



The Rise of Global Hunger

From Scarcity to Solutions

The world is facing a hunger crisis of unprecedented scale. Every day, up to **735 million people**—nearly one in 11 worldwide—go without enough food.

What Causes Hunger?

The world produces enough food to feed everyone on the planet. The issue isn't supply—the real challenges are **access and equity**. Hunger is fueled by:

- **Conflict** is the primary driver of hunger in the world. 65% of the world's hungriest people live in conflict zones, and 8 out of 10 of the world's food crises are driven by war and persecution. Conflict forces families from their homes, destroys livelihoods and restricts humanitarian aid. Today, 117 million people face crisis-level hunger due to conflict alone.
- **Economic shocks** are caused by conflict and climate disruptions, which often trigger soaring food prices and create a vicious cycle of instability. In more than half of the countries experiencing conflict or natural disasters, economic shocks made hunger worse, affecting 96 million people.
- **Climate change** causes extreme weather events—like droughts, floods and disasters—that destroy crops and livelihoods. In 2023, climate disasters displaced over 50 million people, while 80% of the world's hungriest people live in disaster-prone regions. Over the past three decades, extreme weather events have doubled, pushing more families into hunger.



Global Hunger in Numbers

Hunger Around the World

- **Current levels (2023):** Over 9% of the world's population was affected by hunger, a rate that has remained steady since 2019.
- **Future projections (2030):** More than 582 million people are expected to be chronically undernourished, with over half living in Africa.
- **Key drivers:** Conflict, climate change and economic shocks are the leading causes, with wars in regions such as Sudan, Gaza and Haiti worsening food insecurity.
- **Child hunger:** 45 million children under age 5 suffer from wasting, the most life-threatening form of malnutrition.

Hunger in the United States

- **Household food insecurity (2023):** 13.5% of U.S. households—about 18 million—experienced food insecurity, a significant increase from 2022.
- **Child hunger (2022):** 13.8 million children lived in food-insecure households, with 1 in 8 households reporting that they did not have enough to eat.
- **Racial disparities:** Black (23.3%) and Latinx (21.9%) households experienced food insecurity at more than twice the rate of White non-Latinx households (9.9%).
- **Regional trends:** Households in the Southern U.S. reported the highest food insecurity rates compared to other regions.

What Can We Do?

The world produces enough food for everyone. Hunger persists because of inequity, access and injustice—but solutions exist.

Local communities can make a difference by:

- Supporting food banks, pantries and community meal programs. *(Did you know? By joining a [CROP Hunger Walk](#), 25% of your dollars raised will go towards local hunger-fighting efforts.)*
- **Advocating** for stronger safety nets and just policies.
- Partnering with global [organizations like CWS](#) to address root causes of hunger.
- **Raising awareness** in congregations, schools and civic groups.



CWS walks alongside communities all around the globe to combat food insecurity. Learn more about this life-saving work and get involved at cwsglobal.org. You can show your commitment to being a safety net for neighbors near and far who are facing hunger by signing [CWS's 2025 Ecumenical Statement on Hunger Justice](#) — and by sharing it with others in your community who care about ending hunger.