

155 million people faced severe hunger last year: UN's Global Report on Food Crises

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At least 155 million people faced acute hunger in 2020, including 133,000 who needed urgent food to prevent widespread death from starvation — and the outlook for 2021 is equally grim or worse, a report by 16 organizations said Wednesday.

The report, which focuses on 55 countries that account for 97% of humanitarian assistance, said the magnitude and severity of food crises last year worsened as a result of protracted conflicts, the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, and weather extremes that exacerbated pre-existing fragilities.

Key Highlights

- The 155 million people faced crisis, “emergency” or catastrophe/famine” levels of food needs, an increase of around 20 million people from 2019, it said.
- According to the report, two-thirds of the people in those crisis levels were in 10 countries — Congo, Yemen, Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan, northern Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Haiti. The 133,000 facing starvation, death and destitution were in Burkina Faso, South Sudan and Yemen.
- The number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance is on the rise, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres wrote

in the forward to the 307-page Global Report on Food Crises.

- There is no place for famine and starvation in the 21st century, he said. We need to tackle hunger and conflict together to solve either.
- According to the report, 40.5 million people in 17 countries faced acute food insecurity last year because of economic shocks including the fallout from the pandemic.

SOURCE: *Business Standard*