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# HUNGER RESPONSE POLICIES CONTINUE TO IGNORE GENDER



26% of hunger response policies *overlook women entirely* and 47% *do not mention gender inequality*.

**Up to 828 million people around the world are facing hunger, with the potential for that number to increase by 621 million in the next six months<sup>1</sup>.** Projections on access to and availability of food indicate an increasingly deteriorating situation, while current approaches are not meeting urgent needs for sufficient and nutritious food. Gender inequality, as well as conflict and climate change, is a key driver of the global hunger crisis. However, food policies continue to erase the impact gender inequality has on food insecurity for women and girls and ignores the capacity of women to offer solutions that are best adapted to their needs.

*“Things are very expensive in the market; prices keep increasing every day. Before we ate like three times a day; but now to eat one meal is with difficulty, some don't even eat at all.” - Girls in [Nguru Bulabulin, Nigeria](#)*

In **Somalia**, a recent CARE assessment found that women skip and restrict meals 25% more frequently than men<sup>2</sup>. CARE surveys in **Afghanistan** revealed that women have less access to food and balanced diets, evidenced by results that showed men were three times more likely to report having a balanced diet than women<sup>3</sup>. Globally, **150 million more women experience food insecurity than men**, meaning women are 27% more likely to be food insecure<sup>4</sup>. Despite the reality that gender inequality drives hunger and marginalizing factors further compound food insecurity for women and girls, tackling gender inequality is often absent from policy and funding solutions to hunger. Of 86 policies and plans designed to address food insecurity published in 2022, **26% overlook women entirely and almost half do not mention gender inequality**. Women will not be able to realize the right to healthy, safe, and fulfilled lives if their experiences of food insecurity are not represented in evidence informing the response and if they are excluded as actors in the response itself.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/CARE-The-crisis-we-can-still-avert-October-2022-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Pending publication

<sup>3</sup> Pending publication

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Final-Version-Food-Security-and-Gender-Equality.pdf>; [https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000135456/download/?\\_ga=2.208510298.939995582.1665582158-1768919218.1665429056](https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000135456/download/?_ga=2.208510298.939995582.1665582158-1768919218.1665429056)

CARE Policy Reviews by Year	2020 Reports	2021 Reports	2022 Reports
% of documents that are gender unaware <sup>5</sup>	46%	39%	28%
% of documents that include recommendations to address gender inequality	7%	11%	35%
% of documents portraying women solely as vulnerable	36%	31%	52%
% of documents referring to women as leaders	1%	4%	32%
% of documents that include references to funding or supporting women leaders	No data	4%	32%

**Background.** In September 2020, CARE published the report [Left Out and Left Behind](#), which detailed how women face incredible obstacles—even more than men—for getting enough food during emergencies. COVID-19 has led to food crises, alarming increases in GBV, and a rollback in women’s rights and gender equality in many contexts. Women were facing hunger at higher rates than men, and global policies and approaches aiming to address the problem were overlooking women, their skills, and their rights. By November 2020, [Sometimes We Don’t Even Eat](#) showed that millions of women were on the brink of famine. The gap between hunger in

men and women continued to increase from 6% to 10% between 2020 and 2021<sup>6</sup>. CARE’s 2021 updated review of hunger response and policies, [Don’t Leave Them Behind](#), demonstrated minimal improvement of gender inclusion in hunger action documents.

**CARE’s 2022 updated policy review** examined 86 documents, included in [Annex 1](#), responding to the global hunger crisis. **¼ of the reports were gender unaware and 47% did not mention gender inequality at all.** Food insecurity often has ripple effects for women and girls, such as increased health risks, barriers to education, gender-based violence, and protection concerns. **Evidence from CARE programs show that** GBV increases when food insecurity increases. Reports from those displaced by drought in Somalia indicate a 200% rise in GBV cases. A recent CARE survey in Bangladesh revealed that women reported a 21% increase in violence at home as linked to rising food prices.<sup>7</sup> Food insecurity and hunger do not occur in isolation of other risks. Gender inequality drives both hunger and GBV. Yet when **44% of the reviewed documents do not mention funding or activities directed towards women and gender equality**, responses cannot holistically address the complex, interconnected challenges gender inequality and food insecurity have for women’s safety, wellbeing, and rights.

Organizations tasked with creating solutions to end hunger, and producing the information needed to do so, perpetuate evidence collection that frequently makes women invisible. **52% of the global reports, policy, response plans, and funding documents do not have any form of sex disaggregated data on food insecurity.** Even in the rare times hunger and food insecurity data is disaggregated by sex, this **data does not include the particular ways in which people of all genders and ages, with intersecting vulnerabilities, experience food insecurity.** This is largely a result of how data on food insecurity is collected at a household level, not giving voice and evidence to individual experiences of food insecurity.

**Women play a key role in food systems.** They are primary producers, harvesters, sellers, and preparers of food, but women and gender inequality are often ignored when it comes to policies and funding. When women are discussed in key hunger response documents, they are **repeatedly portrayed solely in terms of their vulnerability (52% of documents)** rather than as **current or potential leaders in food systems (only 34% of documents)**. Local food producers,

*“From cooperation with my husband, there is better management of our resources, and we are no longer in the lowest category of poverty ranking. We could increase our property. We bought 3 gardens which we use to grow our crops”* Woman from Rwanda participating in [CARE project](#) on women’s economic justice

<sup>5</sup> “Women” or “gender” is not mentioned, thereby failing to acknowledge the different gendered experiences of food insecurity and roles in food systems

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/cb4474en/cb4474en.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/GBV-food-security-brief\\_EN.pdf](https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/GBV-food-security-brief_EN.pdf)

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including female smallholder farmers and women's led associations, must be a core part of the solution. **CARE projects in Bangladesh** targeting gender inequality resulted in household income more than doubling and dairy productivity increasing by 22%.<sup>8</sup> **CARE programs in Burundi** demonstrated that when women have access to more opportunities and support to address gender inequality, rice production increased 2.7 times.

The 86 documents responding to food insecurity in 2022 include government policy, situational reports, response plans, advocacy materials, and funding strategies. **Policy and funding sources scored lowest in their inclusion of women and gender centered** work when comparing how gender inequality is addressed between these five types of documents. Exclusion of women in guiding frameworks for funding and implementing hunger responses reveals a gap in policymakers understanding of gender inequality as a primary driver of food insecurity. Systematic collection of sex and age disaggregated data, and centering women's and girls' needs and leadership is urgently required to ensure food and nutrition security interventions are truly gender responsive.

**Policies have improved slightly since 2021, but they are still failing women.** In 2021, CARE reviewed 84 reports proposing solutions to address the growing levels of food insecurity globally. 14% demonstrated a commitment to addressing gender inequality, but less than 5% of reports recommended funding for women's led organizations and leadership. Improvements have been made. More documents are addressing gender inequality, including activities targeting women, and directly funding women's leadership in food systems. Yet, significant progress remains in how policy and response prioritizes transforming gender inequality to combat global hunger.

**Hunger is growing. Life threatening food insecurity is growing.** Of the estimated increase in people to go hungry in the next 6 months, 45 million more of those 621 million people are projected to be women.<sup>9</sup> That gap will continue to grow as climate, conflict, and gender inequality drive hunger. **Global solutions are not keeping pace with the magnitude of the problem partly because they continue to overlook the importance of gender equality.** Centering gender equality in food and hunger policies, strategies and responses will result in more durable collective outcomes, allowing women and girls to live more healthy, safe, and fulfilled lives.

## KEY ASKS & RECOMMENDATIONS

**Catch up, quickly – The best time to start systematically using gender analysis and sex, age, and disability disaggregated data to inform food security responses was decades ago. The second-best time is now.**

- All food security analysis and response plans should consider the particular challenges that women and girls face, as well as how their unique experiences position them to find solutions to global hunger. Serious investments by **donors, policymakers and humanitarian leaders is needed** to mainstream the use of gender analysis and SADD collection to inform hunger responses to make a substantial difference for men, women, boys and girls around the world.

Stakeholders in fighting food insecurity **must** engage **women and girls, ensuring their active participation and leadership in all stages** of hunger responses. Gender inequality is driving hunger crises, and addressing gender equality will be key to any solutions.

- More emphasis should be placed on **increasing investments** in targeted interventions for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian and development responses.

**Addressing gender inequality and hunger crises does not mean adding women as a footnote or an afterthought. It means working with people of all genders to take action for gender transformative hunger responses**, and allocating adequate resources. This means holistic food security programs, GBV service provision, multi-sectoral response, targeted assistance, and risk assessment for food security initiatives.

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<sup>8</sup> [https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ADV\\_Gender-Inequality-and-Food-Insecurity\\_OnePager-Designed.pdf](https://www.care.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ADV_Gender-Inequality-and-Food-Insecurity_OnePager-Designed.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> <https://careevaluations.org/wp-content/uploads/CARE-The-crisis-we-can-still-avert-October-2022.pdf>

## Annex 1. 2022 Hunger Action Documents Reviewed for this Report

Document	Organization	Date
<a href="#">Averting the Unfolding Historic Food Crisis in the Sahel</a>	Action Against Hunger	22-Feb
<a href="#">On the Rise: Conflict Induced Hunger</a>	Action Against Hunger	22-June
<a href="#">Zeroing in on Ending Hunger</a>	Action Against Hunger/Devex	22-Feb
<a href="#">Investment Assessment and Application of High-level Technology for Food Security in Asia and the Pacific</a>	ADB	22-Aug
<a href="#">Accelerating Gender Equality in the Agri-Business Sector</a>	ADB	22-Oct
<a href="#">REAUTHORIZATION OF THE GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY ACT OF 2016: OVERVIEW OF ALLIANCE RECOMMENDATIONS</a>	Alliance to End Hunger	33-Jul
<a href="#">CFS POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON PROMOTING YOUTH ENGAGEMENT AND EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION</a>	Committee on World Food Security	22-Jul
<a href="#">Common Agricultural Policy</a>	EU	21-Dec
<a href="#">European Council adopted conclusions on Ukraine, food security, security and defense, and energy</a>	EU	22-May
<a href="#">A Global Food Import Financing Facility (FIFF):</a>	FAO	22-Jun
<a href="#">The Importance of Ukraine and the Russian Federation for Global Agricultural Markets</a>	FAO	22-Jun
<a href="#">The States of the Worlds Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture 2021</a>	FAO	2022
<a href="#">Food Outlook: Biannual Report on Global Food Markets</a>	FAO	22-Jun
<a href="#">Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Bulletin</a>	FAO	22-Oct
<a href="#">Crop Prospect and Food Situation</a>	FAO	22-Sep
<a href="#">Ukraine Rapid Response Plan March-December 2022</a>	FAO	22-Feb
<a href="#">Thinking About the Future of Food Safety</a>	FAO	2022
<a href="#">WFP Haiti Country Brief</a>	FAO	22-Sep
<a href="#">Hunger Hotspots FAO-WFP Early warnings on acute food insecurity October 2022-January 2023</a>	FAO-WFP	22-Sep
<a href="#">Inter-cluster statement on famine and food crises</a>	Food Cluster	22-Jun
<a href="#">Special Report on Food Insecurity in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia</a>	Food Security and Nutrition Working Group	22-Jul
<a href="#">Global Hunger Index 2022</a>	GHI/Concern/Welt Hunger Hilfe	22-Oct
<a href="#">Strengthening Farmers Resilience to Build Sustainable Food Systems</a>	Global Agricultural and Food Security Program	21-Dec
<a href="#">2021 Report on Financing Flows and Food Crises</a>	Global Network Against Food Crises	21- Dec
<a href="#">The Role of Trade and Policies in Improving Food Security</a>	IFAD	22-May
<a href="#">Annual Report 2021</a>	IFAD	22-Jul
<a href="#">IFAD Impact Assessment Report</a>	IFAD	22-Aug
<a href="#">IFI Action Plan to Address Food Insecurity</a>	IFI	22-May
<a href="#">2021 Annual Report</a>	IFPRI	2022
<a href="#">IFRC Emergency Appeal: Angola</a>	IFRC	22-May
<a href="#">Africa Emergency Hunger Appeal</a>	IFRC	22-Oct
<a href="#">Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) guide on Livelihoods and Food Security (LFS)</a>	IFRC	2022
<a href="#">Tackling the Global Food Crisis</a>	IMF	22-Sept
<a href="#">IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis: Afghanistan</a>	IPC	22-May
<a href="#">Nigeria Acute Malnutrition Analysis</a>	IPC	22-Jun
<a href="#">Yemen: Famine Review of the IPC Analysis</a>	IPC	22-Mar
<a href="#">IPC Acute Food Insecurity and Malnutrition Analysis: South Sudan</a>	IPC	22-Apr

<a href="#">Somalia: Famine Review of the IPC Analysis</a>	IPC	22-Sep
<a href="#">IRC's recommendations for halting famine in Somalia and mitigating risk globally</a>	IRC	22-Sep
<a href="#">Agriculture and Rural Development Sectors Climate Change Adaptation: Guidance Note</a>	IsDB	2022
<a href="#">Joint NGO Statement Demanding Urgent Action to End the Spiraling Global Hunger Crisis</a>	Joint NGO Statement	22-Sep
<a href="#">Joint NGO Statement on Global Food Security and Conflict-Induced Hunger</a>	Joint NGO Statement	22-May
<a href="#">Flash Appeal Madagascar</a>	OCHA	22-Jul
<a href="#">Global Humanitarian Overview 2022: September Update</a>	OCHA	22-Sep
<a href="#">Humanitarian Needs Overview Syria 2021</a>	OCHA	22-Feb
<a href="#">Global Humanitarian Overview 2022</a>	OCHA	21-Dec
<a href="#">West and Central Africa Situation Report</a>	OCHA	22-Dec
<a href="#">HRP Nigeria</a>	OCHA	22-Feb
<a href="#">HRP Mali</a>	OCHA	22-Feb
<a href="#">Emergency Response Plan Lebanon</a>	OCHA	22-Jun
<a href="#">HRP Yemen</a>	OCHA	22-Apr
<a href="#">HRP Mozambique</a>	OCHA	22-Jun
<a href="#">HRP Somalia</a>	OCHA	21-Dec
<a href="#">HRP Ethiopia</a>	OCHA	22-Jul
<a href="#">HRP Afghanistan</a>	OCHA	22-Jan
<a href="#">HRP Sudan</a>	OCHA	21-Dec
<a href="#">HRP South Sudan</a>	OCHA	22-Mar
<a href="#">OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2022-2031</a>	OECD-FAO	22-Jun
<a href="#">Global Food Crisis</a>	Plan International	22-Jul
<a href="#">International Development Committee: Food Security</a>	UK Gov	22-Jul
<a href="#">Global Impact of War in Ukraine</a>	UN Global Crisis Response Group	22-Aug
<a href="#">Global Food Security Call to Action</a>	UN Member States	22-Sep
<a href="#">Global Appeal 2022</a>	UNHCR	12-Jul
<a href="#">USAID Nutrition Report to Congress</a>	US Gov	22-Aug
<a href="#">Responding the Global Food Security Crisis</a>	US gov	22-Jul
<a href="#">Prepare Action Plan</a>	US Gov	22-Sep
<a href="#">U.S. Government Global Food Security Strategy 2022-2026</a>	USAID	22-Jun
<a href="#">U.S. Government's Global Food Security Strategy FY 2022-2026</a>	USAID	2022
<a href="#">The Climate Crisis and Hunger</a>	WFP	22-Oct
<a href="#">WFP Annual Report on Flexible Funding in 2021</a>	WFP	22-Jun
<a href="#">2022 Country Capacity Strengthening Policy Update</a>	WFP	22-Oct
<a href="#">WFP Gender Policy 2022</a>	WFP	22-Jul
<a href="#">2022 Global Report on Food Crises</a>	WFP	22-May
<a href="#">Intergovernmental Authority on Development food crises report 2022: Regional Focus</a>	WFP	22-Jul
<a href="#">2022 Global Report on Food Crises Sept Update</a>	WFP	22-Sep
<a href="#">WFP Strategic Plan 2022-2025</a>	WFP	22-Jun
<a href="#">WFP Global Operational Response Plan Update #5</a>	WFP	22-Jun
<a href="#">WFP Country Brief Mauritania</a>	WFP	22-Jul
<a href="#">WFP Kenya Country Brief</a>	WFP	22-Mar
<a href="#">WFP Benin Country Brief</a>	WFP	22-Jul
<a href="#">The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) Report - 2022</a>	WFP-FAO	22-Jul
<a href="#">Repurposing Agricultural Policies and Support</a>	World Bank	22-Jan

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<a href="#">Food Security Update</a>	World Bank	22-Sep
<a href="#">Coping with Shocks: Migration and the Road to Resilience</a>	World Bank	22-Oct
<a href="#">Africa's Pulse: Food Systems Opportunities in Turbulent Times</a>	World Bank	22-Oct
<a href="#">Global Hunger Response</a>	World Vision	22-Sep
<a href="#">Ministerial Declaration on the Emergency Response to Food Insecurity</a>	WTO	22-Jun

**Note on Document Selection:** Documents included in this 2022 hunger response policy review were selected based on their ability to meet one or more of the following criteria 1.) the document established or implemented funding, policy, or actions addressing food insecurity; 2.) the document outlined response plans on or reports of interventions, funding, and/or actions to prevent or mitigate hunger; 3.) the document advocated for specific policy or actions to address food insecurity. The number of analyzed documents (86) is consistent with the quantity of documents reviewed in previous years of hunger policy reviews, and prioritized publishing organizations that had a policymaking, funding, or implementing role in global hunger response. OCHA Humanitarian Response Plans, and if not available OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overviews or food security response briefings, for countries identified in [FAO-WFP's Hunger Hot Spots early warning projections for October 2022-January 2023](#) were also included in the review, isolating the food security cluster component of the HRP and HNO's<sup>1</sup>.