



# Hanyang Model United Nations VIII

## Chair Report

**Committee: World Food Programme (WFP)**

**Chairs: Kim Dayoung, Yoon June**

**Agenda: Developing strategies to increase food security and address the urgent needs of populations affected by conflict in the Middle East.**

### 1. Committee Introduction



The World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian aid agency, established in 1961 under a UN General Assembly resolution as a joint UN/FAO effort. It has two main goals: one is to save the lives of people in areas suffering from conflicts or disasters by providing food aid. The other is to strengthen self-sufficiency and resilience in vulnerable areas through activities such as increasing the nutrients of women and children and supporting school meals that bring more students to school. After starting its first mission in 1963, due to its continuous efforts to solve hunger, improve peace conditions in conflict zones, and promote multilateral cooperation, WFP was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020 (*Who we are* | WFP).

The World Food Programme is governed by the WFP Executive Board of 36 countries. The WFP Executive Board facilitates intergovernmental support and supervises

WFP activities. The Executive Director, who represents the organization, is appointed jointly by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Cindy McCain has been the Executive Director since April 2023 (*Governance and leadership* | WFP).

As WFP lacks financial resources, it relies on the voluntary funding of its donors at all levels, including governments, institutions (other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations), companies, and individuals. In this sense, it is committed to being responsible and transparent in every activity, carrying out its internal audits and periodic independent evaluations (*Funding and donors* | WFP).

WFP's primary goal is to solve hunger around the world, and it deals with the issue caused by cause. First, in areas of conflict, WFP provides assistance with food and nutrition to people affected by conflict. The activity not only saves lives but also supports peace efforts by enhancing access to natural resources in conflict, fostering social connections, reporting the tragedy of conflict zones, and strengthening trust between people and governments regarding the responsibility and service delivery of the state.

Second, the WFP warns local communities in advance about extreme weather events by its established early-warning system to protect people from abnormal weather caused by global warming. It also promotes climate-smart energy solutions by enhancing access to modern cooking appliances and sustainable energy equipment that could help increase the productivity of smallholder farmers.

Third, the WFP coordinates humanitarian logistics through the Logistics Cluster, making the efficient response to the disaster possible by adjusting operations and managing information in the event of large-scale disasters. It is the head of the Emergency Communication Cluster, which builds and provides communication networks in emergencies. Programs such as Automatic Disaster Analysis & Mapping (ADAM) track earthquakes and cyclones all year round, helping governments to predict the immediate impact and prepare for natural disasters.

Fourth, WFP's Food Assistance for Assets Program provides local residents with cash or food when they participate in public projects such as land restoration. The program helps local communities secure public infrastructure, improving inequalities in vulnerable areas and activating local economies. Farm to Market Alliance connects smallholder farmers to the

market and supports them in diversifying their products, improving their business potential.

Lastly, WFP teaches smallholder farmers improved post-harvest handling methods to protect their products from insects, rodents, mould, and moisture, reducing food loss after harvest (*Ending Hunger* | WFP).

Besides the activities to solve hunger, WFP also focuses on school meal programmes that support governments to ensure that all school-aged children have access to school meals. Through its work, WFP helped influence the quality of life, access to education, and nutritional status of 106 million schoolchildren in 77 countries. WFP's work makes a virtuous cycle that enables nations to strengthen their human capital through better nutrition and education, leading each nation to a better future. Often, these programmes align with local smallholder farmers, leading to the establishment of better-designed, sustainable food systems that are better in gender equality and minimise the impact on the environment through reduced greenhouse gas emission in the supply chain (*Ending Hunger* | WFP).

## **2. Agenda Background**

Hunger, famine, and malnutrition have been crucial problems of individual, domestic, and national survival throughout history. As WFP noted, “even in the world where enough food is produced to feed everyone on this planet,” those are still urgent issues, especially in developing regions such as Southern Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. It is because those regions have lower economic capacity, vulnerable infrastructures related to the pathway from food production to distribution, and are easily exposed to natural (climate, earthquakes) or man-made (wars, economic crisis) disasters. This agenda: developing strategies to increase food security and address the urgent needs of populations affected by conflict in the Middle East has been set, hoping to mitigate a current gap of accomplishing food security specifically in the Middle East.

Because of its direct impact on survival, food materialized as a part of security discourse in the early 1970s, at the time of the world food crisis. Since then, collective attempts to ensure food security have been conducted by multiple international institutions such as the World Food Program (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the

World Health Organization (WHO).

Through continuous adjustments over time, the widespread definition of food security is now known as “a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient,

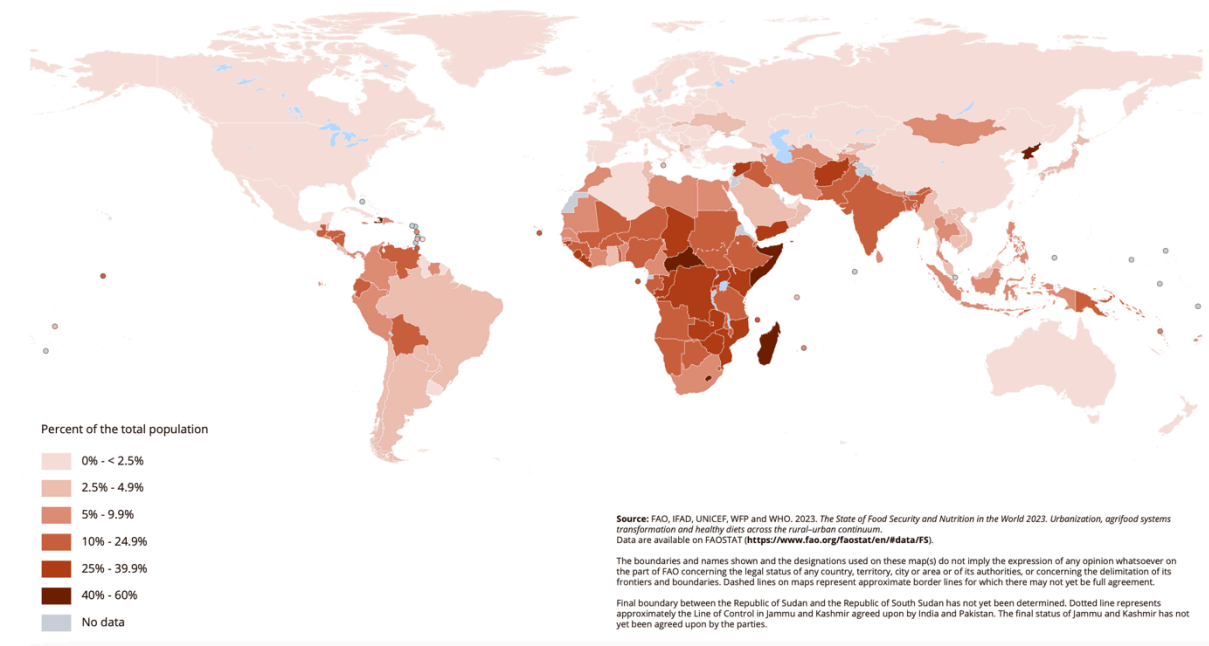


Figure 1. FAO, FAO Hunger Map, 2023.

safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO), which was stated in *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2001*.

Food security is a highly contextual notion, as its definition reflects the fact that it consists of several dimensions characterized by different actor levels, indicators, and time scales.

Generally, there are four dimensions:

- Availability** (national level): securing sufficient food produced locally or imported from abroad while relieving price fluctuation
- Accessibility** (household level): getting available food by transportation infrastructure and having enough money to purchase
- Utilization** (individual level): having safe and clean food chosen by individual preference, being physically healthy to consume and digest food
- Stability** (all the levels): ensuring the ability to withstand shocks to the food chain

system, which are caused by natural or artificial disasters

Currently, the world is moving towards sustainable development, and the latest update is on **sustainability**. It has a long-term time scale targeting future generations and revolves around the rising problems of ecology, biodiversity, and climate change at a supra-national/regional level (Peng and Berry). With this update, achieving food security is aligned with SDG 2: Zero Hunger, which aims to “create a world free of hunger by 2030” (United Nations). All these pillars must be considered, but not separately since they are highly interconnected when it comes to establishing full-scale food security.

On the other hand, food insecurity occurs if there is a problem with any one of those dimensions. Therefore, the definition of food insecurity could be depicted, as the Expert Panel noted, “whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain” (qtd. in Peng and Berry). Based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), the pillages of food insecurity can be divided into 2 types: acute and chronic food insecurity. The former refers to food security at a specific point in time, regardless of causes and duration. On the other hand, the latter is when food security persists over time, generally due to structural factors (Peng and Berry).

While there have been multiple causes of food insecurity over time, nowadays, the major factors are conflict, weather extremes, and economic shocks (GNAFC and FSIN). When it comes to conflict, it has been proven that the region with higher exposures to armed conflicts is more likely to be affected by food insecurity, as FAO notes that “of the nearly 700 million hungry people in the world, about 60 percent live in countries affected by conflict.” In addition, the impacts on food security are more likely to happen since armed conflicts have markedly increased in recent years, which have been relatively low before (fig. 3.). The Security Council Report also acknowledged it, saying, “Recent years have seen a resurgence in global food insecurity, primarily driven by conflict” in its May 2023 Monthly Report. Then, it seems to be necessary for international society to clarify how and why armed conflicts deepen food insecurity and to arrange multi-dimensional solutions (SCR).

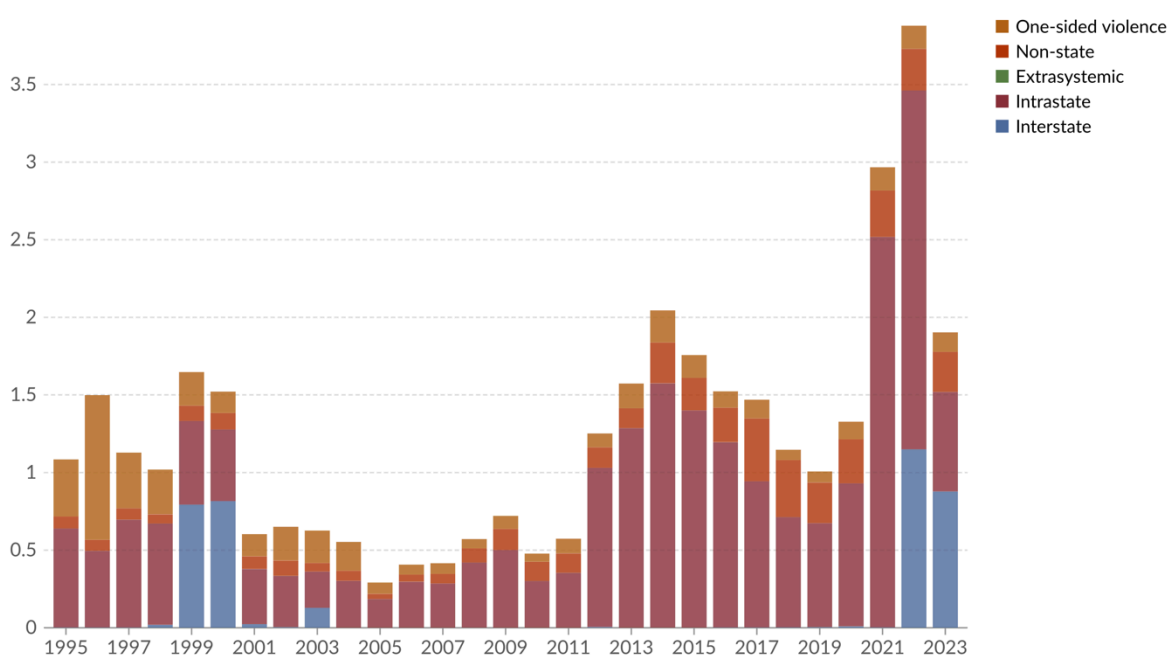
Modern characteristics of conflicts drove the very relationship between food security and conflict. Before and during the Cold War, most conflicts had a form of war, which caused 1,000 or more deaths for at least 12 months period. However, the end of the Cold War

declined wars but made a transition into increasing armed conflicts with resurfaced ethnic and religious tensions and poverty. When it comes to the scale, they are relatively smaller but tend to be more violent as most of the casualties are civilians. Generally, they are held in developing countries in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, and interstate (internal) conflicts are more frequent than international ones (Teodosijevic).

## Death rate in armed conflicts, World



Deaths of combatants and civilians due to fighting, per 100,000 people. Included are interstate<sup>1</sup>, intrastate<sup>2</sup>, extrasystemic<sup>3</sup>, non-state<sup>4</sup> conflicts, and one-sided violence<sup>5</sup> that were ongoing that year.



Data source: Uppsala Conflict Data Program (2024)

OurWorldinData.org/war-and-peace | CC BY

1. **Interstate conflict (UCDP and PRIO):** A conflict between states that causes at least 25 deaths during a year. This includes combatant and civilian deaths due to fighting, but excludes deaths due to disease and starvation resulting from the conflict.

2. **Intrastate conflict (UCDP and PRIO):** A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group inside the state's territory that causes at least 25 deaths during a year. This includes combatant and civilian deaths due to fighting, but excludes deaths due to disease and starvation resulting from the conflict. If a foreign state is involved, it is called "internationalized", and "non-internationalized" otherwise.

3. **Extrasystemic conflict (UCDP and PRIO):** A conflict between a state and a non-state armed group outside the state's territory that causes at least 25 deaths during a year. This includes combatant and civilian deaths due to fighting, but excludes deaths due to disease and starvation resulting from the conflict.

4. **Non-state conflict (UCDP):** A conflict between non-state armed groups, such as rebel groups, criminal organizations, or ethnic groups, that causes at least 25 deaths during a year. This includes combatant and civilian deaths due to fighting, but excludes deaths due to disease and starvation resulting from the conflict.

5. **One-sided violence (UCDP):** The use of armed force by a state or non-state armed group against civilians that causes at least 25 civilian deaths during a year. It excludes deaths due to disease and starvation resulting from the violence.

Figure 2. Our World in Data, Death Rate in Armed Conflicts, World, 2023.

Those armed conflicts have a serious impact on food security all over the pathway from production to consumption. For example, the devastation of critical infrastructures undermines access to available food, either domestically produced or imported, while

scorched farmlands and livestock harm existing food stocks and cease food production. Regarding these immediate consequences, food insecurity is deliberately used as a weapon in armed conflicts. Generally, adversaries intentionally harm opponents' food security "by seizing or destroying food stocks, livestock, or other assets in rural areas and by cutting off or destroying sources of food or livelihood. Land and water resources are mined or contaminated" (Teodosijevic). Combined, those threats of acute food insecurity would result in chronic food insecurity that persists even after the conflict, evolving into systematic problems. With the lower resilience of developing countries, devastated farmland and livestock would take a long time to recover, which means a continuous gap in the food production system. Displaced populations would strike the domestic labor market, with weakened political institutions that lost their control over the agricultural system. This is why all the dimensions of food security must be considered altogether, and peacebuilding is essential for ensuring food security.

Recently, the Middle East rose as a hub of armed conflicts, represented by several countries of ongoing interstate/intrastate conflicts while inducing hunger: Palestine (GAZA Strip), Sudan, Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, and Afghanistan (FAO and WFP). While the most acute driving force of food insecurity in those countries is armed conflict, they also have other common factors: economic risk and natural hazard risks. In fact, all those countries are developing countries confronted with a growing income gap with the rest of the world while having higher dependence on crop imports due to arid territory (Wilson and Bruins). Therefore, when addressing food insecurity in the Middle East, collective consideration would be necessary.

### **3. Previous Actions**

#### **a. Committee on World Food Security (CFS)**

The Committee on World Food Security was launched in 1974 as an intergovernmental policy body to ensure food security and nutrition for all. With multiple stakeholders, including advisors from The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP), CFS provides policy recommendations and guidance for contemporary food security and nutrition topics through its annual



plenary session.

Currently, it has adopted tactical plans for 4 years, named “Multi-year Programme Work (MYPoW) for the period 2024-2027.” While the overall objective is “eliminating hunger and malnutrition through improved policy convergence/coherence at global level, which leads to strengthened actions at national and regional level,” it aims to focus on its roles of establishing platforms for active global discussion and coordination, guiding policy development and promoting voluntary participants on food security and nutrition in the MYPoW 2024-2027. It also tries to align its strategies with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development since working on food security is directly related to achieving SDG 2: Zero Hunger. In this four-year MyPoW, it thematically organized its strategy directions and following activities into 4 areas:

- i. Enhancing equity and inclusiveness in agriculture and food systems
- ii. Fostering the resilience of agriculture and food systems to shocks and stresses
- iii. Promoting agriculture and food systems actions that protect the planet
- iv. Strengthening means of implementation and collaborative action for food security and nutrition

Its policy developments are established through its strategic functions: platform, policy, and uptake, as planned in Figure 3. The platform has a fundamental function to encourage and coordinate collective actions, leveraging its convening authority to promote voluntary participation in food security. The policy is an actual and practical function of MyPoW, which provides policy guidance. It generally focuses on systematic solutions for food security. Lastly, uptake is a reviewing stage of applied CFS products, which would support building and adjusting future policies as well as strengthening the level of voluntary actions.

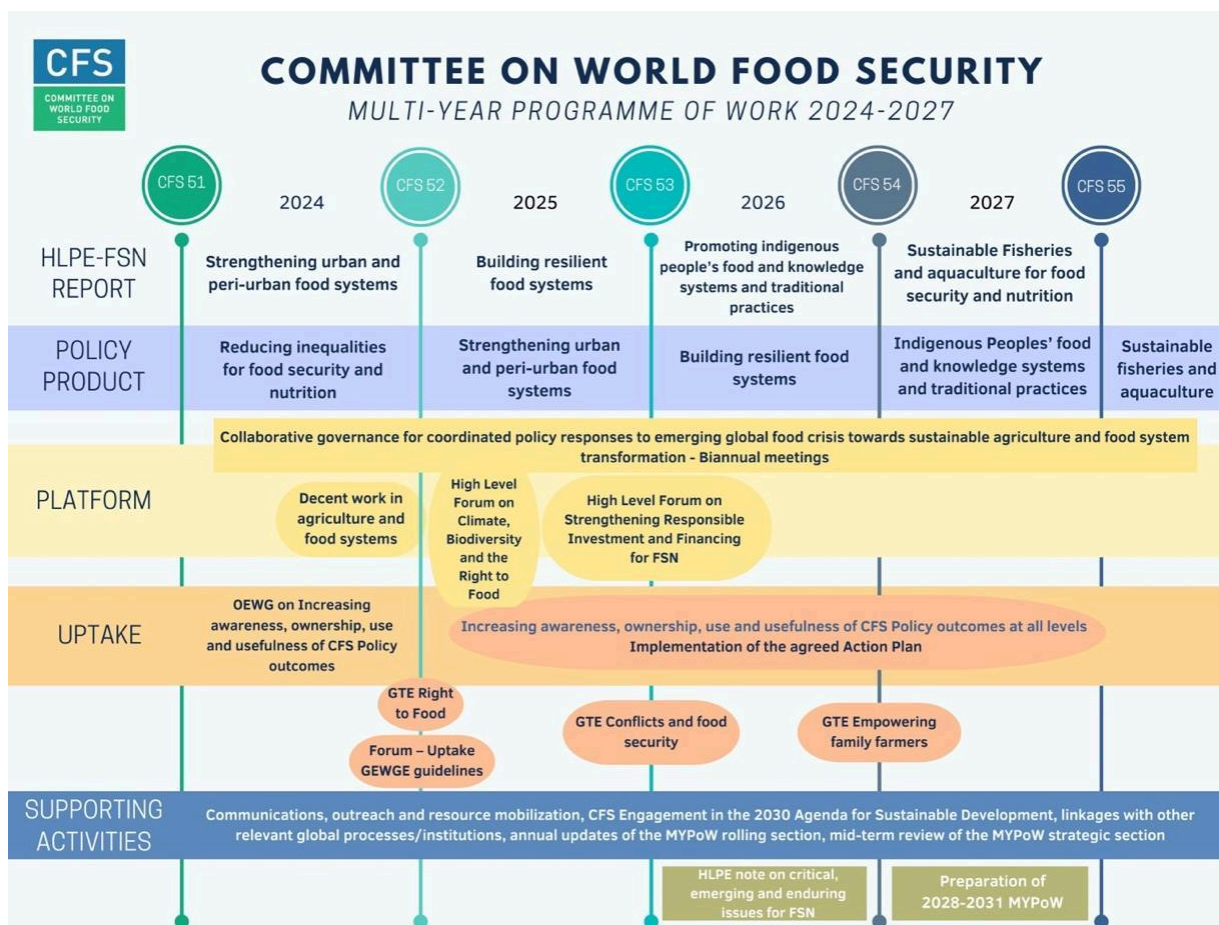


Figure 3. Multi-year Programme of Work 2024-2027, Committee on World Food Security, 2023.

## b. World Food Programme (WFP)

WFP has contributed to improving peace and ending hunger so far. Its activities could be indicated by four main strategies, according to a joint research partnership between WFP and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute:

- i. Enhancing access and supply to contested natural resources such as water and land
- ii. Bolstering social cohesion and resolving grievances within and between communities
- iii. Increasing opportunity and inclusion, including for youth
- iv. Increasing trust between citizens and states by strengthening state accountability

and service delivery.

As the current driving forces of food insecurity are socio-economic, such as persistent poverty, violent conflicts, and natural disasters due to climate change, the WFP has emerged as a crucial entity for conducting social protection. According to its annual review in 2023, WFP supported nationally established social protection systems and programmes in 98 countries across all the regions where it operates. Doing so, WFP could help the development of national systems to manage risks and shocks, preventing the transition into a state of chronic food insecurity. Those protection programmes include both financial and technological assistance, followed by planning and monitoring (Fig. 4).

**c. Security Council of United Nations**

Security Council announced its resolution 2417 on 24 May 2018, discussing conflict-induced food insecurity and responding to the needs of people in high-conflict regions. In the resolution, the Security Council noted that the increasing armed conflicts in specific regions cause devastating humanitarian consequences, in this case, food insecurity. It not only highlighted acute food insecurity but also highlighted the long-term consequences of a collapsed food supply system, which would result in the vicious cycle between armed conflict and food insecurity. In that sense, it urges their member states and all parties to an armed conflict to conduct their obligations under the humanitarian laws, especially under the Geneva Conventions of 1949.

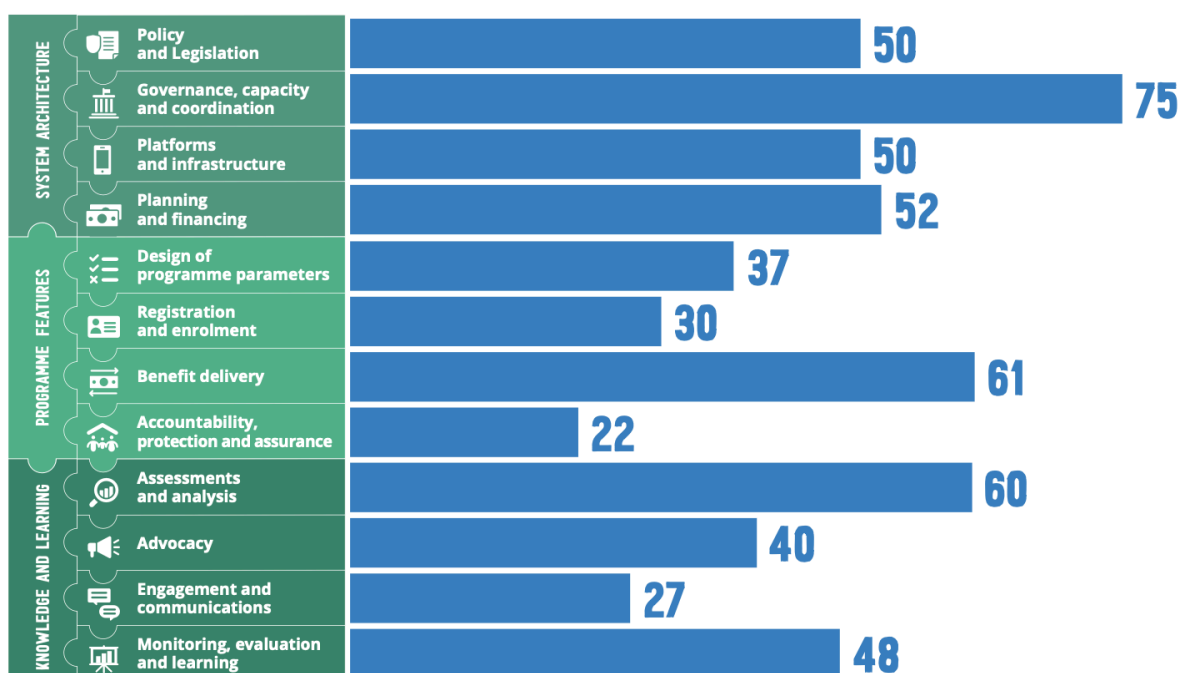


Figure 4. The number of countries where WFP contributed to each of the 12 building blocks through technical advice to national actors and/or delivery on their behalf, *WFP and Social Protection Annual Review, 2023*.

Immediate and continuous actions would be ensured by “taking constant care to spare civilian objects, including objects necessary for food production and distribution such as farms, markets, water systems, mills, food processing and storage sites, and hubs and means for food transportation, and refraining from attacking, destroying, removing or rendering useless objects that are indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, such as foodstuffs, crops, livestock, agricultural assets, drinking water installations and supplies, and irrigation works, and respecting and protecting humanitarian personnel and consignments used for humanitarian relief operations.” Additionally, the resolution called on the Secretary-General to continuously report whenever acute food insecurity is induced by armed conflicts to keep track of current flows while preventing the gap in data (Security Council in United Nations).

#### **4. Possible Actions and Solutions**

##### **a. Establishing resolutions or treaties**

By adopting resolutions or treaties, member states and the states where WFP operates could fully examine the current state of food insecurity in the world by standardizing key terms and revising previous works on the issue. Also, establishing resolutions or treaties ensures legitimate agreements that all sponsors will be seriously concerned about the issue and take accountability for following the actions specified in the documents. Enough discussion and negotiation between countries should be conducted for the resolutions or treaties to gain legitimacy since they must be based on all participating countries' consensus.

##### **b. Adopting technological means to develop food security**

Adopting technological means would provide practical help to develop food security in that they could provide systematic aids that prevent chronic food insecurity in the long term. Considering the feasibility and participation of other entities with technological expertise would be necessary.

#### **5. Defining Key Terms**

##### **a. Food Security**

A situation exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO).

##### **b. Food Insecurity**

A situation occurs whenever at least one of the four dimensions (availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability) of food security is at risk for any reason.

##### **c. Acute Food Security**

Any manifestation of food deprivation in a specific occasion that threatens lives, regardless of the causes, context, and duration (WFP and FAO)

**d. Chronic Food Security**

Continued food insecurity is generally due to systematic problems.

## **6. Key Questions / Questions to Consider**

- a. How could WFP increase food security when it comes to the increasing 'conflict-induced' food crisis?
- b. How can chronic food insecurity be systematically prevented, rather than solely focused on the acute one, by providing food assistance in the short term?
- c. How do we cooperate with the United Nations and the major partners of WFP?
- d. How we enhance the global attention for food security regarding that other entities voluntarily fund WFP?
- e. What other entities, except international institutions (e.g., private corporations, NGOs, individuals), could contribute to food security?

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