

# HUNGRY FOR PEACE

## A CALL TO ACTION



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations



World Food  
Programme

Following years of decline, the number of people suffering from hunger in the world has risen over the last three years to **821 million people in 2017**.

Today, **60% of people** who are chronically food-insecure, almost half a billion people, and **75% of children suffering from stunting**, 122 million children, **live in countries affected by conflict**.

The number of conflicts has risen in the past decade, particularly in countries already facing high levels of food insecurity, so has the scale of conflict-related hunger. People living in areas affected by conflict are three times more likely to be undernourished than those living in more stable developing countries.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, conflict and related violence were the primary drivers of food insecurity in 18 countries.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, some of the root causes of hunger (poverty, inequality, lack of access to natural and productive resources, forced displacement, and impact of climate change) are driving conflicts.

**Conflict and hunger are interconnected and fuel each other. Addressing all aspects of the vicious cycle between hunger and conflict is essential to achieve sustainable peace, Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals.**

On average, in countries affected by conflict, **56%** of the population live in rural areas where livelihoods largely depend on agriculture. Addressing the underlying causes of hunger and supporting resilient small-scale agriculture can contribute to stabilization and recovery. A failure to work in a conflict-sensitive manner in countries in protracted crisis or in fragile states can exacerbate underlying tensions or create conditions conducive to the outbreak or spread of conflict.<sup>3</sup>

While conflicts are on the rise in numbers and intensity, providing life-saving assistance to civilians experiencing conflict-related hunger is increasingly challenging. Some parties to a conflict deliberately deny humanitarian assistance or target humanitarian workers and assets. In the worst cases, conflict actors have actively targeted civilians' food access, agriculture and productive assets. The return of famine and near-famine conditions in several countries in recent years is a direct consequence of growing conflict and a disregard for international norms.

**The gravity of this situation led the Security Council to act. The landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2417, unanimously adopted on 24 May 2018, is a significant step to break the vicious cycle between hunger and conflict and to promote adherence to international humanitarian law and famine prevention.**

It recognises the inter-relationship between armed conflicts and hunger, and considers conflict-induced food insecurity, including famine, as a threat to international peace and security. It strongly condemns the starvation of civilians as a method of warfare and the unlawful denial of humanitarian access. It requests that the Security Council be promptly informed of the occurrence, in contexts of armed conflict, of risks of famine and widespread food insecurity.

<sup>1</sup> World Food Assistance Report 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Food Security Information Network, 2018. *Global Report on Food Crises 2018*. (available at: <https://www.wfp.org/content/global-report-food-crises-2018>)

<sup>3</sup> To address this reality, an increasing number of stakeholders are adopting a conflict sensitive approach within their programming. See for instance Action against Hunger, 2018. *How to integrate conflict sensitivity approach into project cycle management* (<https://www.knowledgeagainsthunger.org/single-post/2018/06/04/HOW-TO-INTEGRATE-CONFLICT-SENSITIVITY-APPROACH-WITH-PROJECT-CYCLE-MANAGEMENT>); FAO, 2018. FAO Corporate Framework to support sustainable peace in the context of Agenda 2030 (<http://www.fao.org/3/I9311EN/I9311en.pdf>), and as essential key area of WFP's Emergency Programming Framework (<http://www1.wfp.org/emergency-programming>)



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**To ensure we collectively build on this momentum and in order to lay the foundation for stable, peaceful and resilient societies, Action Against Hunger, FAO and WFP urge the international community to act now by strengthening commitments to end hunger.**

## **1 Ensure global support and promotion of UNSCR 2417**

**Promote an informal “Group of Friends for UNSCR 2417”.**

This Group would discuss with a wide range of stakeholders, actively promote the recommendations of UNSCR 2417 and

work at global, regional and national levels to secure their uptake. This Group of Friends would complement existing initiatives and tools, including the Global Network against Food Crises, and work to improve global policy coherence and implementation.

## **2 Address unlawful denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of goods and services indispensable to their survival**

**Call on all parties to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and guarantee free and unhindered humanitarian access to assistance for all populations in a principled and non-discriminatory manner.**

The unlawful denial of humanitarian access to civilian populations not only deprives people of their essential means of survival but also, as underlined by UNSCR 2417 Art. 4, may constitute a threat to international peace and security. Conflict actors should refrain from politicizing humanitarian assistance and commit to

setting the conditions necessary to allow neutral and impartial aid to reach those most in need.

**Take immediate action against the use of starvation of civilians as a method of warfare.**

Today, all famines are man-made, often triggered by methods of warfare such as siege-tactics, attacks on livelihoods, scorched earth policies, blockades and market bombings. To this end, we urge parties to conflicts and all those who may have influence over them to prevent, and promote, accountability for these atrocious crimes.

### **3 Promote long term, conflict sensitive interventions that can both respond to immediate needs and address root causes of food insecurity and conflict**

**Support innovative programming that operationalizes the humanitarian-development nexus and its link to peace.**

To strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations, needs- and rights-based assistance must include the persons concerned in decision-making processes, and ensure the strengthening of local food systems through support to markets, small-scale farmers and the creation of meaningful livelihood opportunities. Such programmes aim at overcoming the gap between humanitarian and development responses, targeting the most vulnerable and ensuring that no one is left behind. This will require increased multi-year unearmarked funding.

**Ensure that hunger-related policies, programmes and initiatives are conflict-sensitive in countries in protracted crisis or in an area of structural fragility.**

Conflict sensitive programming considers how investments interact with conflicts in order to mitigate unintended negative effects and have a positive influence on conflict and social cohesion. This is not only in line with the core humanitarian and development principle of do no harm, but is also an essential component of increasing the effectiveness of aid in conflict-affected areas and fragile states. It is therefore a crucial principle for all stakeholders, including private sector, to understand and act upon in their increasing engagement in such contexts. Conflict-sensitive agriculture and food security investments generating positive impacts on the underlying causes of the conflict can promote more equitable use of natural resources and contribute to the prospects for more peaceful communities.

### **4 Strengthen the collection and dissemination of data contributing to regular, neutral analyses of food security and nutrition in conflict-affected contexts**

**Ensure reporting and adequate processing of data on food security to inform UNSC sessions and member states, and to inform investigations as outlined in UNSCR 2417 (§ 10).**

The provision of evidence-based analysis of food security and nutrition situations and recommendations for action, targeted

specifically to the Security Council, would enable member states to make the most of UNSCR 2417's commitment to famine prevention. Thanks to these analyses, the occurrence of risk of conflict-induced famine and wide-spread food insecurity in armed conflict contexts would trigger an automatic response of the Security Council as it is requested in UNSCR 2417 (§12).

**The urgency of the situation calls for bold and collective actions.**

**Let's make commitments a reality for people hit by conflict and hunger.**





**WE ARE #HUNGRYFORPEACE  
LET'S ACT NOW**

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