



A Rapid Assessment Report

Impact of the
Russia-Ukraine
Conflict as a
Crisis Multiplier
in Sub-Saharan Africa,
and Other Driver Of
Food Insecurity (2nd Edition)

June 2023



A woman collecting her food at a food distribution in Laisamis, Lontolio village. Selections for recipients are based on vulnerability and the communities themselves are involved in the selection. Today, the third distribution since the end of last year, they are receiving rice, beans, salt and oil. The distribution is very welcome even though it is not enough. But it's not been possible to have consistent distributions due to lack of consistent funds.

Anette Selmer-Andresen/IFRC

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Southern Madagascar continues to experience its worst drought in 40 years, leaving part of the population fighting for survival. Three years of consecutive severe drought have wiped out harvests and hampered access to food in Madagascar's Grand South regions. The Malagasy Red Cross has joined the Government and other stakeholders to assist the affected population in Southern Madagascar in terms of distributing cash for food and basic needs, assisting children under 5 years old affected by malnutrition, promoting hygiene activities, planting trees, initiating vegetable gardens, rehabilitating/constructing water drilling systems, and promoting disaster risks activities. The interventions of the MRCs cover the entire population of the Commune of Ambatoabo, in the Anosy region.

Acronyms

AEFPF	African Emergency Food Production Facility
AfDB	African Development Bank
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS-NET	The Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSIN	Food Security Information Network
GRFC	The Global Report on Food Crises
HSP	Humanitarian Service Points
IDCM	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MoUs	Memorandum of Understanding
NSs	National Societies
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RFL	Restoring Family Links
SADC	Southern Africa Development Committee
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



THE IMPACT AT A GLANCE



- 30 million tonne shortage of wheat due to Russia-Ukraine conflict
- SSA imports US\$75 billion worth of cereal annually
- SSA heavily dependent on wheat imports from Russia and Ukraine.
- Increase in food prices leading to high acute food security



- Fertiliser prices in most SSA countries more than doubled
Current fertiliser application rates only 22kg per ha
- 33 million small farms responsible for 80% of the food produced in SSA
- 146 million are facing the hunger crisis in Africa
- Worsening nutritional status of women and children
- More SSA countries will register a nutritional crisis



- Diversion of humanitarian aid increased costs of providing aid to SSA countries scaling down of humanitarian operations
- Small humanitarian agencies risk shutting down completely
- Only 27% of the appeals requirements of CHF210 million was funded by May 2023



- Several SSA countries facing armed conflicts and terrorist threats
- Over 26.5 million internal displacements
- Increase in IDPs, refugees and asylumseekers
- International sanctions and limited fiscal space
- Destruction of infrastructure and disruption of livelihoods



- Fuel increased by 17-75% in SSA in 2022
- Increase in oil prices by disrupting energy exports from Russia
- SSA has 37 countries who are net importers of oil.
- Higher fuel costs increase costs of all goods and services

Executive Summary

Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) continues to experience unacceptably high levels of food insecurity, calling for concerted efforts for recovery and resilience building to address the numerous and increasing shocks the region faces. The number of food insecure people has more than doubled since 2018 from 65.4 million to 145.7 million. About 56 million people in the region are in need of emergency food aid. The worsening food insecurity situation in SSA is due to the intricate interaction between recurrent shocks such as extreme weather (drought, floods, cyclones), internal conflicts and insecurity and disease outbreaks (e.g. cholera) and crises multiplier factors such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict and COVID-19. The compounded effect of the different crises has resulted in a worsening macroeconomic situation for SSA countries observed through high levels of inflation, unemployment and poverty. Malnutrition has also been on the rise with high prevalence of malnutrition observed among women (especially pregnant and lactating mothers) and children. Though the extent of the food insecurity challenge differs from region to region and country to country, the Horn of Africa is the worst affected with 8.79 million people needing food emergency support.

The emergence of the Russia-Ukraine conflict in February 2022 has undoubtedly aggravated the food insecurity situation in SSA, with women and children being the most affected. Russia and Ukraine are key suppliers of fertiliser, maize, wheat, barley, sunflower oil and sunflower meal, and the war has disrupted the global supply of these key food and agricultural commodities. Sub-Saharan Africa continue to experience the greatest impact of the conflict because of its heavy dependency on wheat and fertiliser exports from Ukraine and Russia, respectively. Global fuel and energy supplies were also affected which resulted in increase in fuel prices and transport cost. The crisis also disrupted global medical supply chains compromising health systems in SSA. While various efforts have been made to respond to the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine crisis at global, regional and country levels, more needs to be done to realize meaningful and sustainable change. There has been some commitment from various International Finance Institutions such as the African Development Bank to support SSA countries to develop systems that enhance their resilience to external shocks. However, until such a time when such resilience has been built, significant humanitarian response is required to assist millions of people in emergency situations. The challenge is that the humanitarian response continues to be poorly funded affecting the reach of programmes meant to benefit affected communities.

In the short to medium term, the following recommendations are made for IFRC and its partner National Societies:

In the short term:

- Increase resource allocation through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to scale up pre-approved funding requests submitted by the National Societies under Anticipatory Action Plans to mitigate worsening of humanitarian crisis.
- Support NSs to design multi-purpose cash transfer programmes that are explicitly linked to livelihood and community resilience in order to integrate transformational approaches and reduce recurrent of food insecurity in the near future.
- Establish formal agreements (MOUs) with already existing partners to improve coordination and collaborative efforts.
- IFRC to strengthen partnerships with Africa Development Bank (AFDB) and other IFIs to leverage on existing financial facilities to make it possible for vulnerable small-scale farmers to access fertilizers and seed varieties that enhance their agricultural production.

In the medium term:

- Through Humanitarian Diplomacy, persuade host governments towards drafting fiscal policies that protect vulnerable households from rising food and energy prices, such as targeted tax reductions or price subsidies especially for countries with weak social safety nets.
- Advocate for increased funding allocation to scale up Acute Hunger Response, in particular amongst priority countries affected by climate change and non-delivery of fertiliser previously imported from Russia or Ukraine. Over reliance on organic fertilizers and local smallholder farming may not solve the acute food crisis at national scale in the short term.
- Focus on humanitarian interventions that target the most vulnerable populations such child protection programmes to mitigate child labour, severe malnutrition, lack of access to clean water and WASH facilities, child marriage and lower school attendance. Many children are also forced to reside in unsafe refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in countries across the African continent where they are at risk of trafficking, recruitment into armed groups and sexual violence.
- Strengthen anticipatory thinking and approaches, using historical knowledge and past experiences to enable more people to receive needed assistance ahead of predictable shocks and limit the disasters.
- Expand the scope of the IFRC Anticipation Hub to facilitate knowledge exchange, learning, guidance, and advocacy around anticipatory action beyond the initial focus on climate change, and include a wider range of emerging humanitarian disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic, global recessions and the Russia-Ukraine war.
- Preposition supplies and promote flexible unrestricted funding mechanisms with donors.
- Strengthen social protection programmes to improve long term access nutritional diets through reduction of poverty and inequality

Ekapolon Ngasike is about 75 years old and live in the village called Kaitakapel i Turkana. She is the elder in a household of 9. "Life is hard. We have not eaten for four days. Life is tough. The sun is shining strongly. This is very difficult for our family. The drought has punched us for almost three years, and we moved to this place when we lost our animals. We eat wild fruits from palm threes. This is what we survive on, but it cannot save us. It gives the stomach something to work with, but it is not filling us. I was a big woman but look at my bracelets now. After our livestock died, I have become smaller and smaller. Life was good when we had food, meet and milk. Before this drought we had no problems. But now it is not good. This is the worst drought I have experienced. I had 300 livestock, but during the drought I lost most of them. I remain with only four. Look at the skins from the dead ones. I collected the skins to use as sleeping mats. The four remaining goats are not in a good condition and will not live more than a month. In this village we need food. Nobody here can think beyond food at this time.

Olav Saltbones/ Norwegian Red Cross



Introduction

The report is a 2nd edition of the rapid assessment conducted in July 2022 aimed to assess the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict as a crisis multiplier in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with a particular interest on food security and livelihoods leading to the hunger crisis in Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa has been battling with many challenges including acute hunger, climate change, Covid-19, armed conflicts and other multiple disasters. The Russia-Ukraine conflict has had an adverse impact on food and energy security in Africa. Both Russia and Ukraine are major suppliers of wheat, fertilizer and crude oil to Africa, and the disruptions in the supply chain of these commodities has major implications for the food security status on the continent. It is reported that more than 140 million people are facing the hunger crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa and about 56 million people need immediate humanitarian interventions (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023; IFRC, 2022a). The number of people in acute food security has increased by 83% in the past 5 years (IFRC, 2022a). Given this background, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and its partner National Societies are conducting the rapid assessment to inform decision making in respect to the ongoing acute hunger, scenarios, contingency planning, anticipatory action and humanitarian response as well as diplomacy priorities.

The specific objectives of the assessment were to:

1. Update the data sources of the initial analysis conducted in July 2022, especially in regard to the supply chain, prices of commodities, accessibility and availability of goods to Africa, and its potential humanitarian impact;
2. Carry out a comparative trend analysis of the impact of the Ukraine-Russia conflict and other determinants of food insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa, and how they are currently affecting the food security in these countries and the IFRC network ability to provide relevant services with maximum impact;
3. Provide recommendations to IFRC on priority issues at the country level that can inform the revision of the ongoing Acute Hunger Response, and the transition to longer term programming in Food Security;
4. Develop a specific annex on the Food Security situation in Ethiopia in relation to the drivers affecting this particular country.

Methodology

Data collection and analysis

The methodology for the rapid assessment utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches to collect data. Secondary data was obtained through a desk review of information available on public domains including media reports and institutional data (assessments, study reports, and statements by United Nations (UN) Agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations, and Think Tanks). The initial plan was to collect primary data through a perception survey with representatives from National Red Cross / Red Societies in the 23 priority countries in SSA, followed by key informant interviews with representatives of World Food Programme (WFP), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and IFRC in Africa. A questionnaire and key informant guide were developed and sent to all National Societies (NSs) both in English and French versions. Data analysis took an approach that analysed the crisis since the last report done same time in 2022.

Limitations

The timeframe for the assessment limited its scope. The rapid assessment was conducted over a 12-day period which limited the scope to secondary data analysis. The assessment could have benefited from various opinions of representatives of key players in the humanitarian and development sector, including government departments in the priority countries.

Overall: Crisis Context and IFRC Response

Crisis context

Food insecurity is and continues to be on an upward trend in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in the last decade and beyond. The 2023 Global Food Crisis Report shows that SSA had 145.7 million people in food crisis or worse in 2022 (Table 1). Though there is a striking similarity in the upward trend of food insecurity, the extent of the increase differs from region to region,

country to country and household to household. The Horn of Africa is the worst affected region experiencing its longest dry spell on record, with five consecutive dry seasons (IFRC, 2023). This prolonged drought is projected to persist into 2023, causing further agricultural challenges and escalating food insecurity. The severity and magnitude of the food insecurity in SSA is compounded by several shocks such as internal conflicts and insecurity, war between Russia and Ukraine, climate shocks and epidemics such as COVID-19 that African countries were and still are battling to recover from (IFRC, 2022). Inherent traditional macroeconomic challenges inclusive of the inability to service external debts, shrinking fiscal space, rising public debt, and growth in trade deficit have heightened the vulnerability of SSA countries, weakening their resilience to external shocks (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023).

TABLE 1: Acute food insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa (IPC Phase 3 and above) (Millions)

Year	Central and Southern Africa	East Africa	West Africa and Sahel	Total
2016	27.2	26.1	12.3	65.6
2017	28.2	29.4	18.1	75.7
2018	25.3	28.6	11.5	65.4
2019	32.3	27.8	12.7	72.8
2020	40.2	32.9	24.8	97.9
2021	45.6	43.6	30.4	119.6
2022	47.4	56.85	41.45	145.7
2022 (%)	3.9%	30.9%	26.7%	21.8%

Source: GNAFC-FSIN 2023

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine remains one of the critical drivers of food insecurity in Africa as the two countries are key players in the global supply of crude oil, maize, wheat, barley, sunflower oil, sunflower meal and fertilisers (UNCTAD, 2022). The most glaring impacts of the crisis in Africa include the disruption of trade, food and fuel price increases especially in countries largely dependent on staple crop imports (UNDP, 2022; IMF, 2023; UNCTAD, 2022). The fact that SSA imports between 50-85% of wheat, palm oil and rice aggravated the food insecurity especially for vulnerable groups like women and children (IMF 2023). Between January 2020 and January 2023, the average domestic food price levels increased by some 31 percent for SSA countries (World Bank, 2022). The deal between Russia and Ukraine to resume grain exports via the Black Sea brokered by the United Nations (UN) in June 2022 is under threat due to the destruction of the ammonium pipeline which Russia used to export 2.5 million tonnes of ammonium to the world. Food exports through the Black Sea are reported to have dropped from a peak of 4.2 million metric tons in October 2022 to 1.3 million metric tons in May 2023 (Daily Sabah, 2023). Furthermore, the destruction of critical infrastructure such as the Kharkova dam in Ukraine will likely have huge negative implications on agricultural production and global food exports due to the extensive destruction of irrigation systems and farmland (Bloomberg, 2023). Whereas the challenge in 2021 has been about food accessibility, in 2023 it is projected to be fourfold including availability, utilization and stability (Onyeaka, 2022).

Comparison by regional blocs shows that Central and Southern Africa has the highest number of people in emergency food crisis (IPC 4) compared to the other blocs (Table 2). The low numbers of those in emergency food crisis in 2022 compared to 2021 demonstrates the seasonal or transitory nature of the food insecurity crisis in SSA. The crises in the SSA region have also sustained nutritional and population displacement challenges in the affected countries. Approximately 20.76 million under 5 children were moderately wasted and 7.4 million severely malnourished in the three regional blocs (see Table 2) (GNAFC-FSIN 2023). Forcible displacement of people due to armed conflicts, political persecution and economic challenges in some countries has persisted resulting in 26.53 million internally displaced persons and 7.35 million refugees and asylum seekers who also face the brunt of food insecurity more severely. It is reported that women and girls are most vulnerable to the impacts of the different crises (UN Women, 2022).

TABLE 2: Summary of the crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa (2022)

	Central & Southern Africa		East Africa		West Africa & Sahel	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Percent of the GRFC global number of people in crisis or worse	24%	22%	23%	22%	16%	12%
Number of people in emergency (IPC level 4) (millions)	9.89	5.75	10.58	8.79	1.5	2.95
Internally displaced persons (millions)	7.1	7.2	12.4	11.7	6	7.63
Refugees and asylum seekers (millions)	1.0	1.1	4.7	4.54	1.6	1.71
Moderately wasted Children under 5 (millions)	2.0+	2.62	10.2	8.92	7.0+	9.22
Severely wasted Children under 5 (millions)	-	1.13	14.1	2.79	-	3.48

Source: GNAFC-FSIN 2023

IFRC response

As part of the the world's largest humanitarian network, the Africa Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies actively responded to the different crises in SSA through the launching of hunger crisis emergency appeals (see Fig 1) (IFRC, 2023). IFRC currently has 23 countries on its watchlist in SSA. Of these 15 countries, with 92.07 million people classified as IPC level 3 and above, were targeted with humanitarian emergency support. IFRC and its partners managed to reach 1.55 million people out of the targeted 7.7 million, representing 20% of the CHF intended target. The major challenge in the emergency response is a lack of funding. Only 27% of the requested target of 210 million was funded. Of the 15 targeted countries, only Ethiopia, Burkina Faso and Kenya received more than 50% of the requested funding. Thus, a lot more people still need assistance, hence the urgent need for upscaled funding and humanitarian support.

FIG 1: Response and funding towards Africa hunger crisis regional appeal

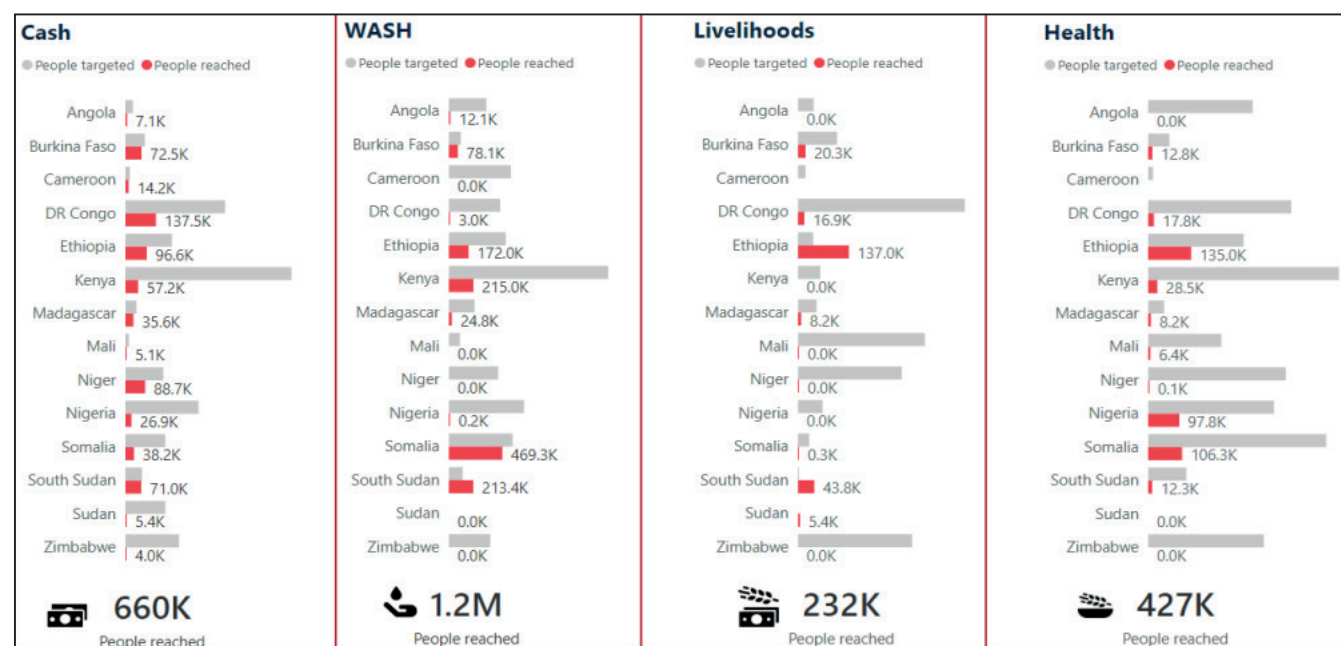
	Situation		Response			Funding		
	Latest IPC data available for each country % is of analysed population. Last update May 2023		From National Societies (via indicator Tracking Tool) Latest update May 2023			Federation wide including multilateral and bilateral contributions to the emergency appeal		
	% population IPC3+	No. people IPC3+	People Reached	% of target	Target	Received	% of target	Target
	19%	92.07 M	1.55 M	20%	7.7 M	56.12 M	27%	210 M
Angola	*58%	1.58 M	12,032	4%	328,880	0.9 M	9%	10 M
Burkina Faso	12%	2.62 M	78,082	22%	350,000	10.6 M	59%	18 M
Cameroon	14%	3.6 M	14,200	3%	545,079	0 M	0%	10 M
DR Congo	23%	24.52 M	137,474	31%	450,000	0 M	0%	16 M
Ethiopia	44%	7.39 M	172,000	34%	500,000	7.7 M	62%	12.5 M
Kenya	33%	5.44 M	215,000	15%	1,400,000	18.5 M	74%	25 M
Madagascar	25%	1.54 M	35,638	16%	225,000	0 M	0%	5.5 M
Mali	3%	0.63 M	6,427	2%	350,000	0.7 M	9%	8 M
Mauritania	6%	0.28 M	0	0%	81,900	0.2 M	9%	2 M
Niger	8%	2.04M	88,702	20%	433,142	1.9 M	19%	10 M
Nigeria	11%	17.04 M	97,794	9%	1,092,300	2.2 M	8%	27 M
Somalia	38%	6.51 M	469,338	84%	560,000	10.3 M	43%	24 M
South Sudan	63%	7.76 M	213,440	52%	413,000	2.9 M	18%	16 M
Sudan	16%	7.74 M	5,400	1%	590,000	0.2 M	1%	12 M
Zimbabwe	*35%	3.38 M	3,997	1%	364,000	35 M	1%	14 M

Source: IFRC (2023)

¹Integrated Food Security Phase Classification

As indicated in Fig 2, as of May 2023, the IFRC managed to reach out to 660 thousand people through cash assistance, 1.2 million through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), 232000 through livelihoods programmes and 427000 through health-related programmes (IFRC, 2023). Despite the significant progress in IFRC response, the growing humanitarian needs outweigh capacities of most National Societies to effectively respond. Additional funding is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods, mitigate further displacement, and avoid greater needs in the future.

FIG 2: IFRC response by sector



Source: IFRC (2023)

Food Security and Livelihoods

2023 Trend in number of people in high acute food insecurity

The Global Report on Food Crises classified eleven countries as having major food crisis in Southern Africa namely Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023). In East Africa, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda were classified as having major food crisis. In West Africa and the Sahel, 9 countries (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) are in the same situation. These countries urgently require emergency humanitarian food aid and assistance because parts of their population are in danger of death from starvation. Table 3 below shows the alarming extent to which people are in acute food crisis and this speaks to the nature of the humanitarian challenge ahead of IFRC and its partners. Countries such as Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Malawi and Chad are among those that have recorded increases in the number of people in food crisis or worse situation since 2022.

TABLE 3: Number of people in food crisis or worse situation (IPC Phase 3 or above) (in millions)

Country	% share of population 2021	Number of people in IPC phase 3 and above in 2021(millions)	% share of population 2022	Number of people in IPC phase 3 and above in 2022 (millions)
DRC	28	27.20	23	24.52
Nigeria	8	12.90	11	17.04
South Sudan	60	7.20	63	7.76
Sudan	21	9.80	16	7.74
Ethiopia	30	16.5	44	7.39
Somalia	22	3.40	38	6.51
Kenya	16	2.40	33	5.44
Malawi *	15	2.60	20	3.82
Cameroon	-	-	14	3.60
Zimbabwe	35	3.40	35	3.38
Mozambique*	16	2.90	10	3.15
CAR*	47	2.30	44	2.65
Burkina Faso	13	2.80	12	2.62
Chad*	12	1.80	13	2.10
Niger	-	-	8	2.04
Zambia *	25	1.70	14	1.95
Angola	58	1.60	58	1.58
Madagascar	37	1.60	25	1.54
Tanzania *	13	0.42	10	1.11
Mali	6	1.30	3	0.63
Mauritania	11	0.52	6	0.28

Note: * 2022 data obtained from the 2023 Global Report on Food Crises 2023

Source: IFRC (2023) and GNAFC-FSIN (2022;2023)

Please note this 2021 IPC findings were not endorsed by the Ethiopian government. Due to the armed conflict data used in the IPC analyses was obtained through computer assisted phone surveys and a limited number of face-to-face interviews with people arriving at receiving centres.

Trend in food prices

Higher food price inflation has been experienced in several SSA countries. This means less people can afford to adequately feed their families. For poor households facing other crises such as climate shocks, loss of employment and conflicts, rising food prices threatens their livelihood. Table 4 below shows annual food inflation rates as of December 2022. Huge dependence on food imports to cater for domestic supplies and currency depreciations, notably in Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Nigeria amplified inflationary pressure on food prices (WFP, 2023a). Generally, food prices are predicted to continue rising thereby contributing to food insecurity in the region.

TABLE 4: Food price inflation for selected SSA countries

Country	Annual food price inflation rates (%) in 2021	Annual food price inflation rates (%) as of Dec 2022
Angola	28	11.1
Burkina Faso	-	19.3
Cameroon	-	15.5
DRC	19	6.1
Madagascar	-	12.3
Mali	-	14.9
Mauritania	9.6	14.6
Nigeria	17.6	33.9
Zimbabwe	48.5	285
Tanzania	-	9.7
Zambia	-	11.6
Malawi	-	31.3
Mozambique	9.8	14.4
Chad	-	18.1
Cabo Verde	-	16.9

Source: GNAFC-FSIN (2023)

Major drivers of food insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa

Russia-Ukraine Conflict

Impact on agriculture

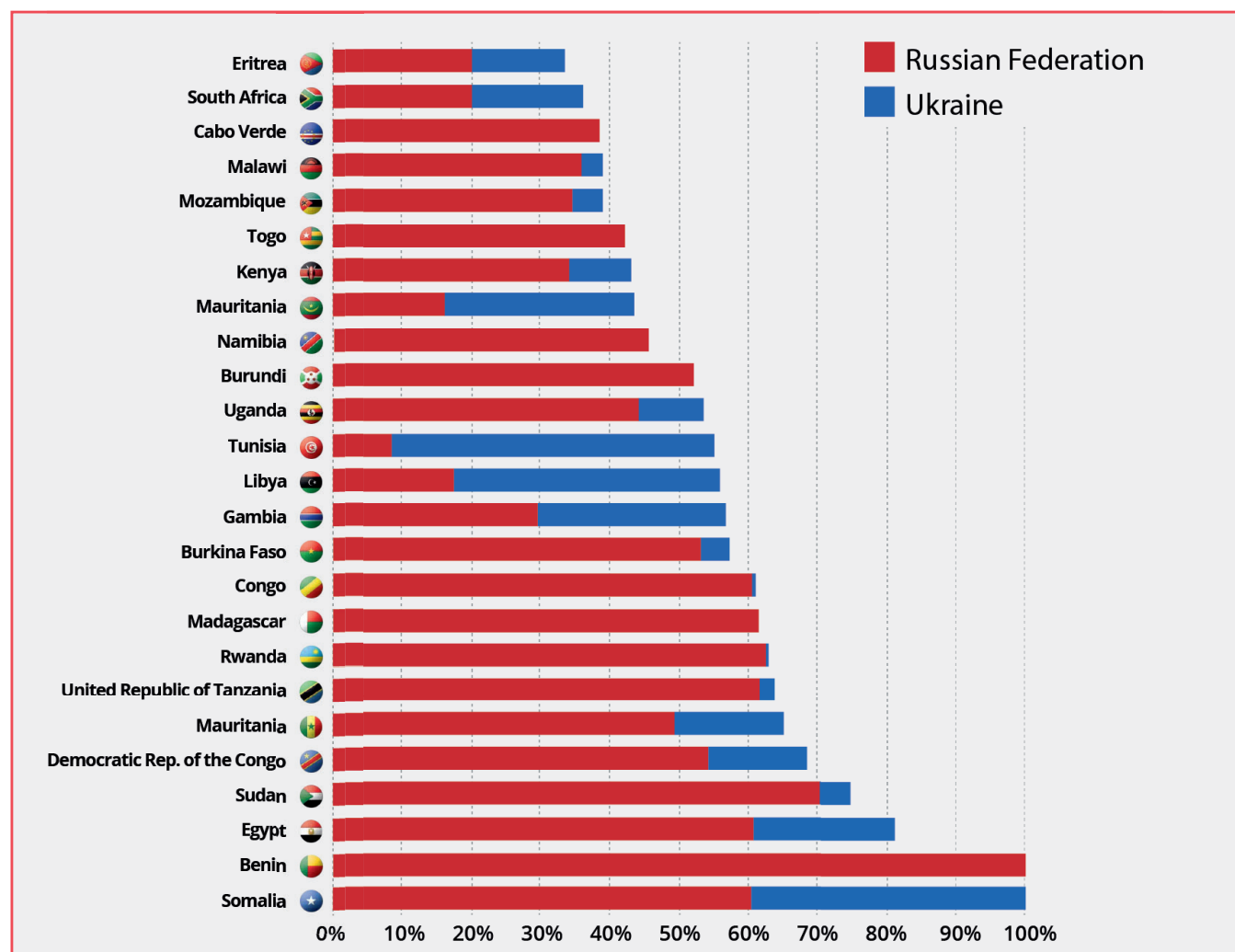
The Russia-Ukraine war caused a shock on energy, fertiliser and other agricultural inputs' in the global supply chains (UNCTAD, 2022). Russia is one of the largest producers of potash (17%) and nitrogen fertilisers (15%) in the world (Locavino et al, 2023). Disruption in the fertiliser supply chains due to the war led to a 199% increase in the global fertiliser prices, with prices more than doubling in some African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) in 2022 (Yohannes-Kassahun, 2023). This led to marked shortages of fertiliser with huge negative ramifications for agricultural production. There are serious concerns for the upcoming season, as the elevated prices could constrain farmers' access and use of inputs and ultimately agricultural production, especially for maize production which is a high user of fertilisers. Though the fertiliser exports to Africa improved at the end of 2022 because of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the destruction of the ammonium pipeline linking to the Black Sea port has aggravated the challenge again (Daily Sabah, 2023). Furthermore a reinforcing risk for agriculture is the rise in fuel prices and hence transportation which are key to agricultural production (WFP, 2022a). Increases in fuel prices have an inflationary effect on the prices of all other products in an economy.

Impact on wheat and maize availability and prices

About 63.4% of wheat consumed across the African continent is imported, and most of it come from Ukraine and Russia. African countries are almost completely dependent on wheat imported, including Somalia (100%), Sudan (75%), DRC (69%), Senegal (66%), and Tanzania (64%) (World Vision 2022).

Russia-Ukraine wheat dependency among SSA countries

FIG 3:



Source: UNCTAD (2022)

The African Development Bank report that African countries spend over \$75 billion to import over 100 million metric tons of cereals annually. They further said that the Russian Ukraine crisis 'triggered a shortage of about 30 million tons of grains on the continent, along with a sharp increase in cost' (Yohannes-Kassahun, 2023). This heavy dependency has led to huge food price increases, driving up food insecurity among the poor and vulnerable communities. For example, the rising wheat prices has resulted in higher flour and bread prices. In countries such as Zimbabwe, the price of bread is now beyond the reach of the ordinary person on the street. Flour and bread are basic food commodities for poor households in most SSA countries, hence, they feel the greater impact of this conflict. Consequently, their food security status is compromised. The recent destruction of key agricultural infrastructure in Ukraine will affect agricultural production in the country and reduce wheat available for export in 2023/24. The humanitarian emergency response in targeted food insecure countries has also been affected. It is reported that the World Food Program (WFP) imports most of its wheat for its food programmes through the Black Sea. Thus, the conflict significantly disrupts this pipeline with ships from Egypt, Turkey and Jordan unable to deliver wheat (WFP, 2022). The conflict has also resulted in low maize supply accompanied by rising maize prices. Maize is a staple food for some SSA countries. The World Bank indicates that the anticipated hampered production due to low fertiliser application rates (average of 22kg per hectare in Africa) will affect food availability (Yohannes-Kassahun, 2023). Coupled with unpredictable and inconsistent rainfall, households will turn to the food market. Thus, higher maize prices will lead to food insecurity especially among poor households. There will be need for more food assistance to address the glaring food gap.

Other Conflicts and Insecurities

Conflict and insecurity are some of the major drivers of food insecurity in SSA. In Central and Southern Africa, conflict and insecurity were the main drivers of acute food insecurity in three countries namely the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023). Conflict also worsened the situation for the refugee populations in the Congo with 32.27 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity. While reinforced by other drivers, conflict and insecurity disrupted agricultural activities and markets, damaged rural livelihoods and infrastructure, and disrupted services, causing large population displacements in western and north-western parts of the Central African Republic, eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the north-eastern province of Cabo Delgado in Mozambique (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023).

In East Africa, conflict and insecurity of both political and resource-based nature continued to disrupt livelihoods, markets and humanitarian access in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan (WFP and FAO, 2022). Fresh fighting in Sudan which started in April 2023 has resulted in 334,000 newly displaced people and 120,000 who fled into other countries (OHCHR, 2023). West Africa and Sahel are not spared as conflict and insecurity were reported to be the main drivers in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, the Niger and Nigeria. Enduring regional security crises in border areas, including the Lake Chad Basin and the Central Sahel, as well as conflict in northwest and southwest regions of Cameroon sparked large-scale internal and cross-border population displacements, and severely disrupted agricultural livelihoods, pastoralism, markets and trade. The delivery of humanitarian assistance was also hindered by poor security conditions particularly in the most affected areas worsening the food situation (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023).

It is worth noting that the Russia-Ukraine war cannot be completely divorced from the insecurity and civil unrest in SSA as its negative impact add social tensions in the region. The most vulnerable are countries that are already fragile and in conflict as further increases in food, oil prices and fertiliser prices exacerbates their humanitarian situation.

Climate Change

Climate change is undoubtedly one of the glaring drivers of food insecurity in SSA with countries such as Angola, Madagascar, Malawi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Niger, Chad, Mauritania and Nigeria being the most severely affected (GNAFC-FSIN, 2023). The weather extremes that affected the various countries were not uniform but took different forms such as drought, floods, tropical storms and cyclones, inconsistent rainfall patterns, and heat stress. The Horn of Africa is the worst affected as it has experienced its 5th consecutive drought, relegating 22 million people to acute food insecurity in the region (WFP, 2023b). Erratic and below average rains were mostly felt in countries such as Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Niger, Chad and Mauritania leading to significant shortfalls in staple crop production in 2022 (FAO-GIEWS, 2022; FEWS NET, 2023).

Tropical storms and cyclones were experienced in Madagascar and Mozambique contributing significantly to the acute food insecurity in these countries. In Mozambique, the March 2022 Cyclone Gombe, affected about 775,000 people, causing internal displacements in central provinces, and Cyclone Freddy had a similar effect in February 2023. Flooding was particularly experienced in South Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Chad with devastating effects such as destruction of homes, farms and shelters for displaced populations in some areas, market and livelihood disruption and increased risk of waterborne diseases, such as cholera and (FSNWG, March 2023; OCHA, 2023).

Epidemics

The outbreak of COVID-19 led to the implementation of lockdowns and social distancing regulations to curb the spread of infections. Consequently, the lockdowns impeded the movement of smallholder farmers, agricultural inputs, and food products thereby disrupting the food supply chains in SSA. COVID-19 drastically affected food accessibility, availability, utilization and stability (Guina et al., 2021). The pandemic affected food security, nutrition and livelihoods of millions of vulnerable people on the African continent, particularly women and girls. Job losses and reduced livelihoods led to declining household income for millions of households (Onyeaka et al., 2022). The impact was worse for SSA countries as 50% of the African population is dependent on agriculture as their primary source of livelihood and food (FAO et al., 2021). Thus, complete and partial lockdown disrupted key stages of agricultural production elevating the risks of food insecurity, hunger, and malnutrition (Morsy et al., 2021).

Though the removal of COVID-19 induced movement restrictions improved economic activity, and purchasing power at household level, a majority of poorer households are yet to fully recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic and some are unable to secure other livelihood opportunities (SADC 2022). Without sufficient access to resources to be resilient or recover from COVID, SSA continue to experience the socio-economic fallout from COVID-19. Other epidemics such as measles and cholera were also reported in areas such as Malawi, Mauritania, Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia worsening malnutrition in children (IFRC, 2023; UNICEF, 2023). In March 2022, Malawi experienced its largest cholera outbreak in 10 years, affecting all 29 districts in the country (OCHA, 2023a). The outbreak has resulted in more than 1400 deaths and has left 4.8 million people in need of assistance. The epidemic has been exacerbated by the occurrence of Cyclone Freddy in March 2023 which caused enormous damage to health and water, sanitation and hygiene facilities further weakening the health system and increasing the risk of malnutrition (OCHA, 2023a). Mozambique has also been battling a cholera outbreak since September 2022 with 30,898 cases and 137 deaths reported by May 2023. The outbreak grew exponentially after the country was also hit by Cyclone Freddy which disrupted health and nutrition services increasing the risk of diseases and death to children (OCHA, 2023b; UNICEF, 2023).

Economic Shocks/Poor Governance

Economic shocks are also playing a primary role towards worsening the food insecurity crisis in SSA. Countries such as Zimbabwe, Malawi, Djibouti, South Sudan, Sudan, Cabo Verde and Mauritania are facing severe economic shocks leading to acute food insecurity. In these countries, the severe deterioration in household purchasing power amid increasing macroeconomic difficulties, compounded by the effects of the war in Ukraine, are widening the food insecurity situation. The economic challenges affecting them include high levels of public debt, fiscal constraints, currency depreciation and slow economic growth (WFP, 2022). A rise in interest rates in several countries to tackle inflation has resulted in increased borrowing costs for governments, with potentially negative implications for public and private spending, further undermining income-earning opportunities. As of December 2022, annual food inflation in Zimbabwe was estimated at 285 percent. Reliance on food imports to satisfy domestic requirements as well as currency depreciations, notably in Zimbabwe and Malawi, amplified inflationary pressure on food prices.

Health and Wellbeing

Trend in malnutrition

Sub-Saharan Africa is facing disturbing levels of malnutrition which have been worsening since 2021 (Table 5). In Southern Africa, most countries had critical (IPC AMN Phase 4) levels of acute malnutrition in some areas with the exception of Madagascar. In East Africa, particularly in the Horn of Africa, there are very high levels of wasting among children under 5. The most affected countries are Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Somalia as they have been observed to witness a more dire nutrition situation. As mentioned earlier, the situation has been compounded by years of prolonged drought and conflict in the region, disrupting livelihoods including access to health services and compromised diets for children (UNICEF, 2022). In West Africa and the Sahel, the higher national levels of wasting among children under 5 were recorded in 2022 in countries such as Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania. This was due to factors such as high levels of acute food insecurity and high prevalence of diseases related to inadequate access to safe water and sanitation services, as well as inadequate food intake. Malnutrition is a major indicator of the humanitarian crisis in a country and signals the need of interventions that enhance the food and nutritional security of vulnerable groups such as women and children.

Impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict on health and well-being

The disruption in the wheat and fertilizer supply chain will further compromise the food security and dietary situation of most SSA countries. This will likely worsen the nutritional status of women and children. The rising food prices add to the conundrum facing the SSA region because it means poor households would not be able to afford a nutritious diet. Nutritional support is required for most affected sub-regions. The Russia-Ukraine war has also disrupted global medical supply chains due to increased transportation costs stemming from increases in fuel prices, delays in the delivery of medical supplies, and impact on extraction and trade in raw materials such as palladium, nickel and vanadium (Putka, 2022; OECD,

2022). Russia is one of the major suppliers of these raw materials. Sub-Saharan African countries would mostly likely feel the greatest impact of the disruption in medical supply chains because they import most of their medical requirements (IMF, 2021)

TABLE 5: Nutrition challenges in SSA (millions)

Country	Moderately wasted		Severely wasted		Acutely malnourished pregnant & lactating wome	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
Angola	0.11	0.08	0.04	0.04	-	-
Burkina Faso	0.63	0.52	0.15	0.18	0.13	0.16
Cameroon	0.11	0.14	0.02	0.64	-	-
CAR	0.21	0.21	0.07	0.86	0.10	0.14
Chad	1.90	1.40	0.40	0.35	0.35	0.28
DRC	1.20	1.89	0.53	0.89	0.55	2.20
Ethiopia	4.20	3.59	1.00	1.21	2.90	-
Kenya	0.65	0.66	0.14	0.22	0.10	0.12
Madagascar	0.50	0.39	0.11	0.09	-	-
Mali	1.20	1.11	0.30	0.37	0.04	0.01
Mauritania	-	0.10	-	0.03	-	0.06
Mozambique	0.07	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.02	-
Niger	1.60	1.67	0.05	0.49	0.65	0.06
Nigeria	1.74	4.31	0.61	1.62	0.15	-
Somalia	1.20	1.32	0.21	0.48	-	-
South Sudan	1.30	1.06	0.30	0.35	0.68	0.74
Sudan	2.60	2.20	0.60	0.56	0.90	0.91

Source: GNAFC-FSIN (2023)

Migration and Displacement

Trend in migration and displacement

About 16.5 million people were displaced in 2022 in SSA, representing 27% of the global total of internally displaced people (IDMC, 2023). The trend has been increasing since 2019. Forcible displacement is widespread largely due to armed conflicts, political violence and tropical cyclones resulting in internal displacements and refugee movements (OCHA, 2022). Countries experiencing this challenge the most are the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique, Central African Republic, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and Cameroon (See Table 6). According to UNHCR (2023) forcible displacements are anticipated to get worse in 2023 both in terms of numbers of displaced people and decline of their food security. The increase in forcibly displaced populations in the region have resulted in food ration reductions and cuts to other essential services in camps and settlements due to funding shortages. Internally displaced persons face a myriad of crises and need emergency humanitarian assistance to survive.

TABLE 6: Refugees and IDPs in selected SSA countries (millions)

Country	Refugees		IDPS	
	2021	2022	2021	2022
Angola	0.06	0.05	-	0.01
Burkina Faso	0.03	0.09	1.58	1.88
Cameroon	0.47	0.47	1.00	1.01
Central African Republic	0.01	0.01	0.70	0.51
Chad	0.56	0.59	0.41	0.38
DRC	0.50	0.52	5.40	5.70
Ethiopia	0.84	0.88	4.20	2.73
Kenya	0.54	0.57	-	-
Malawi	-	0.06	-	0.94
Mali	0.05	0.41	0.35	0.06
Mauritania	0.08	0.11	-	0.03
Mozambique	0.29	0.03	0.95	1.03
Niger	0.30	0.30	0.27	0.38
Nigeria	0.08	0.09	2.20	3.56
Somalia	0.03	0.04	2.90	2.97
South Sudan	0.34	0.31	2.02	2.23
Sudan	1.10	1.13	3.10	3.71
Tanzania	0.24	0.23	-	-
Zambia	0.80	0.09	-	-
Zimbabwe	0.02	0.02	0.04	-

Source: GNAFC-FSIN (2023)

Impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on migration and displacement

The internally displaced populations are some of the hardest hit by food insecurity in the most affected regions/countries. The Norwegian Refugee Council Chief is quoted as saying “The war in Ukraine also fuelled a global food security crisis that hit the internally displaced hardest,” (AfricanNews, 2023). Table 6 above shows that several SSA countries are receiving a huge number of refugees and asylum seekers including countries in armed conflicts and dire food insecurity crisis. This goes on to show the extent of the humanitarian situation in SSA. Refugees cannot be self-sufficient due to limited arable land and livelihood opportunities and hence would need support (GNAFC-FSIN, 2022/23).

Energy Crisis

Trend in civil prices and Impact of Russia-Ukraine conflict

Sub-Saharan Africa was already facing an increase in fuel prices before the Russia-Ukraine conflict. However, the region is most vulnerable to the impacts of the conflict given the strong dependence on imported crude oil and petroleum products (FAO, 2022). The Ukraine war stirred the price of crude oil rising to highest levels since 2014. In response to the global price movement, fuel increased by 10-26% in March 2022 in Southern African countries. By April 2022, throughout SSA, fuel price escalated by 17 to 75% with the sharpest increase felt in Kenya, Ethiopia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Nigeria (see table 7 below) (WFP, 2022). Though some countries have since recorded a slight decrease in fuel prices in 2023, the prices are still high compared those before the conflict. The rise in fuel has been associated with high inflation and food insecurity, and the poor and vulnerable populations are affected the most because the costs are passed onto them through increased food prices (IFRC, 2022).

TABLE 7: Trend in fuel prices across selected SSA countries (2022-2023)

Country	Gasoline price		Diesel price	
Country	2022	2023	2022	2023
Angola	0.37	0.399	0.32	0.180
Burkina Faso	1.15	1.415	1.04	1.124
Cameroon	1.05	1.216	0.97	1.2
DR Congo	1.17	1,256	1.38	1.252
Ethiopia	0.70	1.276	0.68	1.306
Kenya	1.29	1.316	1.13	1.217
Malawi	1.96	1.704	1.88	1.874
Mali	1.31	1.442	1.31	1.439
Mozambique	1.30	1.362	1.24	1.377
Nigeria	0.42	0.705	1.62	1.115
Sudan	1.27	0.877	1.21	1.012
Tanzania	1.28	1.202	1.34	1.114
Zambia	1.46	1.426	1.50	1.273
Zimbabwe	1.77	1.550	1.88	1.560

Source: Global Petrol Prices.com (2023)

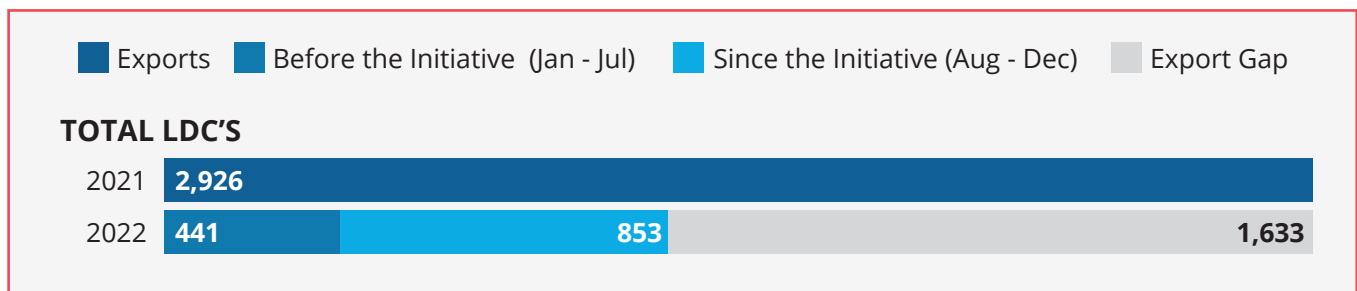
Response to the Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine Conflict on Food Security

Global response

The severe impact that the Russia-Ukraine war has had on the globe, felt more keenly by the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) including SSA, was mainly characterised by trade disruptions from the two conflicting countries as alluded earlier in the report. The war stopped shipment of goods through the Black Sea corridor, a trade gateway for products such as wheat, maize and fertilisers, among others. Hence, the United Nations brokered a deal between the warring parties in June 2022 known as Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) together with a memorandum of understanding between the UN and Russia (UNCTAD, 2023). The two agreements helped ease the food and price situation as they revived trade activities including those through Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea. However, while the agreements provided hope for vulnerable populations, glaring gaps remained as the supplies are still significantly low to remedy prices and food insecurity to pre-

conflict levels (see Fig 3) due to other confounding factors such as currency depreciation (WFP and FAO, 2022; UNCTAD, 2022). As noted in earlier sections, the BSGI is also under threat as parties might fail to renew the deal. Such an eventuality will be catastrophic to SSA especially as the corridor is also a gateway of humanitarian aid coming to Africa. Recently (June 2023) a seven country African Head of States delegation visited both Russia and Ukraine to present the African Peace Initiative which seeks a negotiated resolution to the conflict between the two countries. The peace proposal acknowledged the impact that the war has had on the African continent and sought for the opening up of the Black Sea trade so that grain and agricultural inputs can reach the world market (Government of South Africa, 2023). This demonstrates that the continuation of the BSGI is as important as scaling up emergency humanitarian assistance to LDCs.

FIG 4: Ukrainian wheat exports to LDCs before and since the BSGI export gap



Response in Sub-Saharan Africa

In light of the effects of the different crises including the Russia-Ukraine war, the SSA governments partnered with humanitarian agencies such as the UN, International NGOs, Civil Society Organisations and Red Cross-National societies to collectively counter the various food shocks through food emergency and livelihood recovery programmes (IFRC, 2022). Furthermore, different International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have stepped efforts to support affected countries address food insecurity and climate change effects. For example, the African Development Bank (AfDB) availed a US\$1.5 billion facility, the African Emergency Food Production Facility (AEFPF), to boost the local production of cereals and oil grains as the most effective and efficient way to build the resilience of Africa's food systems to respond to such circumstances and mitigate risks to supply in the short to medium term. Through this initiative 20 million smallholder farmers will receive certified seeds and have increased access to agricultural fertilizers that enables them to rapidly produce 38 million tons of food worth US\$12 billion (AfDB, 2022a). The AfDB and partners have also mobilized US\$1 billion to increase the production of wheat and other crops in Africa. The goal is to help 40 million farmers increase their harvests of heat-tolerant wheat varieties, rice, soybean and other crops to feed about 200 million people (Verkooijen, Tvinnereim & Adesina, 2022). These initiatives together with several others by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the International Fund for Agricultural development (see IMF, 2022) are meant to build the resilience of the African continent to any food security shocks.

Furthermore, SSA countries also took several measures to improve food access and availability through improved crop production, stabilization of local currency and market prices (IPC, 2022; GNAFC-FSIN, 2023). For example, in West Africa, measures such as targeted social safety net programmes, tax suspension or reduction on food items, release of existing food stocks, export restrictions and bans, and agricultural inputs subsidies were taken to increase food availability (WFP, 2023a). However, some of these measures, such as export restrictions, have not been as effective as expected as they disincentivised production and weakened regional trade integration. It has been observed that West Africa continue to face persistent high food prices and poor availability of food (WFP, 2023a). Price ceilings have also not achieved much as they led to further markets disruption as they were not accompanied by appropriate solutions to ease fiscal pressure. Furthermore, most SSA governments have also failed to honour their commitments to the accelerated agricultural growth and transformation and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (only 20% managed to achieve) (AfDB, 2023). This affects agricultural production and the potential to address the food insecurity challenges in their countries. Hence, levels of acute food insecurity remain alarmingly high in SSA and humanitarian response is needed to address the short-term food, health and WASH requirements of the affected populations.

Humanitarian and Funding Landscape

The unprecedented levels of attention on the crisis in Ukraine have negative financial and human implications on the global aid response in other parts of the world. Due to funding gaps, humanitarian agencies in SSA now face difficult decisions of scaling down operations. Even big agencies such as WFP have had to scale down their operations because of a reduction in funding (WFP, 2023). Also the cost of providing humanitarian aid in Africa has also enormously increased because of the different crises. For example, WFP monthly cost of food procurement increased by US\$23 million after the start of the Ukraine crisis (WFP, 2022). The same was also experienced by other agencies including IFRC. This means the value for money for humanitarian funds reduced greatly. With limited funding, there is most likely to be a worsening food security and nutrition situation in SSA, especially in countries with a prolonged emergency food insecurity situation.

The May 2023 IFRC Africa Hunger Crisis appeals shows that there is a huge humanitarian aid funding gap for most countries. Only CHF56.12 million of the CHF210 million funding requirement was received (see Fig 1) and Table 8 below shows the various funding that has been injected in the region for the IFRC humanitarian response. Various organisations have made significant efforts to mitigate the impacts of the various shocks being faced by SSA countries (see Table 8) but more is needed. The gaps means that humanitarian agencies in SSA such as IFRC are already operating with limited resources and hence scaled down operations as alluded earlier. Of the 15 countries targeted by IFRC in SSA, only 3 had above 50% of their funding targets reached and 8 of them had below 10% of their targets reached (see Fig 1). Many countries which fund these appeals scaled down on their funding commitments as they tried to deal with and recover from the effects of COVID-19 restrictions and the Ukraine war. Given the global financial challenges and continued conflict between Russia and Ukraine, no much improvement in the funding landscape is expected in the near future. This means humanitarian agencies should streamline their activities and focus on the critical interventions that not only provide immediate relieve but build resilience of affected communities.

TABLE 8: IFRC Multilateral and Bilateral funding landscape (as of May 2023)

Organisation	Amount Funded (in millions)	Organisation	Amount Funded (in millions)
USAID	8.62	Norwegian Red Cross	1.21
Belgian Red Cross	7.12	Canadian Red Cross	1.13
Netherlands Red Cross	5.68	Italian Red Cross	1.01
Kenya Government	5.19	German Red Cross	0.93
Finish Red Cross	4.27	Spanish Red Cross	0.63
American Red Cross	3.46	Icelandic Red Cross	0.58
British Red Cross	3.07	Japanese Government	0.52
Luxembourg Red Cross	3.02	French Red Cross	0.46
Swedish Red Cross	2.22	Canadian and Icelandic	0.40
Japanese Red Cross	1.85	Ethiopian Red Cross	0.35
Danish Red Cross	1.68	European Commission	0.29

Source: IFRC (2023)

IFRC Preparedness and Response Capacity

As the world's largest humanitarian network strategically positioned to alleviate human suffering across the SSA region, the Red Cross Movement's value addition amongst many others remains its independence and neutrality guided by the 2030 IFRC Global Strategy. IFRC Africa Cluster has immensely contributed towards community resilience and strengthening capacities of member National Societies (NSs) during multiple crisis currently reported in this region. Adaptation to the new norm and way of working including scaling up IFRC programmes for greater impact remains a key priority in order to effectively respond to ever growing humanitarian needs. The IFRC remains one of the strongest humanitarian players to provide services, information and hope during crisis periods, as more people are forced to move away from their homes.

IFRC commits to deliver 50% of humanitarian assistance through the use of Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) by 2025, improving accountability structures as well as effectiveness and efficiency. CVA increases people's dignity and empowers them to address needs such as food, household items and rent, education and healthcare costs. The approach strengthens localization of humanitarian assistance but requires local actors to build their capacity and to listen to those affected by crises and disasters to ensure that our work is driven by their needs.

However, the growing humanitarian needs outweigh resources of most National Societies to effectively respond. Additional funding is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods, mitigate further displacement, and avoid greater needs in the future. Whilst IFRC is addressing humanitarian and NS governance priorities, there is need to strengthening advocacy approaches that addresses structural causes of instability in affected areas as a result of the Russia-Ukraine war, maintaining a specific regional focus, cross-border fragility and dynamics. IFRC in the SSA region in collaboration with member NSs holds a strong investment case through its vast volunteer network through:

- A strong volunteer network to save lives and protect livelihoods through hazard monitoring and early warning systems.
- Strong community structures for rapid response and recovery from disasters, including in hard-to-reach areas.
- Provision of subsidised clinical treatment and first aid services.
- Community based expertise that enables healthy and safe living.
- Community mobilisation, disaster awareness and education.
- Strong disease prevention programmes including water and sanitation.
- Representation of vulnerable communities and provision of psychosocial support.
- Strategic Partnerships.
- Linking emergency relief and development.
- Resilience, shelter and settlement programmes.
- Early actions to manage risks rather than crises.
- Community infrastructure and access to social services.
- Integrated community-based approach and community ownership.
- Coordination across initiatives and sectors.
- Strong infrastructure and vehicle base.
- Governance and oversight structures from grassroots to national level.
- Strong supply chain and distribution of emergency relief and recovery goods and services.
- Auxiliary to the host governments and access.
- 5 C's (Compassionate, collaborative, creative, credible, committed).
- Strong mechanisms for social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
- Social mobilisation and advocacy whilst promoting peace, tolerance and diversity.
- A trusted partner to tackle sensitive issues

Recommendations

The recommendations below provide priority issues at country level that can inform scale up of ongoing Acute Hunger Response, Anticipatory Thinking, Scenarios, Contingency Planning, and Humanitarian Diplomacy interventions.

Short term recommendations

- Increased resource allocation through the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to scale up pre-approved funding requests submitted by the National Societies under Anticipatory Action Plans to mitigate worsening of humanitarian crisis.
- Whilst targeted cash and voucher assistance (CVA) to vulnerable households are the first-best response, robust approaches are required to ensure that the households which benefited from the cash transfers are immediately absorbed into government supported programmes towards sustainability.
- Support NSs to design multi-purpose cash transfer programmes that are explicitly linked to livelihood and community resilience in order to integrate transformational approaches and reduce recurrent of food insecurity in the near future.
- Strengthen financial management and forecasting capacities of NSs to efficiently implement approved humanitarian programmes amidst foreign exchange rate pressures stemming from higher global interest rates and increased uncertainty caused by the Russia-Ukraine war.
- Establish formal agreements (MOUs) with already existing partners to improve coordination and collaborative efforts.
- Support NSs to ensure volunteers are fully informed, motivated, equipped and protected during their work under the local action and volunteering flagship especially in conflict zones.
- IFRC to strengthen partnerships with Africa Development Bank (ADB) and other IFIs to leverage on existing financial facilities to make it possible for vulnerable small- scale farmers to access fertilizers and seed varieties that enhance their agricultural production.

Medium-term recommendations

- Through Humanitarian Diplomacy, persuade host governments towards drafting fiscal policies that protect vulnerable households from rising food and energy prices, such as targeted tax reductions or price subsidies especially for countries with weak social safety nets.
- Advocate to host governments towards ensuring all citizens can access and afford safe and nutritious food, as guided by the African Human Rights law, which states that everyone has the right to sufficient and adequate food.
- Advocate for increased funding allocation to scale up Acute Hunger Response, in particular amongst priority countries affected by climate change and non-delivery of fertiliser previously imported from Russia or Ukraine. Over reliance on organic fertilizers and local smallholder farming may not solve the acute food crisis at national scale in the short term.
- Focus on humanitarian interventions that target the most vulnerable populations such child protection programmes to mitigate child labour, severe malnutrition, lack of access to clean water and WASH facilities, child marriage and lower school attendance. Many children are also forced to reside in unsafe refugee and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in countries across the African continent where they are at risk of trafficking, recruitment into armed groups and sexual violence.
- Strengthen the capacities of National Societies' preparedness through and updated and robust contingency planning, towards achieving timely and effective humanitarian aid.

Long term recommendations

- In the longer term, the global climate crisis has underscored the need to increase disaster preparedness and climate adaptation collectively. This must include addressing structural developmental needs of vulnerable populations and prioritizing inclusive access to natural resources.
- Strengthen anticipatory thinking and approaches, using historical knowledge and past experiences to enable more people to receive needed assistance ahead of predictable shocks and limit the disasters.
- Expand the scope of the IFRC Anticipation Hub to facilitate knowledge exchange, learning, guidance, and advocacy around anticipatory action beyond the initial focus on climate change, and include a wider range of emerging humanitarian disasters such as the Covid-19 pandemic, global recessions and the Russia-Ukraine war.
- Conduct community sensitization and dissemination programmes with early warning information.
- Preposition supplies and promote flexible unrestricted funding mechanisms with donors.
- Strengthen the capacities of NSs to develop and disseminate information on sustainable and climate friendly food production methods to smallholder farmers at community level, to increase domestic agri-food markets.
- Strengthen the capacity of NSs to advise their governments to adopt effective, climate-smart approaches and protective laws and policies for disaster risk management, including public health emergencies.
- Strengthen social protection programmes to improve long term access nutritional diets through reduction of poverty and inequality”

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