

Fighting famine and food insecurity in an age of crises and uncertainty

A high-level roundtable hosted by

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

Date and time:

1300 - 1530 (CET), 14 February 2023 [sandwich lunch available from 1200]

Location:

OECD Conference Centre, Paris

Background:

The spectre of famine threatens lives in several parts of the world. From the Sahel to the Horn of Africa, from Yemen to Haiti, food insecurity is on the rise. 222 million people are facing acute food insecurity and in need of urgent assistance. 236 million people are in food distress, requiring urgent interventions to prevent them from slipping into worse levels of food insecurity. The situation will deteriorate in 2023.

Many of the causes are not new: conflict, including Russian aggression in Ukraine and its impact on food and fertilizer prices; economies struggling with the long-term effects of Covid19; and increasingly frequent extreme weather events driven by climate change.

Demand for official development assistance (ODA) is rising exponentially. Development co-operation providers are struggling to balance vital life-saving assistance with addressing the root causes of hunger and starvation. Donors have stepped up their efforts, with humanitarian assistance to food sectors reaching a record USD 9.8 billion in 2021, a 20% increase compared to 2020. Despite this, needs continue to outstrip available resources.

Even though ODA is increasing, it is not doing so fast enough to keep pace with rising needs. Hence more ODA for humanitarian response means less for development and longer-term resilience. Yet it is widely recognised that investing in prevention saves lives, livelihoods and money and that investing in adaptation to climate change is urgent for some of the world's most vulnerable people. The current food security crisis requires developmental as well as humanitarian responses. ODA won't be able to finance or support everything and hence trade reform, a step change in agri-food production with private sector engagement, an increased focus on climate change adaptation, diversification of livelihoods and renewed diplomatic and security efforts are needed.

Objective:

This high-level roundtable will convene donors and agencies to discuss how we can better respond to extraordinary food crises and famine in 2023 and prevent their recurrence. On the basis of current humanitarian commitments early in the year, we will assess the opportunities, challenges and trade-offs to meet our shared obligations when ODA levels can't meet all needs. How can we collaborate better to maximise our collective response? Are we delivering our commitment to implement the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to ensure that the resources we do have are used as effectively as possible?

Fighting famine and food insecurity in an age of crises and uncertainty – a DAC high-level roundtable

Chair: Susanna Moorehead, Chair of the DAC

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions – Susanna Moorehead
2. Setting the scene: food insecurity in 2023
3. Plenary discussion covering the following questions:
 - How can we collaborate better to maximise our collective response when ODA is under strain?
 - How can international resources be deployed to meet immediate needs, while also investing in sustainable food systems, resilience, social protection, preparedness and early action?
 - What more can be done to deliver our commitment to implement the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to ensure that the resources we do have are used as effectively as possible?
 - How will you ensure policy coherence on sustainable development to ensure that development co-operation, climate action, trade and diplomacy approaches are complementary?
4. Closing remarks – Susanna Moorehead

Participants: The high-level roundtable will provide a platform for senior leaders from DAC members, other donors, UN agencies and other relevant food security actors.

Communications: Summary conclusions to inform the Global Meeting of Development Cooperation Providers on 15 February and distributed through OECD and UN agency channels.

Background materials:

- [Global Humanitarian Overview 2023](#)
- [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022](#).
- The DAC [Recommendation](#) on the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
- [Global Food Crisis Report, 2022](#)
- Financing flows analysis on food crises, 2023
- Global Hotspots Report
- IPES-Food (2022). [Another perfect storm?](#)
- Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food (2021), [Food systems and human rights](#)
- [OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2022-2031](#)