

# Myanmar

## ACUTE FOOD INSECURITY PEAK 2022

 **15.2M** people or **27%** of the total population faced high levels of acute food insecurity and were in need of humanitarian assistance in 2022

Source: HNO 2023, January 2023.

## Food crisis overview

 The number of people experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity and in need of humanitarian assistance increased from over 13 million in 2021 to 15.2 million in 2022, representing 27.1 percent of the total population, based on WFP's rCARI methodology (see Technical Notes). Active fighting, population displacement and movement restrictions, as well as rapid currency depreciation and high food, fuel and fertilizer prices, severely limited food access and availability and pushed prices beyond many households' reach (WB, July 2022).

The worst food security outcomes were reported in the states/regions of Chin, Kayah, Kayin, Rakhine and Sagaing. An estimated more than half of households were relying on crisis and emergency coping mechanisms that are more difficult to reverse and likely to reduce future income streams and food production levels (HNO, January 2023).

## Drivers of the crisis, 2022–23

 **Conflict/insecurity** Resistance to the military takeover in February 2021 has evolved into a protracted conflict that has led to widespread insecurity and displacement. Ongoing armed civil conflict has limited people's ability to produce food, mainly in the Rakhine, Sagaing and Kayah states/regions, through a reduction in the area planted, disruptions to value chains, soil contamination or land confiscation, as well as

reduced employment and livelihood opportunities (HNO 2023, January 2023). Physical access to food was constrained in conflict-affected areas by movement restrictions, which also challenged humanitarian assistance efforts as agencies were unable to enter certain areas or transport supplies across state borders (ACAPS, December 2022).

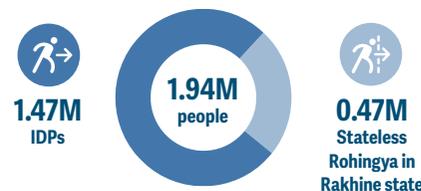
 **Economic shocks** Macroeconomic volatility in 2022 compounded issues of food access. The local currency continued to depreciate, losing nearly a quarter of its value in 2022 (WFP, March 2023). This led to issues with production of food and food affordability for households as prices of fuel and basic food items continued to increase throughout the year. At the end of December 2022, the cost of a basic food basket was 54 percent higher year-on-year, and had doubled since the start of 2021 (WFP, March 2023).

Price increases for agricultural inputs also negatively impacted 2022 yields, with paddy production estimated to be 10 percent below the five-year average (FAO-GIEWS, October 2022). A survey found that domestic prices of urea and compound fertilizers in July 2022 were 90 percent and 75 percent higher year-on-year, respectively (IFPRI, August 2022). Limited credit availability compounded farmers' inability to pay the higher cost of inputs (WB, July 2022). According to the findings of the food security and livelihoods assessment that was conducted by FAO and WFP in September 2022, 54 percent of farmers reported a reduction in their expected harvest.

## DISPLACEMENT

 **IDPs** In 2022, the number of IDPs more than doubled to 1.47 million due to conflict and insecurity. Nearly 70 percent of all new IDPs were in the northwest, which included 47 200 in Chin, 124 400 in Magway, and 624 000 in Sagaing. Approximately 126 000 people, mostly Rohingya IDPs, were in camps in central Rakhine state (HNO 2023, January 2023).

## Number of displaced and stateless people, 2022



Source: HNO 2023, January 2023.

Most IDPs were in overcrowded or otherwise inadequate displacement sites, often in jungles and forests, where they faced movement restrictions, security risks, as well as limited access to livelihood opportunities and basic services. For instance, large unmet WASH needs in camps and displacement sites led IDPs to resort to coping strategies that impacted their health, such as open defecation and drinking contaminated water. Many were also fully reliant on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs. With conflict anticipated to continue unabated, the number of IDPs is projected to increase to 2.7 million by the end of 2023 (HNO 2023, January 2023).

Around 470 000 non-displaced stateless Rohingya in Rakhine state remained extremely vulnerable to shocks, and continued to experience significant difficulties in accessing identity documents that would allow them to receive basic services like healthcare, education and jobs due to longstanding discrimination and marginalization (HNO 2023, January 2023). They were also more likely to face food insecurity since their access to agricultural land was limited and they have high levels of debt.

## NUTRITION

 In Myanmar, about 290 000 children under 5 years old were wasted, including nearly 50 000 severely wasted (HNO 2023, December 2022). Pockets of malnutrition are likely in northwestern and southeastern areas where there is limited humanitarian access.

## Drivers of undernutrition

 **Food insecurity and lack of access to healthy diets** Rising inflation, loss of livelihoods, reduced incomes, market disruptions and reduced harvests negatively affected household food consumption patterns and the affordability of healthy diets. Nearly a quarter of households reported insufficient food consumption in August–September 2022, with those outcomes worse in rural areas (26 percent) than in urban (19 percent) (HNO 2023, January 2023). The prevalence of low diet diversity among women and children increased, with fewer vitamin-A-rich fruits and vegetables, dairy, meat, fish and eggs consumed (IFPRI, December 2022).

 **Limited access to health and nutrition services** Interruptions to public health programmes and services, attacks on health facilities and a lack of trained professionals meant the healthcare system became even more fragmented and fragile (HNO 2023, January 2023).

Ethnic and community-based health organizations and private providers worked to cover gaps, but the response capacity was not commensurate with needs. Private providers were too expensive for many people amid the current economic shock. A survey found that 1 in 10 people were unable to access healthcare services when needed. Restrictions on the import, transport and provision of medical supplies impeded emergency and primary healthcare in conflict areas (HNO 2023, January 2023).

 **Poor household environment** Many households, especially in rural areas, lack access to safe drinking water. A 2022 assessment found that safe water access remained very low for the most vulnerable groups, especially among non-displaced stateless people, with more than 40 percent of households in this population group reporting using unsafe water sources for drinking (HNO 2023, January 2023). Public provision of WASH services declined with attacks on infrastructure, lack of funding and movement restrictions. At the same time, high prices limited households' ability to purchase WASH-related items (HNO 2023, January 2023).