

Asia

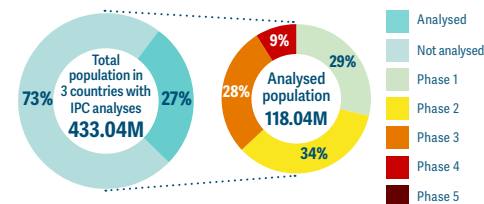
Afghanistan | Bangladesh | Pakistan (Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh) | Sri Lanka

Improvements in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, and expanded analysis coverage in Bangladesh and Pakistan

47.54M people or **34%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent, in 2023 in four countries

43.63M of them are in three countries with IPC analyses

40.57M in 3 countries | 33.12M in 3 countries | 10.51M in 3 countries



Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023.

3.91M of them are in Sri Lanka with a WFP CARI analysis

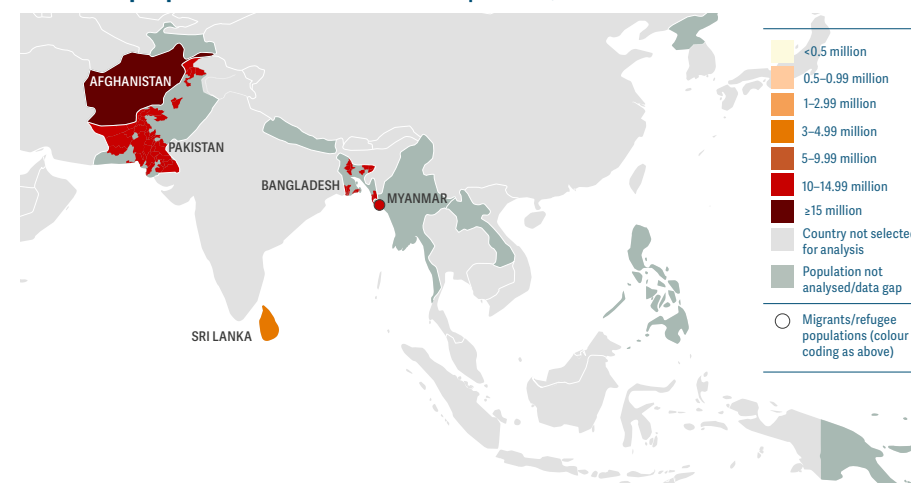
Source: FAO/WFP, 2023.

Four countries in Asia with data by mid-2023

Out of the 12 countries in the region selected for inclusion in the GRFC 2023, seven were not included as they had data gaps or data that did not meet GRFC requirements: Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Tajikistan and Tonga. This was still the case by early August 2023. No 2023 data were available for Myanmar.

MAP 2.5

Numbers of people in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent, 2023



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023; FAO/WFP, 2023 (Sri Lanka).

Acute food insecurity overview

Around 47.5 million people or 34 percent of the analysed population are estimated to face high levels of acute food insecurity in 2023 in four of the five countries that were included in the GRFC 2023. Over 90 percent of them are in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan, which are among the countries with the highest number of people and prevalence of analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent in 2023.

Direct comparison between the 2022 and 2023 analyses is not possible for **Bangladesh** or **Pakistan** due to increased analysis coverage in both countries.

No new data are available for **Myanmar** but intensifying conflict, soaring food prices and continued displacement mean that the food security situation could deteriorate in the second half of 2023 (FAO-GIEWS, July 2023).

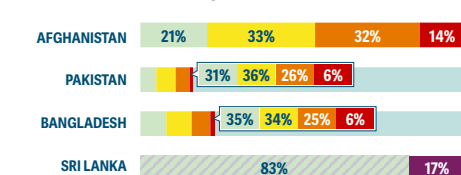
Four countries with new 2023 analyses (since March 2023)

Afghanistan

Afghanistan continued to be the largest food crisis in the region with the peak of acute food insecurity occurring between November 2022 and March 2023 – although the number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) was around 13 percent lower than during the

FIGURE 2.11

Share of analysed population by phase of acute food insecurity, 2023



IPC
 Phase 1 - None | Phase 2 - Stressed | Phase 3 - Crisis
 Phase 4 - Emergency | Phase 5 - Catastrophe

WFP CARI
 Food secure + marginally food secure | Moderate + severe acute food insecurity

Not analysed

This chart ranks countries from highest prevalence of analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent to lowest.

Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023; FAO/WFP, 2023 (Sri Lanka).

same period in 2021–2022 when 22.81 million people (55 percent of the population) were in these phases (IPC, January 2023; IPC, October 2021).

Around 19.9 million people or 46 percent of Afghanistan's population were in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), including about 6.1 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between November 2022 and March 2023, which is the lean season period in most areas.

New analyses in 2023 showed an improvement from April with 17.2 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity, and 15.3 million in the post-harvest period of May–October. As per GRFC protocol the peak figure – that of November 2022–March 2023 – is reported.

Nevertheless, Afghanistan still faces a persisting and alarming acute food insecurity situation, underpinned by the impact of decades of conflict on livelihoods and reduced food availability during the winter lean season. Sustained high food prices, and ongoing macroeconomic and policy challenges have reduced income-generating opportunities and contributed to high unemployment.

Bangladesh

For Bangladesh, the GRFC 2023 used data from the Joint Response Plan on the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis (IOM et al, March 2023), which analysed Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) in camps and host communities in Cox’s Bazar, while this Mid-Year Update presents a new IPC analysis covering 15 of the country’s 64 districts and FDMNs, thus increasing the analysed population from 1.4 million to 38.2 million or 23 percent of the country’s total population.

The number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above is projected to increase from 8.9 million during March–April 2023 (24 percent of the analysed population) to 11.9 million (31 percent of the analysed population) during the lean season of May–September 2023 due in part to anticipated cyclones and consequent flooding. Out of over 2 million people in IPC Phase 4 from May–September 2023, around 239 500 are Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMNs) in Cox’s Bazar (IPC, June 2023).

Pakistan

In November 2023–January 2024, 11.81 million people are projected to be in IPC Phase 3 or above, corresponding to 32 percent of the analysed population (IPC, June 2023).¹ This is not comparable with the peak of 8.6 million in IPC Phase 3 or above during September–December 2022 as the number of rural districts analysed increased from 28 to 43, corresponding to an increase from 19.8 million to 36.7 million people analysed. However, looking at the same 16 districts covered by both analyses, the proportion of the population facing high levels of acute food insecurity increased in four districts of Sindh and four of Balochistan, while it reduced in four districts of Sindh and three of Balochistan. It remained the same in Washuk compared to July 2022 (pre-flooding analysis) (IPC, December 2022; IPC, June 2023).

¹ The IPC analysis is pending Government approval.

Sri Lanka

During the February–March 2023 period, approximately 3.91 million people, or 17 percent of the national population, were estimated to face moderate acute food insecurity and around 10 000 people severe acute food insecurity, based on the WFP CARI methodology (FAO/WFP, May 2023). This is 2.4 million fewer people than during the May–June 2022 period when 6.3 million people or 28 percent of the population faced moderate or severe acute food insecurity (FAO/WFP, September 2022). The macroeconomic situation has improved in recent months with the annual headline inflation rate down from 67.4 percent in September 2022 to 6.3 percent in July 2023 (WFP Economic Explorer, August 2023), mainly driven by lower food prices and an increase in foreign exchange reserves. In addition, currency appreciation since March 2022 has strengthened capacities to import food (FAO/WFP, May 2023).

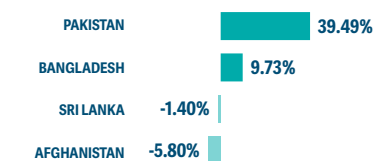
Drivers



Economic shocks were considered the primary driver of acute food insecurity in all four countries with 2023 data. High inflation rates and increases in the cost of fuel, fertilizer and food have reduced the purchasing power of households and weakened resilience to other food security shocks across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka (FAO/WFP, May 2023; HNO, January 2023; IPC, June 2023; IPC, June 2023). In Afghanistan, additional policies restricting women’s movement, on top of limitations to employment, constrains access to markets for female-headed

FIGURE 2.12

Annual food inflation, June 2023



Data for Afghanistan refer to May 2023; data for Pakistan and Bangladesh refer to June 2023; data for Sri Lanka refer to July 2023.

Source: WFP Economic Explorer, 2023.

households with socio-cultural norms leading to a gender imbalance in food consumption (CARE, November 2022).

During the first half of 2023, food inflation rates increased in Pakistan and Bangladesh and followed an opposite trend in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka (WFP Economic Explorer). As of June 2023, Pakistan recorded the highest food inflation rate at 39 percent, followed by Bangladesh at 10 percent, while Afghanistan experienced food deflation for the second consecutive month at 6 percent in July 2023, following a 3 percent decline in May 2023 (WFP Economic Explorer). In Sri Lanka, the food inflation rate has fallen steadily after reaching a 95 percent peak in September 2022, to -1.4 percent in June 2023. In all countries inflation is having a disproportionately negative impact on the purchasing power of low-income groups, such as farmers, daily wage labourers, and groups reliant on government social safety nets (IPC, June 2023; FAO/WFP, May 2023; HNO, January 2023).

Currency depreciation in Pakistan is reducing imports of critical goods and food staples (IPC, June 2023). The macroeconomic crisis is eroding households’ ability to access food and agricultural inputs, while limiting the government’s ability to provide critical assistance.

Afghanistan’s economy is expected to see moderate GDP growth through 2023 following the late 2022 stabilization of the currency, but this forecast is contingent on negotiations between the de facto authorities and international donors (UNDP, April 2023). While wheat prices continue to decline from 2022 levels, agricultural yields are constrained by fertilizer prices that remain above two-year averages and a lack of certified seed inputs (FAO-GIEWS, June 2023).



Weather extremes Household recovery from the 2022 flooding continues to drive acute food insecurity in Pakistan and Bangladesh. In Pakistan, flooding reduced wheat production in early 2023, including in Balochistan and Sindh provinces, which were still recovering from catastrophic flooding in 2022 (IPC, June 2023). Many of the more than 2 million people displaced by flooding in the northeast of Bangladesh remain vulnerable to further shocks during the 2023 cyclone season (IPC, June 2023). Already, Cyclone Mocha made landfall in Cox’s Bazar in May 2023,

destroying homes and key service provision facilities (UN, May 2023).

Afghanistan endured three consecutive years of La Niña-related drought (HNO, January 2023), which ended in March 2023. Below-average rainfall between October 2022 and April 2023 has had a negative impact on wheat and barley crop outputs, particularly in the north, west, and south (FAO-GIEWS, June 2023).



Conflict/insecurity In Afghanistan, pockets of violence persist in Panjshir, Samangan, and Sar-e-Pul provinces that threaten to spark new population displacements should conflict escalate (HNO, January 2023). The Interim Taliban Authority has issued numerous decrees and directives, strongly affecting the daily lives, livelihoods and human rights of Afghans, as well as the operating environment for humanitarian responders (ACAPS, June 2023). Two years since the political transition of August 2021 the engagement between the Taliban and the international community is at an impasse.

The humanitarian response in the FDMN refugee camps of Bangladesh continues to prioritize eventual reintegration in Myanmar, but the current security and political situation in Myanmar prevents the safe return of refugees (JRP, March 2023).



Crop pests The north and northeast of Afghanistan is still facing the consequences of the May 2023 Moroccan locust outbreak that has lowered wheat yields, a critical crop for household income and consumption, just as farmers have shifted towards greater wheat production in response to the Interim Taliban Authority’s (ITA) ban on poppy production (FAO-GIEWS, June 2023).

Nutrition overview

Malnutrition data for 2023 are only available for Afghanistan where a deterioration of the acute malnutrition situation is projected (IPC AMN, January 2023), with 3.2 million children under 5 years estimated to be suffering from wasting in 2023, of whom nearly 875 000 are estimated to be severely wasted. An estimated 804 400 pregnant and breastfeeding women are acutely malnourished in 2023.