

## Global Hunger Declines for Third Consecutive Year, but Progress Remains Fragile: UN Report

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The 2026 edition of The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) also examines the cost of healthy diets



Global hunger declined for a third consecutive year in 2025, demonstrating that progress is possible. However, the improvements remain fragile, unevenly distributed and insufficient to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, according to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2026 (SOFI 2026) report, released on Tuesday by five United Nations specialized agencies.

The report estimates that 7.8 percent of the global population faced hunger in 2025, down from 8.1 per cent in 2024 and 8.6 per cent in 2022, confirming a sustained, albeit slow, improvement. This means that around 645 million people were affected by hunger in 2025, representing a reduction of nearly 14 million compared to 2024 and 43 million compared to 2022.

Despite global progress, recovery remains uneven across regions. Asia, together with Latin America and the Caribbean, has recorded steady improvements in recent years. In contrast, Africa is now home to approximately 309 million hungry people, compared with 292 million in Asia. Although Africa's previously rising trend is beginning to stabilize, with the share of its population facing hunger decreasing from 20.3 per cent in 2024 to 20.0 per cent in 2025, the continent now has the highest number of hungry people in absolute terms amid a rapidly growing population.

Broader measures of food access tell a similar story. In 2025, an estimated 25.8 per cent of the global population (around 2.1 billion people) experienced moderate or severe food insecurity, meaning they were at times forced to compromise on the quality or quantity of the food they ate. This is down from 27.1 per cent in 2024 and 28.7 per cent in 2020 – equivalent to nearly 86 million fewer people than in 2024 and 135 million fewer than in 2020, though still above pre-pandemic levels.

Regional disparities remain stark. More than half of Africa's population (56.6 per cent) faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2025, compared to 20.3 percent in Asia, 22.9 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 8.7 per cent in North America and Europe. Food insecurity also continues to be more prevalent in rural areas than in peri-urban and urban areas, while women remain disproportionately affected, although the gender gap narrowed slightly in 2025.

The annual report also offers updated hunger projections for the next five years in light of the conflict in the Middle East. Depending on the length of the impact of the crisis on food inflation – which is driven by higher energy and fertilizer prices – approximately 510 to 520 million people may still be facing hunger in 2030 (compared to the lower projection of 503 million in the pre-conflict scenario), with the global number of undernourished people expected to decrease by 20 percent. However, other potential disruptors, including the effects of weather extremes such as El Niño in 2026 and 2027, are not considered in these projections and could further compound these effects.

The report's joint authors - the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN World Food Programme (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO) – warn that the 2026 Middle East conflict, along with weather extremes and the reductions in official development assistance and humanitarian funding, are threatening to undermine the progress made to end global hunger.