC 4) in 2024.⁷⁸

If the absence of food leads to conflict, then on the other side, the sustainable, reliable, and nourishing supply of food should mitigate the drivers of conflict.

Conflict ignites chains of events that lead to and exacerbate hunger. Indirect impacts from national and regional conflicts can have a far wider impact beyond the groups involved. It destabilises regions, affecting markets, currency and inflation, wipes out infrastructures and displaces farmers, making food difficult for people to access.⁷⁹ For example, the conflict in Ukraine has led to a decrease in wheat exports, and energy costs have also spiked, indirectly leading to a further increase in food prices.⁸⁰

Hunger can also precipitate violence. Social unrest can be triggered when access to food suddenly changes.⁸¹ Competition for resources like arable land and water exacerbate the propensity for conflict, and the cycle perpetuates.⁸² "The sheer threat of hunger or loss of livelihood also plays a major role in driving hunger-related conflict. A faith leader in Centre Est, Burkina Faso [told World Vision that], 'it's poverty that causes it. The lack of work means that people can't feed themselves, and that's what creates conflict.'⁸³

In some cases, hunger is weaponised as a tactic of war. Combatants can cut off or destroy food supplies or production infrastructures, hijack food aid intended for civilians, or use blockades to starve oppositions into submission. They might accidentally or intentionally destroy water, land, livestock and crops to strip their opposition of assets.⁸⁴

In the DRC, a deadly mix of poor harvests, diseases, unemployment, deteriorated infrastructure, and violence-driven displacement has left more than 25 million people in acute food insecurity (IPC 3+), 16% of whom are in facing starvation (IPC 4).⁸⁵

More than one in four people (6.7 million) are forcibly displaced due to armed conflict in eastern DRC.⁸⁶ While spurring hunger, the violence also separates people from their communities and farmland and complicates the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Young people from the DRC also told World Vision in 2022 that fighters destroy homes and crops in order to make people flee and take control of the area. Those who stay in their towns experience extreme poverty and hunger as armed conflicts interrupt the local economies and impede the production and distribution of adequate food.⁸⁷

Our price survey in DRC presents an intriguing case; the year-on-year comparison from 2022–2023 shows a price increase of about 1% when measured in US\$. However, cost measured in hours worked presents a slight improvement from about 17 days to over 15 days. These changes are consistent with macroeconomic trends. DRC saw GDP growth of 6.2% in 2021 and 6.1% in 2022, driven mainly by the services sector, exports on metal and high prices of oil. However, this economic growth has not been passed on many children and their families. Hunger has been exacerbated by escalating food prices⁸⁸ and according to the UN, DRC has the highest number of acutely food insecure people in the world.⁸⁹

In 2018, the UN Security Council passed the landmark resolution 2417⁹⁰ condemning the use of starvation as a weapon of warfare, calling for parties to spare civilian objects needed for food production and distribution. It outlawed the destruction of farms, water systems, markets, and any objects needed for civilians to survive in international armed conflicts.⁹¹

"... the higher UN authority acknowledged the link between hunger and conflict, giving the humanitarian world a wider framework under which to operate when starvation is used as a weapon of war."⁹²

– Margot van der Velden, Head of the Emergencies, WFP

Spotlight on East Africa

Countries in the East and Horn of Africa are experiencing conflict and violence that have displaced around 10 million people⁹³ and left more than 65 million people⁹⁴ food insecure. This region is uniquely fragile due to a polycrisis – while enduring a fifth consecutive dry season this year as well as sudden floods inundating farmlands and livestock, food and energy prices remain high. These disasters have also driven displacements to their highest level ever in sub-Saharan Africa, with almost 3 million girls, boys, women, and men displaced across East Africa.⁹⁵ Additionally, since April, 1.3 million people have fled armed conflict in Sudan and poured into other already fragile situations, putting even more stress on already crisis-stricken countries like South Sudan and Ethiopia.⁹⁶ Compounded by domestic conflict and instability particularly in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan this is one of the regions of highest concern for food crisis in the world.

An average Ethiopian will now have to work almost 12 days to buy a food basket, compared to a Canadian who can buy the same 10 food items for just 2 hours' worth of work. Between 2022 and 2023, the cost of a food basket for an Ethiopian jumped up by nearly 13 hours of labour – only a slight increase compared to the jump it made in 2022 when it tripled from 3 days in 2021 to 9 days of work.

Food costs in Sudan also showed a noticeably sharp spike;⁹⁷ all 10 goods in the food basket experienced a dramatic price jump since 2022. **It now costs the equivalent of almost 14 days of work in Sudan to buy just these 10 food items.** These price shocks are consistent with the dire humanitarian situation on the ground where almost half the population was thrust into a humanitarian crisis, due to a mix of economic crisis, erratic rainfall,⁹⁸ and an outbreak of armed conflict in April 2023,⁹⁹ which has forcibly displaced almost 6 million people.¹⁰⁰ More than 20 million people are facing acute food insecurity (IPC 3+) – nearly one-third of whom (6 million) are experiencing 'emergency' conditions or worse (IPC 4+) – throughout the country due to displacement and economic decline.¹⁰¹ Suffering is concentrated in states where there is active conflict: West Darfur, Khartoum and South Kordofan, Central Darfur, East and the South Darfur, as well as West Kordofan.¹⁰²

Climate extremes threaten children's well-being

"Many experts predict that the next world war will not be over oil, but over water. Water is directly related to climate change."
– Climate change specialist, Dry Corridor¹⁰³

1/2 of the

world's children.

Around 1 billion children are estimated to be living in countries that are at an 'extremely high-risk' from the impacts of climate change.¹⁰⁴

41% ↑

2022 saw the highest number of people displaced due to disasters in a decade.¹⁰⁵

57%

Respondents told World Vision in a recent survey that they completely agreed that climate change increased the risk of hunger/food insecurity.¹⁰⁶

99%

People surveyed universally agreed that climate change leads to displacement.¹⁰⁷

Every child has an inalienable right to safety, water, food, shelter and education; yet, the fundamental impacts of climate change directly threaten the rights of children. "As weather patterns become more extreme and temperatures rise over the coming years, the global landscape will be dominated by social and environmental risks, including natural disasters and extreme weather events and large-scale environmental damage, which, when faced in combination, often result in widespread asset loss and hardship, while

disrupting economic activity and public service delivery more widely."¹⁰⁸ These events and their subsequent impacts, when coupled with El Niño and other natural or manmade disasters, put children in particular in harm's way. Reduced food supplies leave people forced to skip meals or eat foods with lower nutritional levels, which in turn drives higher levels of malnutrition, starvation and in some cases leads to instances of famine.

“Poverty in our town is increasing due to climate change and other problems like COVID. Families are affected by a lack of crops such as potatoes, corn, and cereals which are a staple food. People are hungry and they do not find a solution or help.” – Juan, age 15, Peru

In Malawi, the global grain shortages triggered by the Ukraine crisis and the fallout of crop-destroying cyclones in early 2022 have combined to push everyday essentials out of reach for many people and communities. Hunger in Malawi is driven by climate extremes, including Cyclone Freddy, and high prices of staple foods. This is exacerbated by a weakening local currency that reduced the ability for Malawians to afford food. Our price survey found it takes almost two entire weeks to earn a food basket in Malawi, and the potential effect of El Niño threatens rainfall shortages that could further reduce agricultural production and curb incomes in 2024.¹⁰⁹ The result in the village of Mpama is that more and more children are quitting their education in a desperate bid to find work to help their families earn money. Many find jobs at the market delivering goods for a few coins, and few who leave ever return to school.



© World Vision

A recent global survey showed that people who said their children had gone to bed hungry in the past 30 days, 16% attributed it to climate change effects and one out of every 12 said it was due to displacement/migration.¹¹⁰ Families displaced by the effects of climate change often arrive in urban areas already facing resource pressures due to ongoing urbanisation, where host populations are struggling to absorb large numbers of new arrivals and often have to do so with limited support. Displacements undermine social cohesion in the host community as well as in the displaced population as they seek to survive, and make relationships between the two groups difficult.¹¹¹

An uneven socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have an impact on the most vulnerable

“The devastation caused by COVID is unbearable. Thousands and thousands of people died, and many children became orphans. Companies closed their operations, and millions of employees were fired. So, no jobs, no money, no food. People, especially children, were hungry, and they are still hungry. Many of them asking food on the streets. The situation is dramatic.”

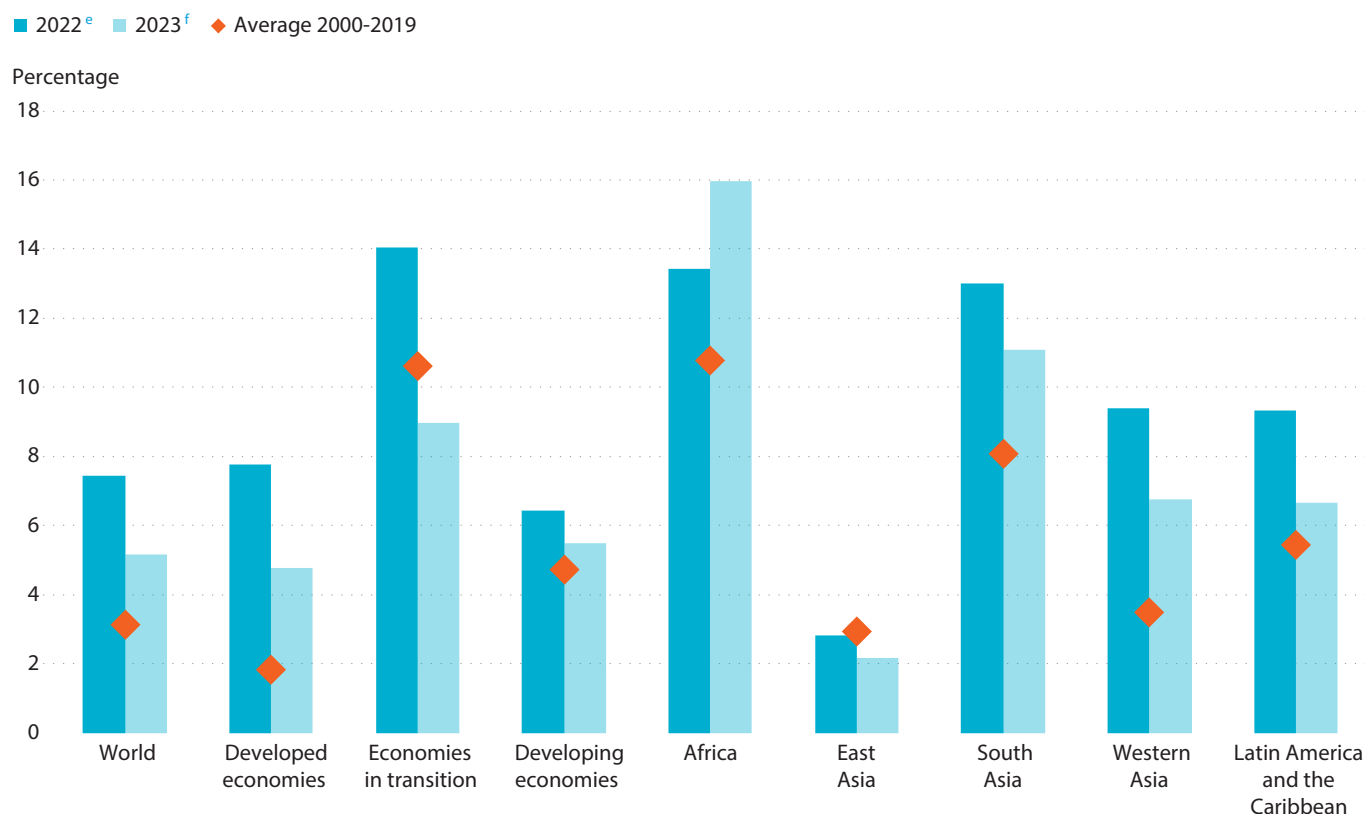
– Carlos, age 17, Brazil

Although the global economic outlook is murky due to ripples from COVID-19, violent conflicts (such as in Sudan and the war in Ukraine), and intensifying effects of climate change, there are some reasons for hope. Many regions and countries have already seen a drop in inflation (see figure 7) and global inflation is predicted to fall from 7.5% in 2022 to near 5% this year.¹¹² Still, except for East Asia and ‘economies in transition’, inflation rates in all economies remain above the 20-year, pre-pandemic average of 3% (figure 7).¹¹³

However, economic shocks are still playing a key role in driving hunger in 2023. Domestic food prices are still rising in the most vulnerable contexts, particularly those already experiencing extreme levels of hunger and other compounding crises.¹¹⁴

A recent global study revealed that one-fifth of families have had a child go to bed hungry in the past 30 days, and of those, 13% said it was due to the lasting impacts of COVID-19.¹¹⁵ Slowing inflation or decreased food prices, are not being felt in countries crippled by debt and unable to mitigate food price inflation with imports.¹¹⁶ Although mixed trends are seen in some commodities like wheat, prices of other key foods, such as maize, rice, beans and cereals, remain exceptionally high.¹¹⁷

Figure 7. UN’s economic analysis reflecting year-on-year inflation rates by region and country grouping¹¹⁸



Source: UN DESA, based on estimates and forecasts produced with the World Economic Forecasting Model.

Note: e = estimates, f = forecasts. Regional averages are GDP-weighted. Data for Argentina, Sudan, Türkiye and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are excluded.

In Latin America, Venezuela has witnessed some economic growth due to an improvement in oil production in 2022 and early 2023; yet, there is a general increase of prices of many goods including food staples due to scarcity of foreign exchange, hyperinflation and the maxi-depreciation of the national currency.¹¹⁹ Headline inflation was at 318% in September of 2023 and is expected to stay at about 250% through the end of 2023, further constraining people’s ability to purchase food.¹²⁰ Our price survey found that the cost for a basic food basket in Venezuela rose 26% between 2022 and 2023.

There has also been an alarming spike of inflation in Africa (figure 7).¹²¹ Our price survey also showed that countries in sub-Saharan Africa had the highest food prices. In Zimbabwe,

inflation spiked to 175% in June of 2023, worsening an already tenuous situation where 41% of the population lives under the poverty line. Three and a half million people are expected to face acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above) by June 2024.¹²²

For instance, Burundi presents outlying data this year with an uptick from 26 days of work to over 36 days since last year’s food price analysis. A Burundian will now have to work 10 extra days to be able to purchase the same food basket. The Burundi Franc experienced a sharp devaluation of 35% due to an International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement.¹²³ However, the prices of each individual good in Burundi seems to have fallen except for wheat, which more than doubled.

THE HUNGER CRISIS IS A CHILDREN'S CRISIS

“Poverty leads to a lack of food. Lack of food leads to hunger. Hunger leads to an increase in child marriage. Hunger raises the cases of teen pregnancy because girls go with men for food. Hunger put children in the streets to beg for food. Hunger leads to a lack of participation because if you are malnourished, you are unable to participate.”

– Richard, age 16, Ghana

Children who do not enjoy nourishing food will not thrive.

Studies have shown that children in food-insecure households are at increased risk of birth defects, anaemia, asthma, lower nutrient intakes, cognitive and behavioural problems, depression, suicidal ideation, aggression and anxiety, hospitalisation, and having poorer general and oral health.¹²⁴ In particular, the 1,000-day window between conception and the age of two is a critical time for structural brain and physical development. “Infants born weighing less than 2,500 grammes are approximately 20 times more likely to die than those with adequate birthweight, and those who survive face long-term development and health consequences, including a higher risk of stunting, a diminished intelligence quotient, and increased risk of obesity and diabetes as adults.”¹²⁵ These issues do not just affect individual children’s lives, the **global economy and society is paying US\$3 trillion a year** in the form of productivity loss due to undernutrition, in terms of lost national productivity and economic growth.¹²⁶

Even though countless vulnerable children, in both high and low-income countries, face a daily reality of poverty, exploitation, violence, neglect, and abuse, girls in particular face many disadvantages that reinforce and reflect gender-based discrimination. Children who are already marginalised, living in the street or with disabilities are also at risk of exclusion from food distributions. Vulnerable children living

with food insecurity may be driven to adopt negative coping mechanisms, including transactional sex or other forms of hazardous work.¹²⁷

Food insecurity often leads families to adopt harmful coping mechanisms such as child marriage or child labour. Data analysis in 2021 found that a child who had gone to bed hungry in the past four weeks is 60% more likely to be married than his or her peers who did not experience hunger.¹²⁸ As parents struggle to make ends meet, they become more likely to marry their daughters in the hopes that their new husband will be better able to care for them, and one less mouth to feed at home means a better future for the rest of their children.¹²⁹ Child marriage is strongly connected to school dropout, risks of complication and death in pregnancy and childbirth, heightened risk of domestic violence, and a lifetime drop in earnings potential.¹³⁰



© World Vision. Benedicte, nutritionist for World Vision's Childhood Rescue project, holds a child while his mother tends to soybean and cabbage fields as part of a Common Interest Group in Kiseguro, DRC.

WORLD VISION'S RESPONSE TO THE GLOBAL HUNGER CRISIS: BRIDGING DISPARITIES IN GLOBAL FOOD PRICES TO SAFEGUARD THE FUTURE OF THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN

World Vision has been addressing the issue of hunger in fragile and emergency contexts for decades, including in some of the world's most complex contexts. Our work reaches children no matter their background or the dangerous places they live. World Vision responds in refugee camps, remote areas, where there is conflict, fragility, extreme weather conditions, and post-disaster scenarios, and where people are facing famine-like or severe hunger conditions. Within these contexts, World Vision often draws on its decades-long presence in country. Such a durable commitment before, during, and after crises allows for deeper, transformative positive change, often in close partnership with local and national authorities' impact. Due to our community presence, World Vision's grassroots focus is core to our work. By centring communities, we ensure lasting, more accountable change, which in turn allows for greater access and acceptance from those whom we serve.

We're prioritising activities that reach across the humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus

World Vision is accountable first and foremost to those whom we serve. Our programmes provide regular and inclusive

opportunities for community consultation, including child-friendly, mobile, and digital approaches and set up channels for sensitive and non-sensitive feedback and complaints that are accessible to people on the move. However, in the face of the growing humanitarian need and funding challenges, as well as increasingly interconnected conditions, we recognise that the HDP nexus offers a more coherent approach by meeting the immediate needs while also addressing the root cause of vulnerability through sustainable and long-term solutions.

In line with the nexus' framework, World Vision developed a fragile contexts programme approach to expand and deepen the impact of interventions by tackling both the causes and effects of fragility. To help fragile communities build resilience in the long term, this method focuses on transformative change by implementing unified HDP efforts. It builds strength from collaborations with a wide range of partners at the local, regional, and international levels – including the private sector, civil society, international organisations, governments, faith communities, and community leaders, amongst others – to respond to short-term needs while prioritising long-term interventions to reduce the impact of recurrent shocks and stresses and address the multiple causes of poverty and fragility.

From struggle to success: Navigating food insecurity in Myanmar through resilience and community support

Since early 2021, the social, economic, and civil upheaval has become more complicated and shows no indications of improvement, putting Burmese people, particularly Myanmar's poorest families, in danger of food insecurity. If we were to only provide these communities with humanitarian aid to combat the uncertainty of food insecurity, but do not give them the tools to build their resilience to future shocks, then families will never recover and thrive.

Htet's family is all too familiar with the burden of food insecurity. 'It was difficult for our family to eat three meals a day,' Htet, age 13, recalls. He lives with his parents and four siblings in a small village near Mawlamyine City. A fifth grader, he and his older brother are still in school, but his two elder sisters were forced to drop out as a result of the growing socioeconomic and political turmoil and are now working.

Htet explains that because his parents are uneducated and did not know modern farming methods, their garden was not bountiful. 'The way they planted gourds in the past was too traditional,' he said, explaining that the produce was not high quality, so it had to be priced below market. Their meagre sales barely allowed them to afford food every day, much less pay for their children's education costs.



Fortunately, their family was chosen to join World Vision's programme. They received emergency food rations for six months, including rice, beans, cooking oil, dried fish, as well as seeds for their home garden, alleviating their daily worries about how they would feed the family so they could focus on growing their family business instead. His parents were also educated about nutrition, child protection, and health and received training on home gardening, to learn to cook nutritious meals using the organic vegetables from their own garden, and vocational training on livestock breeding and systematic vegetable planting. Now, Htet's family has planted mushrooms and raises chickens and cows in the backyard for food and small-scale sales.

World Vision is working within Htet's community to expand financial inclusion through a saving-for-transformation programme and financial literacy training through a partner community-based organisation, which has enabled Htet's mother and neighbours to save money to put into their businesses, children's educations, and their health care. The savings group also gives them a safety net to access low-interest loans in case of emergencies or investment opportunities.

Now, after a few seasons of harvests, Htet's family's prospects are finally looking up.

“After producing mushrooms for two seasons, we sold them for 1.3 million Kyats (about US\$500). We now have three cows and chicken farms We purchased a cow and a few chickens with the money from the mushroom farm, savings, and a cheaper loan from the savings club.” – Htet's mother

With the aid and development support from the programme, Htet's family's financial and social resilience has been steadily increasing, even throughout the pandemic, and they were able to complete the course in 2021. Now, his family is a part of World Vision's 'Building Secured Livelihoods' programme, which helps them enhance their sources of income.

“My parents are able to generate a reliable source of income from home gardening and raising livestock. In addition to allowing us to preserve the extra money in the [savings] group, my mother can make healthy meals for us every day. We have now regular family dinner time.” – Htet

We're improving access to food

Emergency food aid saves lives in conflict, humanitarian, and disaster situations where market access is not available, but this is not the only way that we can improve children's access to food. School meals programming has numerous benefits to child well-being, and World Vision promotes and implements school meals across the humanitarian development and peace contexts. This model of food assistance programming has been proven to be the most effective approach to supporting the most vulnerable children, integrating all sectors, including education; nutrition; health; water, sanitation, and hygiene; livelihoods; gender; protection from sexual exploitation and abuse; and child protection. It is the world's largest safety net for children whose families struggle to provide the nutrition they need. The impact on education outcomes also outpaces other interventions, which makes it a wise investment both for food security and for education.

Finding food security at school

In Kenya, World Vision engages with partners and donors to improve children's lives by finding ways to improve their access to healthy food, including through school meal programmes. Children living in Kilifi often do not have enough food to eat at home, and many go for long hours, some of them days, without food. World Vision involves community members to prepare nutritious daily lunches and clean drinking water for 6,336 students (3,226 boys and 3,110 girls) attending 12 primary schools in Bamba, Kilifi. Children are focused and concentrating in class now, unlike before, when most of them would doze off because they were usually too hungry to stay awake. School attendance has also improved, with 100% of students present.



Faith leaders connect families fleeing violence with lifesaving food assistance

"I didn't know him, but the church made [food for my family] possible."

– Nyalual, mother of five, South Sudan

With more than 2 million people displaced in South Sudan, faith communities are joining efforts to support displaced families, connecting people to humanitarian relief programmes and assistance.

Nyalual, a 33-year-old single mother of five, fled her village in South Sudan when fighting erupted in 2015, spending eight years on the move as a refugee before resettling with 34,000 other IDPs in the Upper Nile State. Yohanes, a faith leader at the Malakal Protection of Civilian site, connected Nyalual and her children with a church community that helped them register with World Vision to receive WFP food rations. A healthy supply of food will help Nyalual and her family build their immune system to avoid illnesses such as malaria and typhoid.

However, because of funding shortfalls and a growing number of people requiring assistance, the amount of food a family receives a month has been reduced. The reduction of food rations at the Malakal site makes life difficult for the people who are already hungry and even worse for those who are not registered within the system.



We're providing clean water

"We don't have drinking water. The only water we have is salty. It causes tummy aches, cholera, diarrhoea."

– Chrisdaly, age 10, Haiti



Water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions play a crucial role in combatting global hunger. In agriculture, clean water is essential for growing crops and sustaining poultry/livestock. Having access to clean water can increase the production of populations whose livelihood relies on small-scale production, hence increasing their income. Clean water also helps in ensuring good nutrition and health as it prevents the transmission of waterborne diseases – a leading cause of death in children who suffer from malnutrition. Drinking unclean water and a lack of good hygiene practices around handwashing and waste management can lead to illnesses, such as diarrhoea, giardiasis, dysentery, typhoid, and E. coli, which block the absorption of vital nutrients, even if the child is eating adequate food.

Furthermore, "water scarcity forces difficult choices across all levels of society. At the household level, water scarcity can drive familial conflict over decisions of prioritisation (drinking water versus agricultural use). The collection of water from communal water points can result in conflict over queuing and distribution, while women and children can

face personal security risks when having to travel far to access water. Water demand also creates conflict between farmers and pastoralists, and between small-scale producers and industrial agricultural and livestock operations."¹³¹

Clean water provides a lifeline to help transform communities

In Sierra Leone, a solar-mechanised borehole water supply system has become a vital resource for over 3,500 people just 20 miles east of Freetown. The 20,000-litre reticulated tanks and 12 double faucet tap-stands provided by World Vision bring clean and accessible water to a community that had been deprived of potable water. The collaborative efforts of the community members have strengthened their resolve to protect and maintain the project, emphasising the newfound sense of ownership and shared responsibility.

"We have enough vegetables for my siblings and me. Our garden has never gone dry because we have plenty of water."

– Pkorkor, age 6, Orwa, Kenya

Meanwhile, in West Pokot County, Kenya, World Vision's partnership with the Mbara community has significantly improved the lives of residents. Catherine and her 10 children, once burdened by a five-kilometre trek to the river for water, now benefit from a borehole less than a kilometre from their home. The impact on their community has been profound, addressing health challenges, improving hygiene, and eliminating educational setbacks caused by water scarcity. With the borehole, families like Catherine's are redirecting funds from medical expenses to education. Over 950 households are now experiencing the positive ripple effects of improved hygiene, access to nutritious food, and a brighter future for their children.



We're ensuring access to nutrition and health services

Community health workers provide displaced mothers and girls essential health and nutrition services in Sudan

In response to the continued humanitarian crisis in Sudan being exacerbated by conflict-induced displacements, dedicated community health workers are playing a crucial role in women's and children's health in conflict-stricken Sudan, helping displaced mothers, like Solafa, care for their children and access essential health and nutrition services through mobile clinics in the Blue Nile State.

Together with partner agencies, the State Ministry of Health and Humanitarian Aid Commission, World Vision is supporting community health workers in 14 clinics. They have helped nearly 3,000 women receive antenatal and postnatal care services, including nutritional training on infant and young child feeding practices so they can maintain proper health and nutrition practices once home. The community health workers have also identified hundreds of malnutrition cases in pregnant and lactating mothers, enrolling them in curative and preventive care, and children under age 5, who they registered for further nutrition care.



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We're keeping the most vulnerable safe

Holistic approach to child protection improves the lives of street children in Afghanistan

Food insecurity often leads families to adopt harmful coping mechanisms such as child marriage or child labour. In Afghanistan, over 1 million children are involved in child labour, which deprives them of their basic child rights. They help their families survive hunger, as many of them are the sole breadwinners in their families. Hunger, families' low income, a lack of parents' awareness of the consequences of child labour, years of conflict and natural disasters – like drought – contribute to the increased child labour rate.

World Vision supports around 4,000 street-working children every year in Herat city, Afghanistan through the Street-working Children's Enrichment Centre. Since its establishment in 2015, the project has transformed the lives of thousands of these children through delivering education support, health care services, and counselling for children and caregivers. Thanks to these activities, World Vision has seen a decrease in violence, neglect, abuse, disrespect, underage marriages, working hours and education dropouts amongst working street children.



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Psychosocial support for vulnerable children and adolescents in Venezuela

“I believe in them [the children and adolescents]. I believe they are good soil. Where anything we sow will grow. They will grow and bear fruits according to what we plant in them.”

– Angi Montesinos, pastor, El Sembrador church, Venezuela

World Vision collaborates with over 1,680 churches in Venezuela to provide psychosocial support to vulnerable children and young people as part of a faith-based network for social action in humanitarian responses, advocacy, and child protection that aims to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition by providing children with a safe and nurturing environment where they can be themselves and talk about issues they are facing.

Partner church, El Sembrador, trains volunteers and church members to recognise child abuse and provide victims with psychosocial first aid to help them deal with subsequent emotional issues. Faith leaders are also trained to identify which children and young people are particularly vulnerable so they can promptly provide them with targeted support based on their needs.



We're improving household resilience to food insecurity and mitigating predictable impacts from humanitarian emergencies and disasters

World Vision partners with local communities to implement 'anticipatory' interventions before emergencies to reduce vulnerability during disasters and prevent or mitigate potential impacts. When crises strike, World Vision coordinates closely with broader recovery efforts; our global capacity ensures we can quickly provide urgent, life-saving support to reduce suffering and are ready to meet the total demand of any crisis, regardless of size, location, nature, or complexity. However, we stand with communities from disaster through recovery to rebuilding. As a crisis transitions, World Vision adapts its operations to build resilience in children and their families to restore their lives.

Climate-resilient farming practices build farmers' resiliency in Timor-Leste

Helping farmers to adapt to climate change is critical. In 11 villages across Aileu and Baucau municipalities, World Vision has supported 657 farmers through facilitation and community mobilisation to assess local vulnerability and identify climate-related risks in partnership with municipal and village disaster management committees, the department for civil protection, the agriculture ministry, and village councils. The process identified various challenges, including damage to crops during droughts and lack of knowledge or resources to plant a different variety of crops.

“There was a challenge during the dry season, the communities lacked water for their daily use. However, they gained skills on how to preserve water by rain harvesting.”

– Natalino Tilman, Timor-Leste, Climate Resilience Project Facilitator, World Vision

Farmers attended training sessions on how to improve their farming productivity by planting various crops, building understanding about how to reduce their disaster risks, and helping them become more resilient ahead of longer dry seasons.

“I learnt about seed protection techniques, crops and plants practices, the farmer-managed natural regeneration module, and savings and loans guides. Before I didn’t know how to plant seeds on the farms as I only grew pak choy. Besides, I spread the seeds not properly in the soil, causing the crops not to grow well. I felt motivated because I have options to plant crops and now it grows well in seasons. The crops I grow are for family consumption as well as for sale.”

– Marcos, 60, father of 8, Aileu, Timor-Leste

“This training [on how to work with others to complete a community-owned vulnerability and capacity assessment and climate adaptive agricultural practices] has influenced me on how to cope with climate change. I had difficulties raising my sustainable agriculture product. Now, I have [joined] my saving and loans group to save for future needs. I also motivated other youth in my suku [village] to join the activity, and teach them how to grow their farm well through the skills I gained from World Vision.” – Pedro, age 28, Baucau, Timor-Leste

Marcos and Pedro, along with hundreds of other farmers, received organic seeds, including onions, tomatoes, and pak choy, and agricultural equipment to help them cope with climate change. Marcos’ income has since increased by US\$3 per day, which he uses towards his children’s school fees and other needs.

We’re advocating for children

Advocacy is an essential part of World Vision’s work at the local, national, regional, and global levels. Our efforts aim to mobilise and amplify voices of the most vulnerable – especially those of children and young people – around the world to call for lasting and sustainable impact and the change of unjust policies affecting children’s health and well-being, through working on policies and changing practices and structures affecting them.

Global advocacy efforts on hunger initiatives achieve results

World Vision launched a global three-year advocacy campaign in September 2023 towards ending child hunger and malnutrition, ENOUGH, with support from keynote speaker, WFP’s director, Cindy McCain. World Vision also expanded our Global Hunger Response to include three additional countries of highest concern and extended our target from serving 22 million of the most vulnerable experiencing acute hunger and the threat of famine to 30 million, including advocating for the most vulnerable suffering from acute hunger to achieve:

- a joint call to action on school meals with the School Meals Coalition that helped generate momentum around the need to strengthen school meal programmes to drive development goals related to food systems, climate, education, social protection, agriculture, health, and nutrition
- the publication of a case study on the Global Hunger Response’s work across the HDP nexus featured in Civil Society Dialogue Network discussion paper for the European Union,¹³² demonstrating that a more holistic approach is possible when responding to acute hunger issues within emergency, conflict, and fragile contexts
- passing two successful resolutions through the US’ Congress condemning the denial of humanitarian access and the use of hunger as a weapon of war
- the adoption of a resolution to exempt all humanitarian aid from UN sanctions by the UN Security Council, allowing World Vision to scale up and speed its interventions during period of high food insecurities specifically within contexts where the UN had listed terrorist parties as present
- joint advocacy with NGOs and UN agencies for the extension of cross-border operations authorisations in the Syrian Arab Republic wherein Resolution 2762 was adopted, allowing 4 million people to benefit from continuous life-saving aid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Donors should:

Meet crisis pledge targets to urgently save lives. Food rations are sometimes non-existent and often inadequate – the WFP should not be forced to make decisions to cut rations or cash assistance to families.

- Aid that provides the right nutrition for children, on time, must be part of every emergency response.
- Prevention of future hunger crises must be well funded and include social safety nets that meet children's specific needs.
- Interventions to build communities' resilience and prevent future hunger crises must be incorporated into funding for all emergency responses.

Include child-sensitive indicators in all funding commitments. Global and national funding commitments in aid, agriculture, food security, and climate change must have specific child-sensitive indicators and approaches for nutrition, hunger, gender, and protection.

National governments and UN and implementing agencies should:

“Children are the primary victims of the hunger and malnutrition crisis . . . but we can also significantly help to transform people's minds and empower others.”
– Genoveva, age 13, Tanzania

Listen to children. Children are powerful agents of change who have the right to food and the right to participate. All governments and service providers must be open to children's influence and include opportunities for consulting them as policies and services are developed, changed, and implemented. Governments, NGOs, faith and community leaders, and parents and caregivers must stand with children and amplify their ideas for change.

Ensure comprehensive and quality nutrition services and food for children. Government health and social systems need to deliver on nutrition policies and services and ensure that every child, no matter where they live or their situation, has enough nutritious food.

- They must help caregivers understand how to best nourish their children and include service providers to support caregivers.
- If enough nutritious food is not available or affordable, governments must step in to protect children until their diet is stabilised again.

“I would like the government to lower food prices. In the past I often ate fish with rice but now I have to eat my rice with beans. Everything is expensive, price of rice, fish, oil even bread has increased. Previously, when we went to the market, we brought some money back home, but today, it's barely enough to buy our food supplies. All this has a negative impact on my studies.”
– Minetou, 11-year-old girl, Mauritania

Provide school meals to every child. Good quality school meals give all children a chance at balanced nutrition, especially those facing acute food insecurity; encouraging girls to stay in school, keeping them safe from early marriage; and preventing all children from being forced into labour.

- Governments must scale up school meal access and quality to nutritional food sources ethically, sustainably, and as locally as possible, with careful consideration of the issues girls face because of hunger.

Support interagency efforts to work across the HDP nexus. UN agencies and NGOs must apply lessons learnt from previous famines and from the current food crisis to enhance households' resilience to food insecurity and livelihoods-related shocks while reducing/mitigating predictable humanitarian impacts from negatively affecting at-risk populations through coordinated and timely anticipated action.

- UN agencies must build consortia, inclusive of NGOs and local actors, focused on strengthening the resilience of children, families, and communities to multiple shocks and stresses through livelihoods diversification, strengthening social connectedness, and other responsive, flexible programming.

- Implementing organisations must provide greater support for productive, resilient livelihood opportunities for smallholder farmers and pastoralists to improve their skills; access appropriate tools, technologies and financial services; produce more nutritious foods; and increase market opportunities and off-farm employment opportunities throughout the food system.
- Governments and UN and implementing agencies must integrate famine early action 'trigger' indicators into planning, emphasising prevention and disaster risk reduction and 'no regrets' programmes, and increasing the use of crisis modifiers in development programming.
- Global accountability mechanisms must link early warning for action to ensure a rapid response and consensual buy in of Member States.

Parties to conflict should:

Ending hunger is inherently linked to achieving sustainable peace. If hunger can be a weapon of war, let nutritious food supplies be a weapon of peace.

All parties to conflict must:

Take immediate measures to end conflicts and sustain peace through diplomatic and political solutions.

- adhere to international human rights and humanitarian law (e.g. by ceasing attacks on civilians, especially children, aid workers, and civilian infrastructure)
- stop the use of starvation as a method of war in alignment with UN Security Council Resolution 2417
- facilitate the safe and timely provision of principled humanitarian assistance to affected populations.

ANNEXE 1. METHODOLOGY

Seventy countries where World Vision operates participated in the food basket price survey in 2023 or were included during the desk review. Participation was voluntary and optional, with offices across the organisation invited, but not required, to participate in the survey. The countries included during desk review were countries with reliable online data sources where World Vision does not typically implement programmes. The overall trends of this year's primary research are consistent with and supported by secondary data.

World Vision's Global Hunger Response compiled quarterly data (collected between 1 October 2022 and 30 June 2023) on local food prices for 10 common food items (including one kilogramme (kg) each of sweet bananas, white uncooked rice, wheat flour, raw sugar, maize corn cobs, and tomatoes; one raw chicken; one dozen (12) eggs; one litre each of cooking oil; and fresh, locally sourced milk) collected by offices in 18 countries where World Vision operates food and cash assistance programmes (i.e. Angola, Armenia, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, the DRC, Georgia, Malawi, Moldova, Mozambique, Niger, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Ukraine, Venezuela, Yemen, and Zimbabwe) as part of their established operational activities.

In an additional 52 countries (i.e. Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, the CAR, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel and the oPt, Italy, Jordan,

Kenya, Laos, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, the Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, Uganda, the UK, the US, Vietnam, and Zambia), the research team conducted a one-time survey between 1 August and 12 October 2023 to determine the local cost of the same food items.

Primary data includes local food prices collected by World Vision staff from supermarkets, open markets, and online sources for 10 common food items. In order to compare amounts across countries, food prices were converted to US\$ using current currency exchange rates on the date when the data was collected. These US\$ values were then converted using the average PPP conversion over the year. The PPP conversion rates for each country were calculated using the ratio of nominal GNI per capita and PPP GNI per capita. Results are rounded to the nearest half hour and assume an eight-hour workday and a 48-hour workweek. Local currency units were used when comparing prices between 2021, 2022 and 2023 in the same country.

Desk research was conducted as a secondary exploratory method to understand the complexities and contexts of findings from primary data as well as investigate the latest developments on the global hunger crisis and collect additional food price data.

Table 1. Participant and desk review countries

	2021	2022	2023
Afghanistan			
Angola			
Armenia			
Australia			
Austria			
Bangladesh			
Bolivia			
Bosnia and Herzegovina			
Brazil			
Burkina Faso			
Burundi			
Cambodia			
Canada			
CAR			
Chad			
Colombia			
Costa Rica			
DRC			

	2021	2022	2023
Ecuador			
El Salvador			
Eswatini			
Ethiopia			
Finland			
France			
Germany			
Georgia			
Ghana			
Guatemala			
Haiti			
Honduras			
India			
Indonesia			
Ireland			
Italy			
Japan			
Israel and oPt			
Jordan			
Kenya			
Laos			
Lebanon			
Lesotho			
Malawi			
Malaysia			
Mali			
Mauritania			
Mexico			
Moldova			
Mongolia			
Mozambique			
Myanmar			
Nepal			
Netherlands			
New Zealand			
Nicaragua			
Niger			
Papua New Guinea			
Peru			
Philippines			
Romania			
Rwanda			
Serbia			
Senegal			
Singapore			
Solomon Islands			
Somalia			
South Africa			
South Korea			
South Sudan			
Spain			
Sri Lanka			
Sudan			

	2021	2022	2023
Switzerland			
Syrian Arab Republic			
Tanzania			
Thailand			
Timor-Leste			
Türkiye			
Uganda			
Ukraine			
UK			
US			
Vanuatu			
Venezuela			
Vietnam			
Yemen			
Zambia			
Zimbabwe			
	27	60	70

Limitations

There are natural limitations in measuring commodities due to inconsistency in quality of goods, production, availability, and consumption patterns across different populations. There are also inherent limitations in collecting rich data from conflict-affected countries and hard-to-reach areas, where measurements are incomplete. Of the 70 participating countries with collection dates, five countries did not have reliable GNI (i.e. Afghanistan, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela, and Yemen), so their food baskets are not included in the analysis of how many hours of work it would take to purchase these items.

Another three countries (i.e. El Salvador, Vietnam, and Zambia) also had to be removed from the food basket analysis due to a number of missing food items, presumably, due to lack of availability; however, there was not enough data to provide a complete picture of a purchase of typical food basket compared to other countries.

Some of the limitations identified in the last year's report were mitigated by expanding the sample size of the food prices collected, where possible. Some countries provided prices collected from multiple locations (urban and rural). In certain countries, it was also possible to collect food prices on food basket items quarterly. However, collection dates were not given for some of the quarterly data, which are essential for accurate US\$ conversion rates for the food basket price

calculations, which can be volatile and change rapidly, especially in the context of political instability and economic crises. This inconsistency may produce distorted outcomes. In countries where quarterly data was available, but no collection dates were given, an average US\$ PPP conversion rate from the quarter was used to estimate the food basket prices. These averages were calculated using the closing conversion rates on the last day of each month in the quarter. Data from nine countries were included using this calculation method (i.e. Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, DRC, Georgia, Moldova, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe).

Although the price of the basic food basket in the DRC increased by 1% when measured in US\$ PPP, its cost in hours worked decreased from about 17 days in 2022 to over 15 days in 2023. This inverse outcome is due to the strengthening of the Congolese Franc against the US\$ and the country's GNI increasing by a larger percentage than the price increase in 2023.

Due to a change in methodology in 2022, as the GNI PPP was not previously used to analyse 2021 food price data, direct comparisons to changes in food prices expressed in hours of labour were only made between 2022 and 2023; year-on-year comparisons to 2021 would not be accurate.

All analyses in this report take these caveats into consideration as much as possible.

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© World Vision. In Akkar, Lebanon, Amnah and her 10 girls are working constantly amidst the worsening economic crisis. Their father, Mahmoud, is a fisherman and the older girls, Aya and Khoulood, work in the potato fields despite regularly attending school. The family benefitted from a WFP and World Vision-sponsored food parcel distribution to help provide them with much-needed food supplies.