

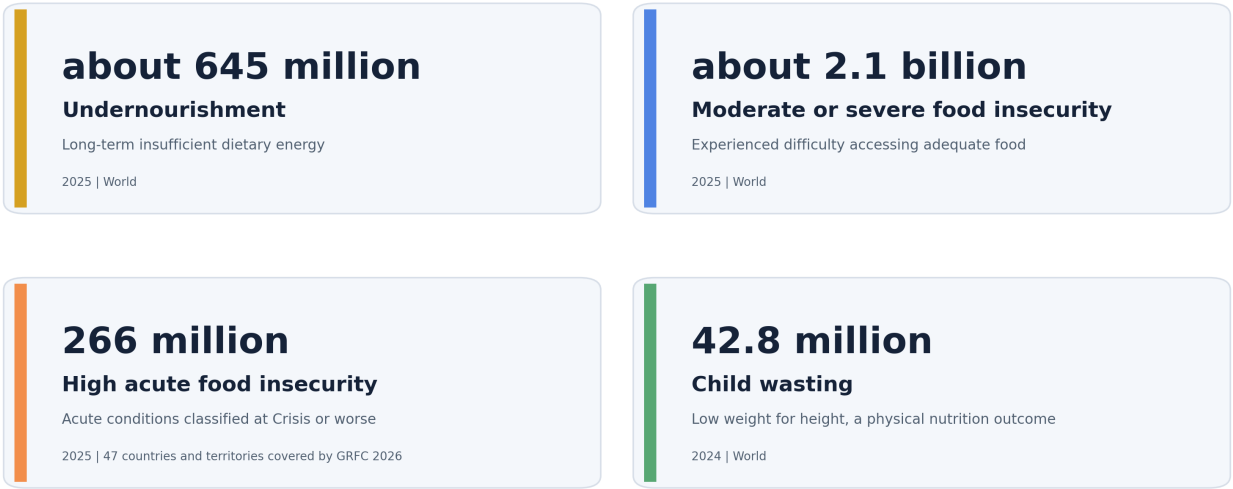
Hunger is not one number

Four measures that answer four different questions

Main takeaway. Chronic hunger, food-access difficulty, acute food crises, and child wasting are related, but they cover different populations, periods, places, experiences, and outcomes. Their headline figures should not be added together.

Hunger is not one number

Four headline measures answer four different questions.



Sources: SOFI 2026; GRFC 2026; UNICEF/WHO/World Bank JME 2025 edition. Do not add the figures together.

Sources: SOFI 2026; GRFC 2026; UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, 2025 edition.

1. What does each measure answer?

The labels can sound interchangeable. They are not. One measure concerns long-term energy intake, one records lived food-access difficulty, one classifies urgent food crises in analysed settings, and one is a physical child-nutrition outcome.

Four measures, four different questions

The population, time basis, universe, and outcome differ.



Definitions: FAO, FSIN/GRFC, IPC/CH, and UNICEF/WHO/World Bank JME. WSI synthesis; no cross-measure ranking.

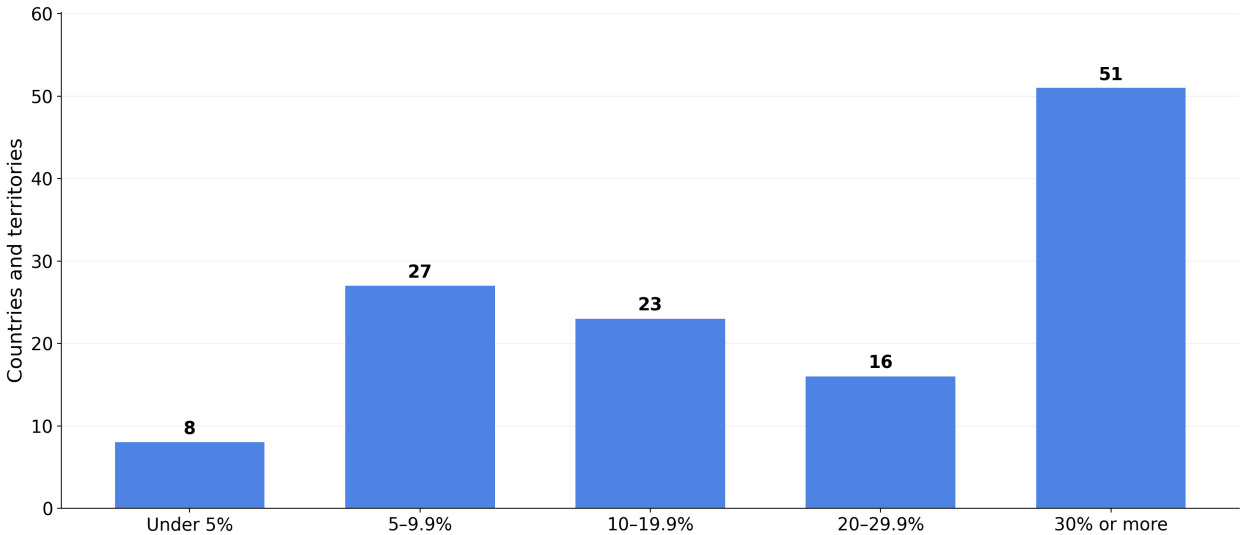
The useful comparison is conceptual, not arithmetic.

2. Severe food insecurity varies widely

The completed WSI FIES evidence profile contains 125 country or territory records with matched 2023-2025 prevalence estimates. The bands below show the distribution without creating a country league table.

Severe food insecurity varied widely across 125 places

Count of complete FAOSTAT FIES records by severe-prevalence band, 2023-2025.



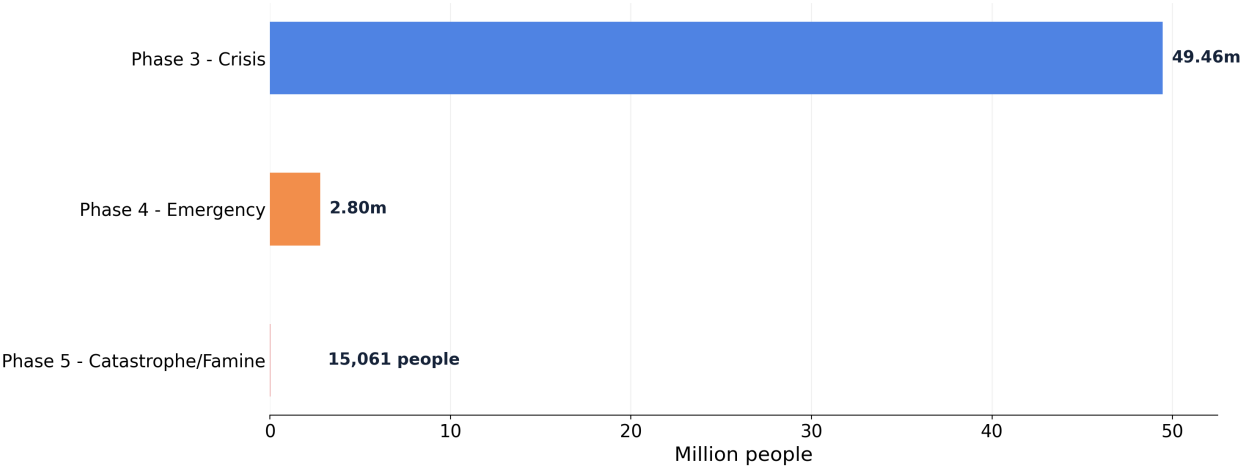
Source: FAOSTAT FIES; validated WSI 125-record extract. Bands are descriptive, not official severity categories.

3. Acute food insecurity is a severity classification

Across the validated 14-country Cadre Harmonise snapshot, 52.3 million people were in Phase 3 or worse. Phase 4+ included 2.81 million people, and Phase 5 included 15,061. The chart uses mutually exclusive phases.

52.3 million people were in Phase 3 or worse

Exclusive Phase 3, 4, and 5 populations in the 14-country CH snapshot, June-August 2026.



Phase 4+ total: 2.81m. Phase 5 is included in Phase 4+ and Phase 3+.

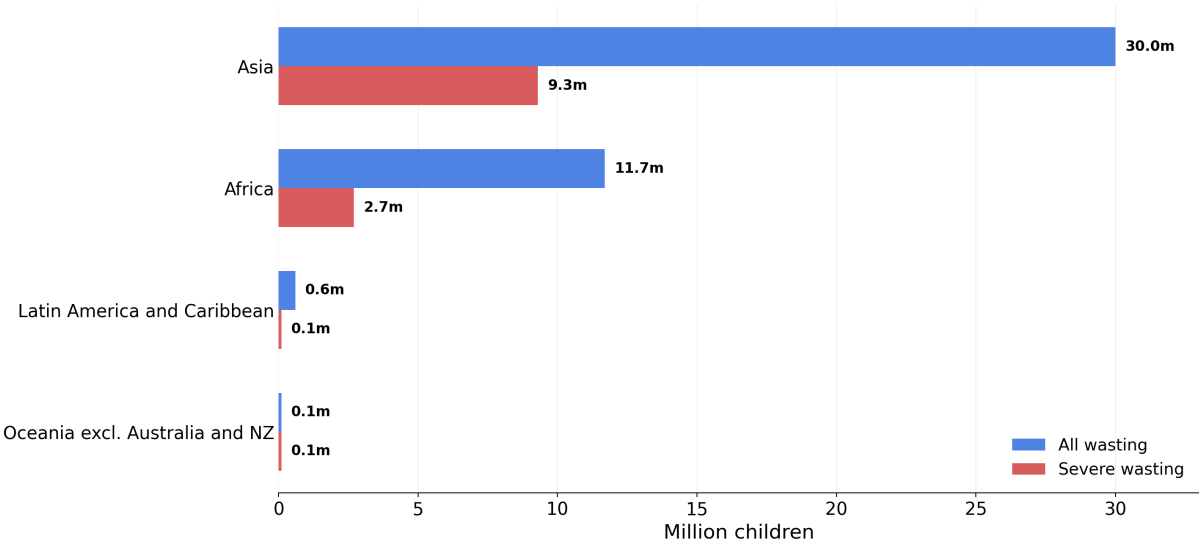
Source: validated 14-country Cadre Harmonise evidence profile. Exclusive phase counts are derived from the approved Phase 3+, Phase 4+, and Phase 5 controls.

4. Most children affected by wasting lived in Asia and Africa

The 2025 JME edition estimated 42.8 million children under five with wasting in 2024, including 12.2 million with severe wasting. Regional values are rounded as published.

Most children affected by wasting lived in Asia and Africa

Millions of children under five, 2024 regional estimates.



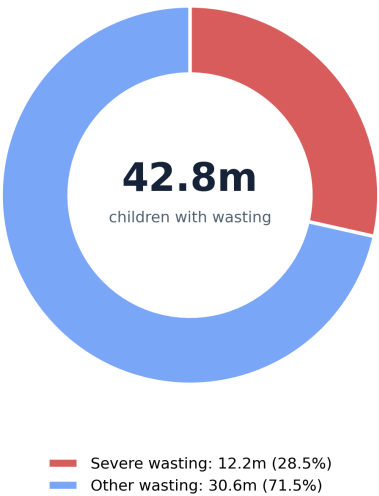
Source: UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, 2025 edition; 2024 estimates. Regional values are rounded as published.

5. Severe wasting is included within total wasting

Severe wasting accounted for about 28.5% of the global number of children with wasting in 2024. This is a composition of the same child-nutrition measure, not an additional population to add to 42.8 million.

About three in ten children with wasting had severe wasting

Global 2024 estimate; severe wasting is included within total wasting.



Source: UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates, 2025 edition; 2024 estimates.

Four measures, four questions

Undernourishment (PoU)	Who is likely to have chronically insufficient dietary energy? Who: Whole population Where: Global When: Annual model estimate / multi-year statistical framework
FIES	Who reports difficulty accessing adequate food? Who: People age 15+ surveyed, calibrated to population estimates Where: Global and country estimates When: Past 12 months / official reporting period
IPC/CH and GRFC	Who in analyzed crisis settings needs urgent action? Who: People in covered crisis areas Where: Selected crisis countries/areas When: Current or projected acute analysis period
Child wasting	Which children have a serious physical nutrition outcome? Who: Children under age 5 Where: Global and regional estimates When: Survey/model reference year

WSI does not add the four headline populations, create a cross-measure country ranking, or use experimental USU estimates to drive this brief.

What WSI adds

The brief connects disjoint official measures in one clear story, preserves their definitions and limits, and provides reusable charts and chart data.

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