

# Global Food Security during COVID-19 Epidemic in 2020

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# The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition in 2020: Making sense of what we know & what we expect when more data are available

- The impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition is dramatic
- FSN indicators in 2019 and were already bad, and worsening from 2014
- Understanding the drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition helps understand how COVID-19 has impacted households and overall populations
- Most numbers so far are estimates of what we believe has happened in 2020 (and is happening in 2021).

# Outline – The pieces of the puzzle

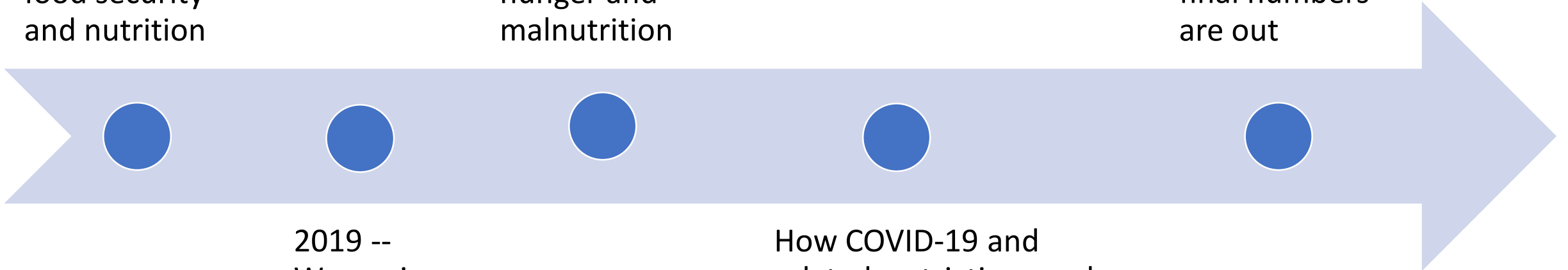
Indicators of  
food security  
and nutrition

Underlying  
causes of  
increases  
hunger and  
malnutrition

Current  
estimates +  
what we  
expect when  
final numbers  
are out

2019 --  
Worsening  
numbers

How COVID-19 and  
related restrictions make  
things worse



# The Indicators --- two big divides

**Food security** (reliable, consistent, healthy, safe food access) versus

**Malnutrition** (anthropometric indicators, e.g. stunting and wasting)

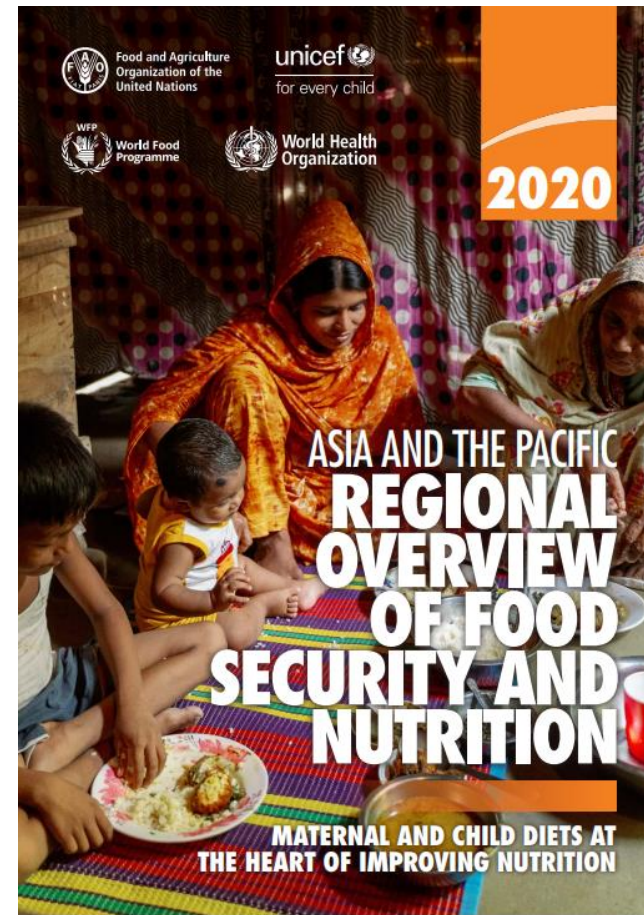
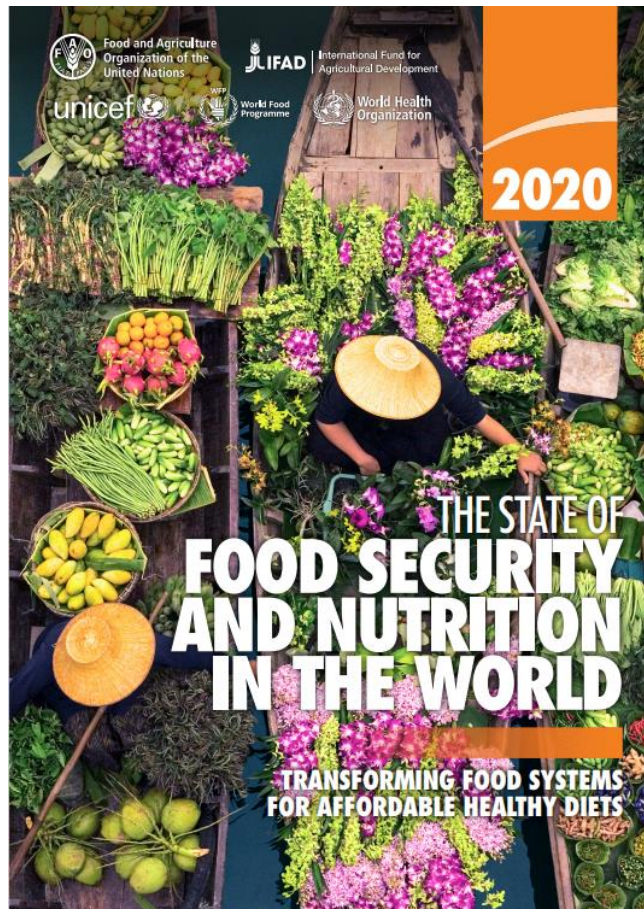
and

**Chronic** (think of child stunting, longer-term vulnerabilities) versus

**Acute** (think of child wasting, the outcomes of crises and emergency situations)

## Two main global FAO/UN annual reports:

- *The State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)* – chronic, historically mainly on food insecurity, now with much more on nutrition
- *Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC)* – acute, both FS and Nutrition



# SOFI – Contains two SDG2 food security indicators

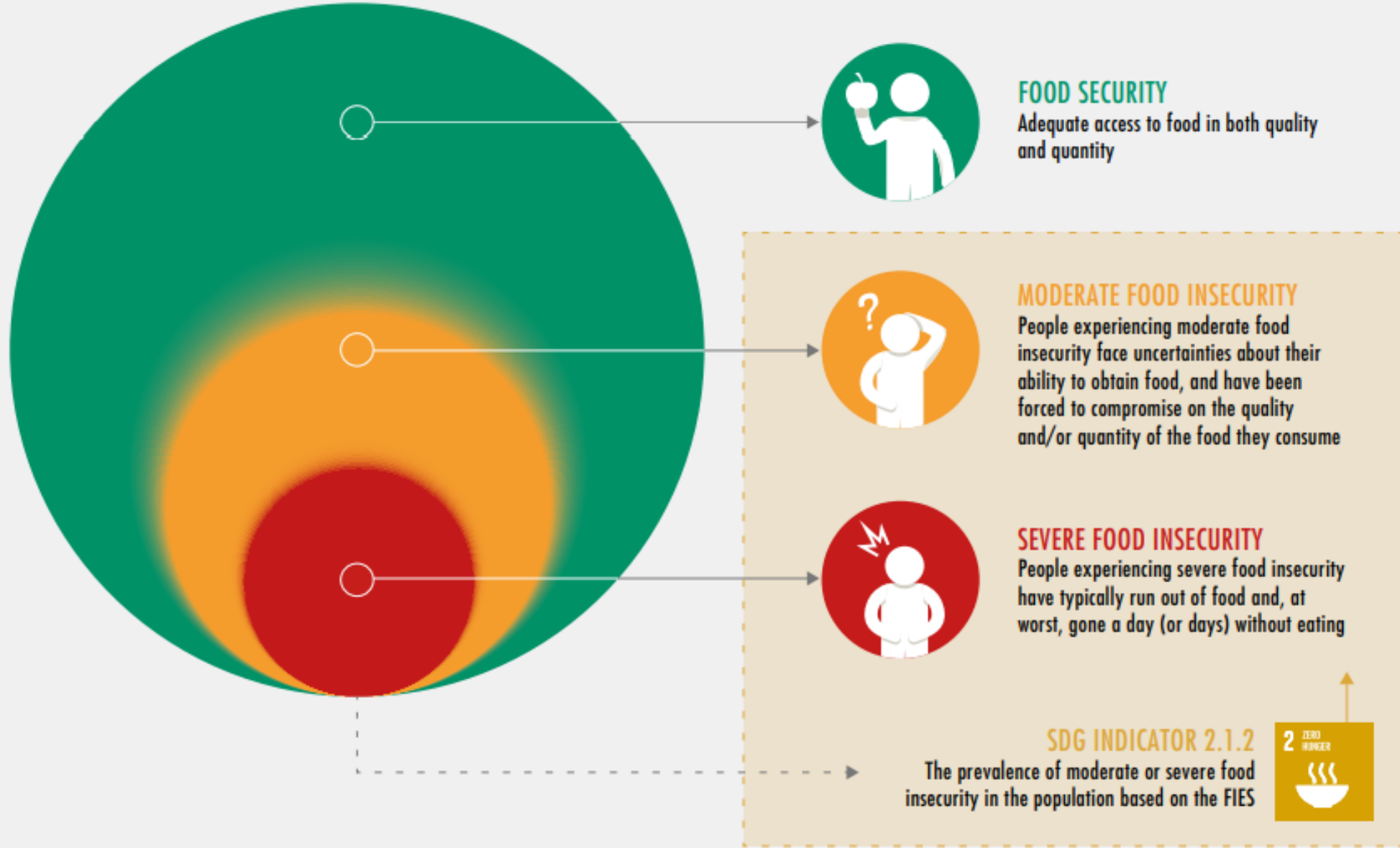
Historical series on **Prevalence of Undernutrition (POU)**, number and percentage, by country, dietary energy consumption = **calories**

- POU calculated about every year for every country, based on parameters that are relatively easy to obtain
- Adjustments to the series made as better information on the parameters is obtained (e.g., a big revision in 2019 based on better estimates on inequality of dietary energy consumption in China)

## New **Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)**

- Based on sampling and interviews regarding people's direct experience in their lives
- Two FIES numbers reported: **Severe food insecurity** and **Moderate and Severe food insecurity**

# EXPLANATION OF FOOD-INSECURITY SEVERITY LEVELS MEASURED BY THE FIES IN SDG INDICATOR 2.1.2



# Global Food Crises Report

- Covers Acute Food Insecurity and Malnutrition
- Includes only Countries in Crisis, number changes from year to year
- Consensus views among multiple agencies on numbers and severity of crises across and within countries
- Based on IPC methodology (Integrated Phase Classification) levels 1-5: *1 - Minimal, 2 - Stressed, 3 - Crisis, 4 - Emergency, 5 - Famine*
- Contains information on Acute Malnutrition (% < 5 children suffering degrees of wasting and other data), among other aspects which determine the classification level
- Aggregate numbers and in-depth discussion for each country included



# IPC/CH acute food insecurity phase description and response objectives

| Phase                       | Technical description  | Priority response objective   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| 1 <b>None/Minimal</b>       | Households are able to meet essential food and non-food needs without engaging in atypical and unsustainable strategies to access food and income.   | Resilience building and disaster risk reduction.  |
| 2 <b>Stressed</b>           | Households have minimally adequate food consumption but are unable to afford some essential non-food expenditures without engaging in stress-coping strategies.  | Disaster risk reduction and protection of livelihoods.  |
| 3 <b>Crisis</b>             | Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; <i>OR</i></li> <li>• Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies.</li> </ul>           | <b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.              |
| 4 <b>Emergency</b>          | Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have large food consumption gaps which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; <i>OR</i></li> <li>• Are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation.</li> </ul> | <b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> to save lives and livelihoods.  |
| 5 <b>Catastrophe/Famine</b> | Households have an extreme lack of food and/or other basic needs even after full employment of coping strategies. Starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical acute malnutrition levels are evident. (For Famine classification, area needs to have extreme critical levels of acute malnutrition and mortality.)          | <b>URGENT ACTION REQUIRED</b> to revert/prevent widespread death and total collapse of livelihoods. |



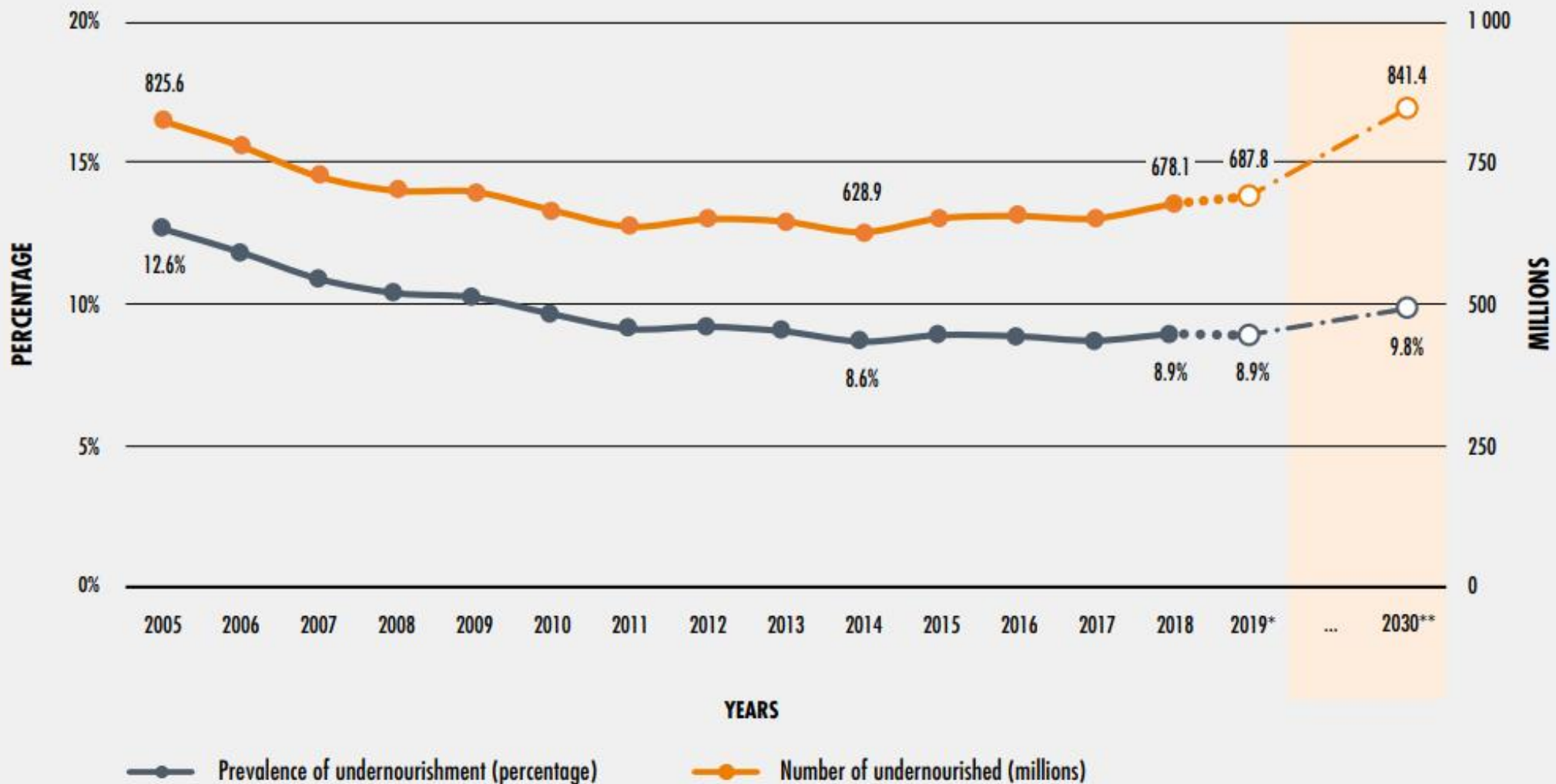
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United Nations



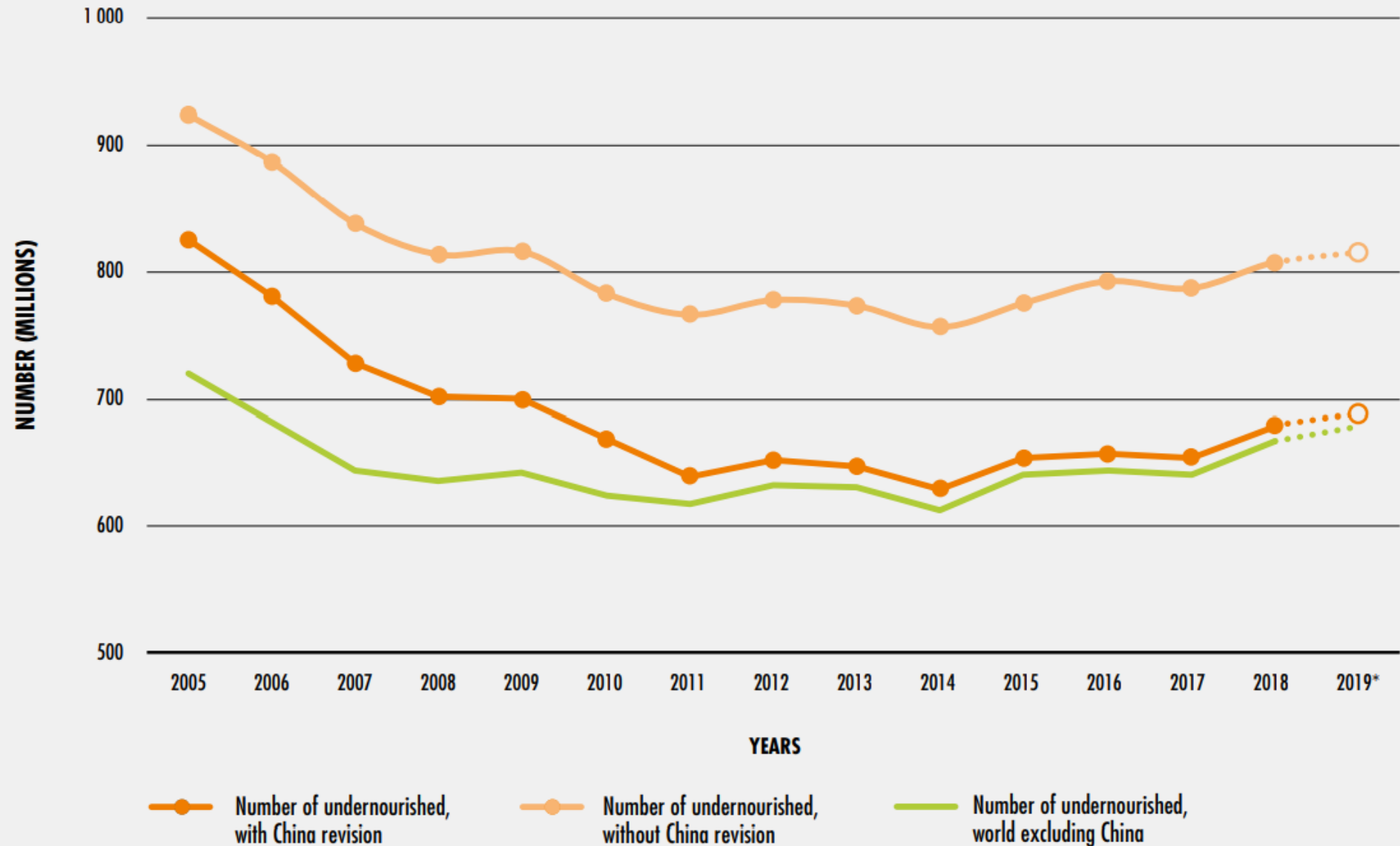
# 2019 Numbers, *Pre-COVID-19*, reported in SOFI 2020

- 690 million people, 8.9% of the global population undernourished (POU)  
An increase of 10 million since 2018 and +60 million in five years
- FIES indicator – 750 million affected by *severe* food insecurity  
2 000 million suffering from *severe or moderate* food insecurity
- 21.3% of children <5 stunted, 144 million; 6.9% were wasted, 47 million;  
5.6% overweight, 38.3 million

THE NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IN THE WORLD CONTINUED TO INCREASE IN 2019. IF RECENT TRENDS ARE NOT REVERSED, THE SDG 2.1 ZERO HUNGER TARGET WILL NOT BE MET



# A. NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED IN THE WORLD, WITH AND WITHOUT THE REVISION FOR CHINA



SOURCE: FAO.

# India SOFI numbers for 2019 (note: not competing with much richer NSSO and hh surveys)

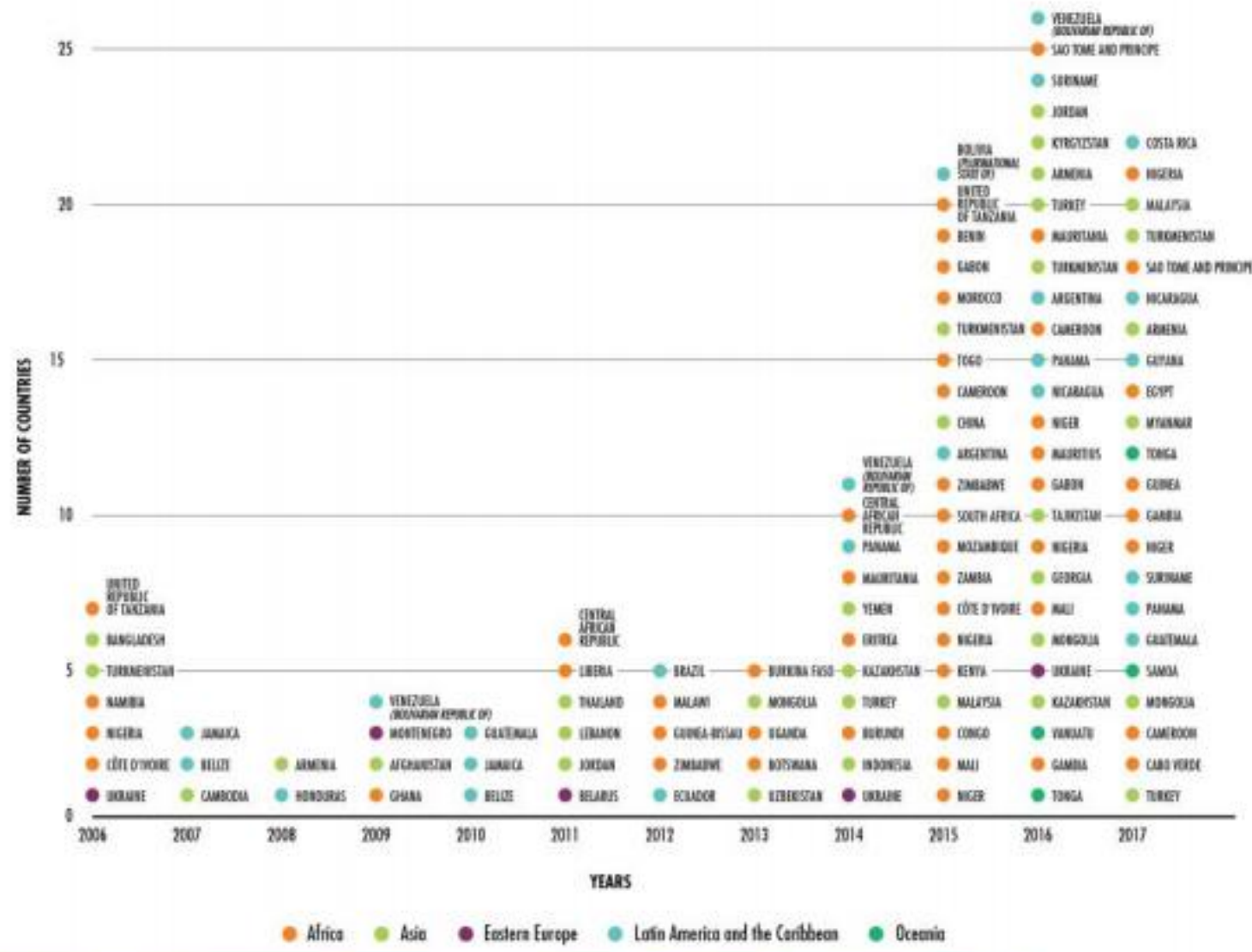
- POU *2004-2006* 21.7%    *2017-2019* 14%  
  249.4 m                                   189.2 m
- FIES not reported
- <5 wasting                                   *2019* 17.3%
- <5 stunting    *2012* 47.8    *2019* 37.4%
- <5 overweight *2012* 1.9%    *2019* 1.6%

# Why the Increase in Food Insecurity since 2014?

## ...Increasing burdens on the most vulnerable

- **Weak, stagnant, deteriorating economic conditions** = less income, fewer remittances = increasing poverty and undernourishment
  - 10% of population remains below poverty line of USD 1.90/day
- Increasing debt burden in poorer economies
- Increasing **extreme weather events**, altered environments, spread of pests and diseases (e.g., desert locust)
- **Growing inequality**, uneven benefits of economic growth
- **Conflict and violence**, displacement of populations (70.8 m)
  - 70% higher in 2018 than in 2010

# Most countries where hunger increased in the last few years experienced economic slowdown or downturns – most are middle-income countries





# Global Food Crises Report 2020

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**135M** people

**2019**

in **55 countries** were in Crisis or worse  
(IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)

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## Numbers in previous years

**2016**

**108M** people in  
**48** countries

**2017**

**124M** people in  
**51** countries

**2018**

**113M** people in  
**53** countries

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**Numbers of acutely food-insecure people in Crisis  
or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)**

# IPC Phase 2

## 2019



# 183

## MILLION PEOPLE

in **47** countries

were in Stressed

(IPC/CH Phase 2)

**Most of these people in Stressed (IPC/CH Phase 2)  
were in Africa**

1. NONE /  
MINIMAL

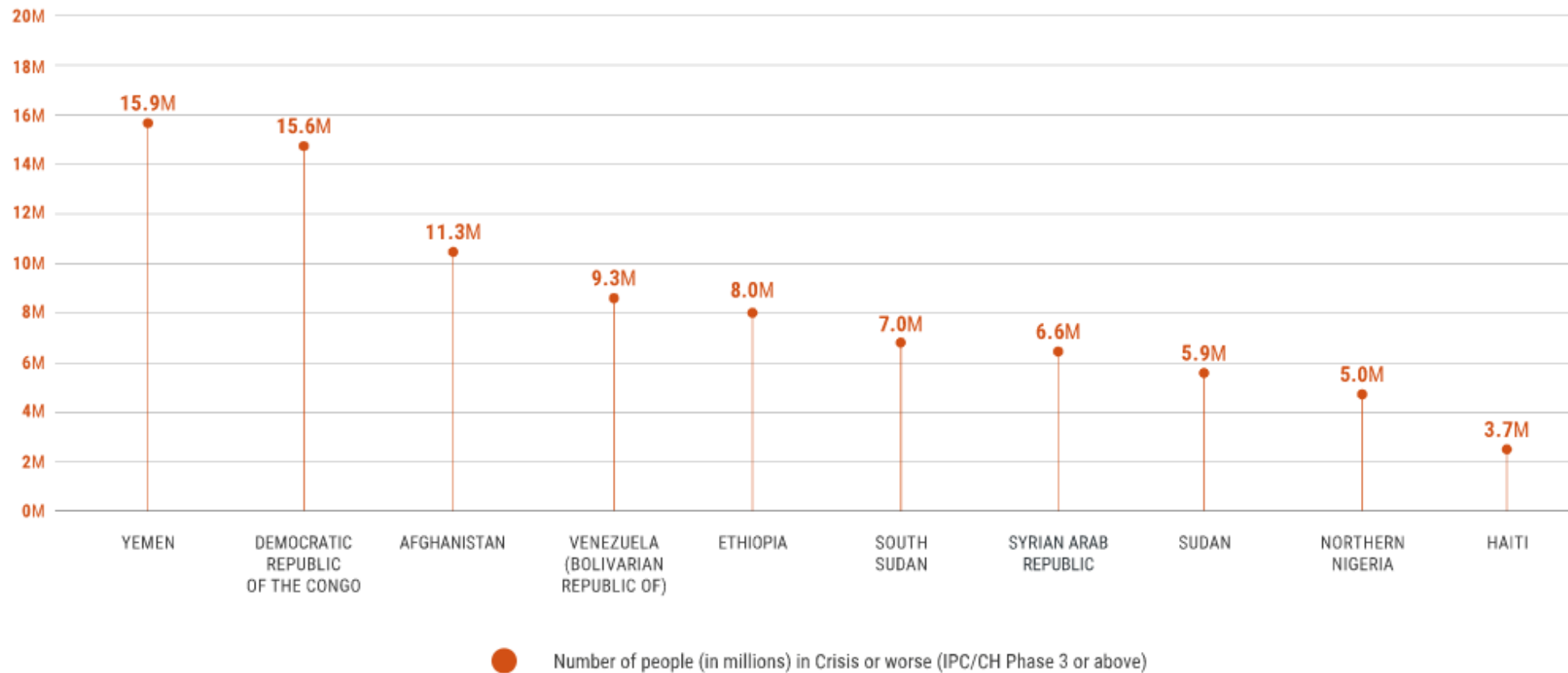
2. STRESSED

3. CRISIS

4. EMERGENCY

5. CATASTROPHE  
FAMINE

These were the **10 worst food crises** in 2019 in terms of NUMBERS of people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)



**Conflict/insecurity** was still the main driver of food crises in 2019,  
but **weather extremes** and **economic shocks**  
became increasingly significant



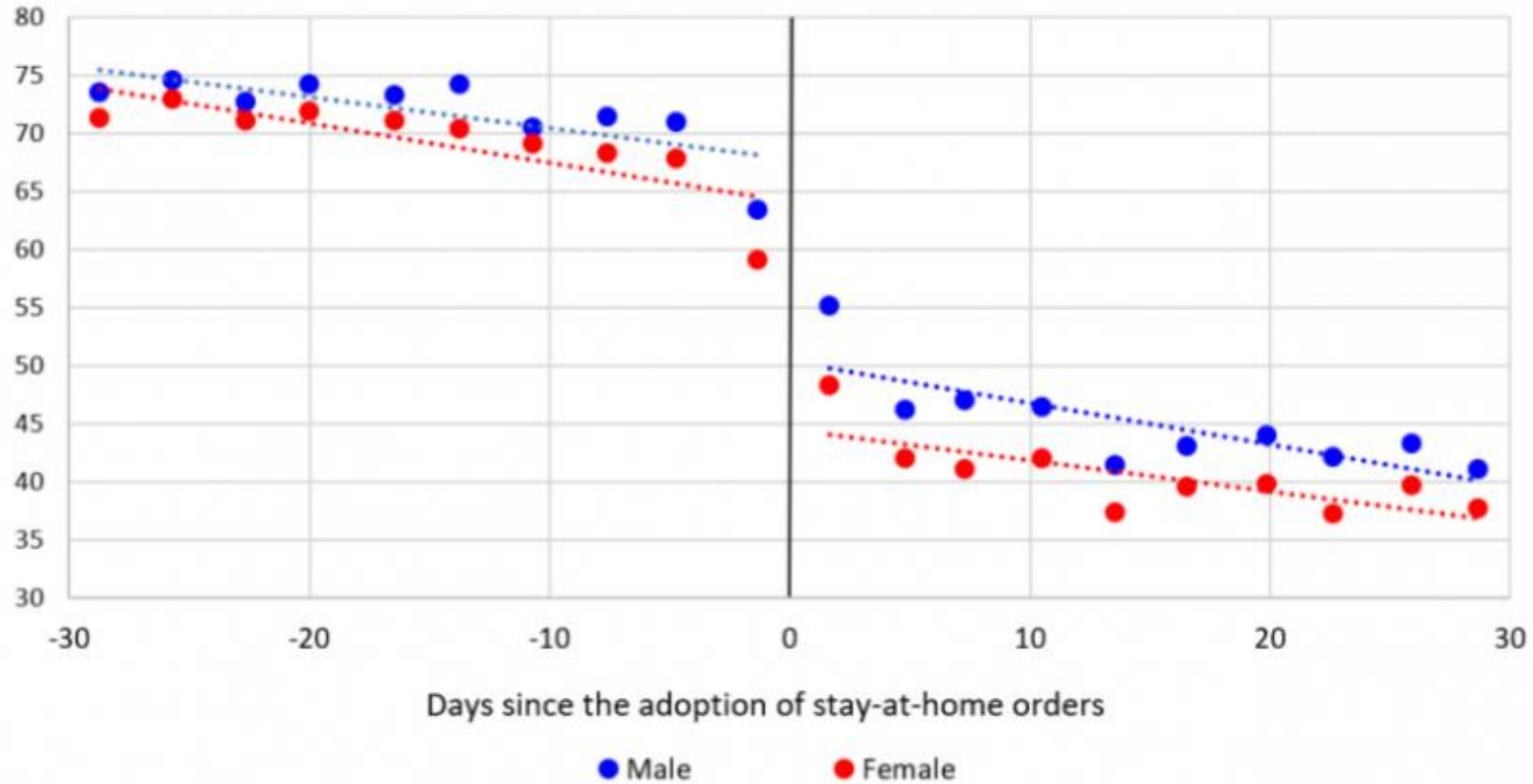
# Impact of COVID-19 and Lockdown/Restrictions

- Disruption in the food supply chain
- Reduced employment and income
- Reduced remittances
- Price increases and market closure, instability, increased cost of healthy food, impaired access
- Internal migration, spread of the disease, further impacts
- Diminished social services, health care and health services, school feeding, community-led services
- Deterioration of childcare practices due to quarantine, illness, death
- Many others, **all increasing vulnerabilities of the most vulnerable**

# Uneven impact across gender and age groups

Lockdowns halted movement of women more than men...

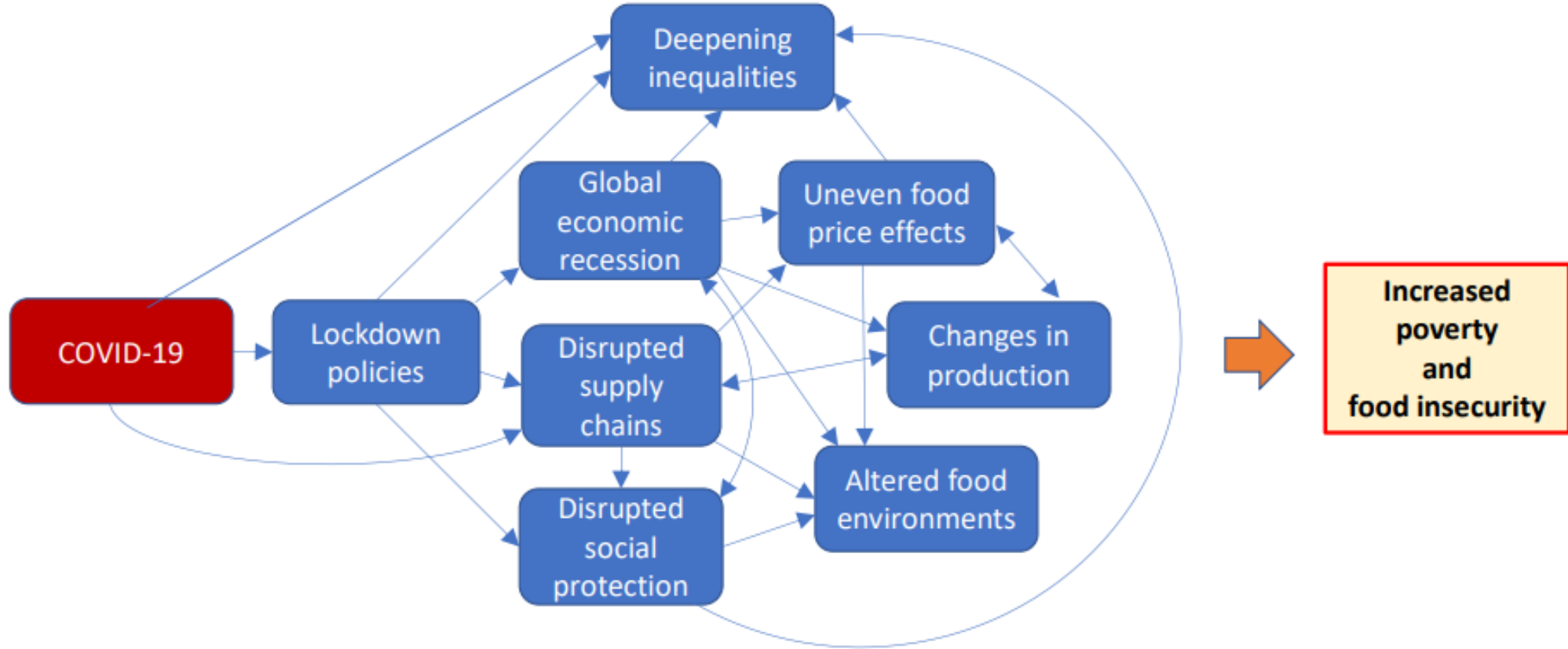
(percentage of people moving)



Sources: Vodafone, and IMF staff calculations.

Note: The sample includes Italy, Portugal, and Spain. The series are residualized with respect to province and day-of-the-week fixed effects. The x-axis is divided into 20 equally sized bins.

## The dynamics of COVID-19 that threaten food security and nutrition



# Impact of COVID-19: The Current Numbers

## 1. Chronic food insecurity – SOFI estimates

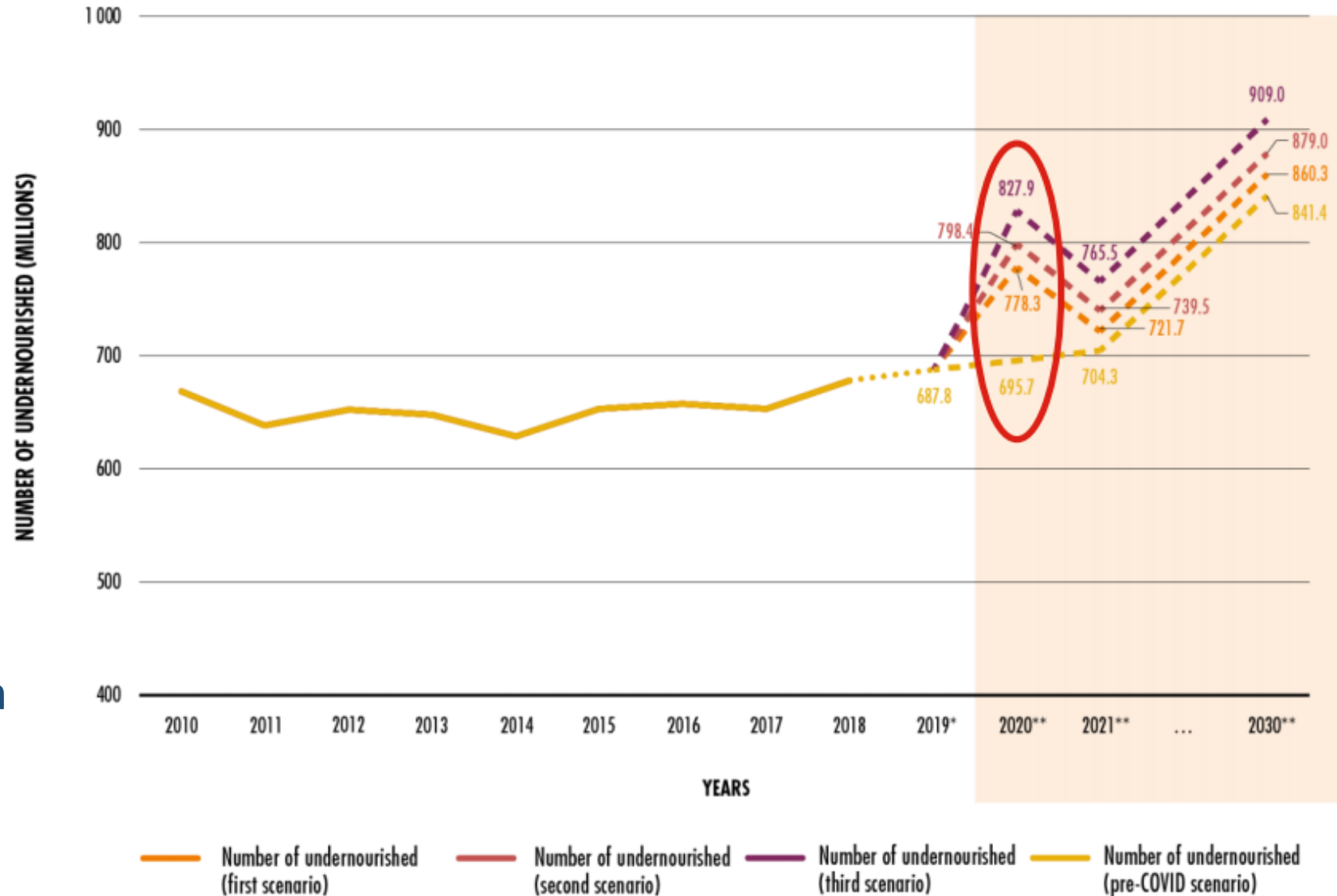
- A lot will depend on economic growth and increase in poverty – any slowing of growth is bad, a negative number is **dramatic**
- The impacts continue into 2021
- The outlook remains uncertain
- Estimates of economic growth continue to be refined, January 2021  
IMF estimates of economic growth are better than they looked in October and those were better than April 2020



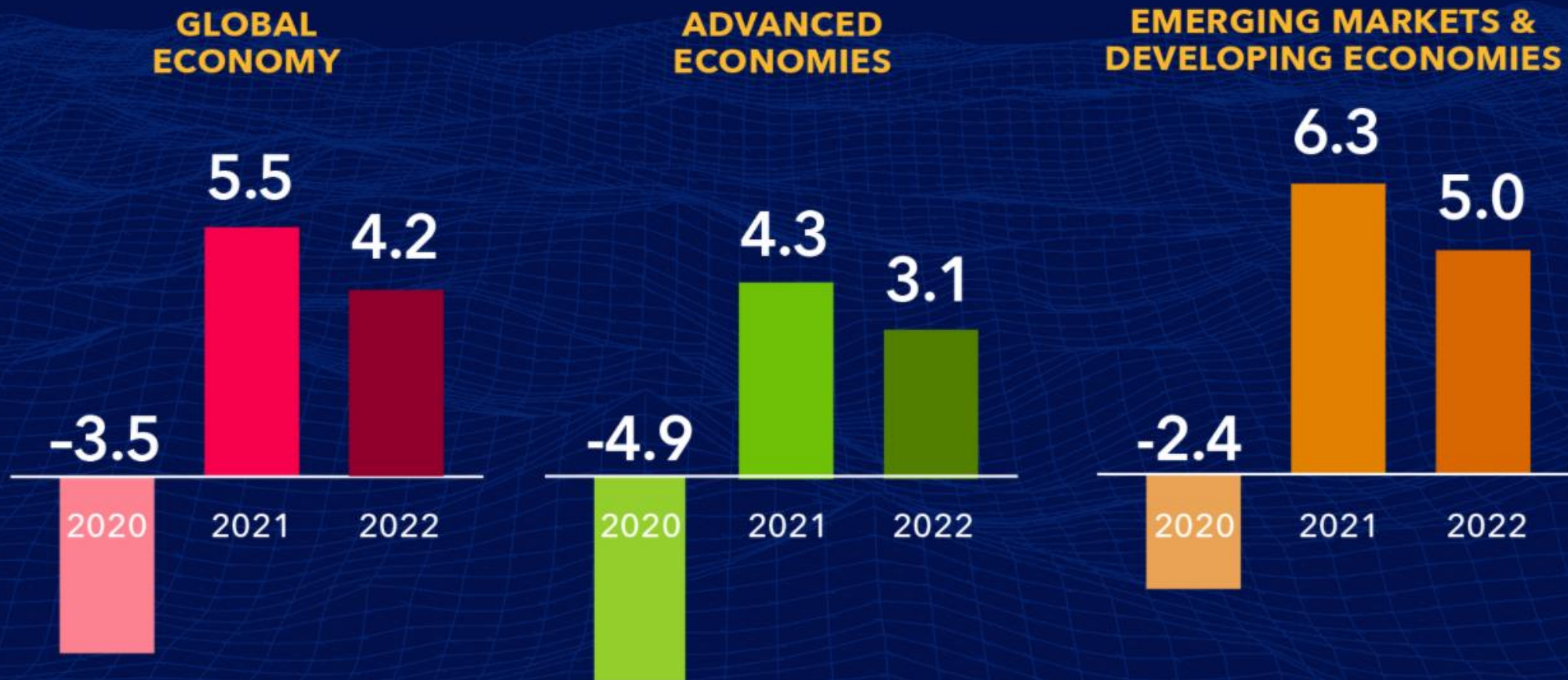


**COVID-19 pandemic may add between 83 and 132 million people to the total number of undernourished people in the world in 2020**

- 4.9% GDP decline > 83 million
- 7% decline > 102 million
- 10% decline > 132 million




# GROWTH PROJECTIONS



# Current Rough Estimate for 2020 Total Undernourished (POU)

2020 estimated economic decline from 2019 was

-3.5 percent  Additional undernourished population of around 75 million people, an increase of 11% attributable to the pandemic.

An important number, but not the complete picture of COVID-19 impacts.

For that we will need FIES results, anthropometric data, new household surveys where available

## Impact of COVID-19 (2): Acute food insecurity – IPC/CH latest reports

39 Countries analysed so far,  
additional **22.4 million** people  
**+ 21%**, IPC Phase 3 or above,  
with considerable variation  
due to national context and  
causes of crises.

If the similar increase applied  
to all 55 countries, global total  
would be around **163 million**

|    | Country                     | 2019               | 2020               | % change<br>in<br>vs. 2019 |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1  | Afghanistan                 | 11,286,353         | 13,154,519         | 17%                        |
| 2  | Angola                      | 562,000            | 562,000            | 0%                         |
| 3  | Burkina Faso                | 1,219,079          | 3,280,800          | 169%                       |
| 4  | Cabo Verde                  | 9,871              | 10,012             | 1%                         |
| 5  | Cameroon (7<br>regions)     | 1,368,372          | 2,685,039          | 96%                        |
| 6  | Central African<br>Republic | 1,809,109          | 2,362,737          | 31%                        |
| 7  | Chad                        | 640,874            | 1,017,358          | 59%                        |
| 8  | Côte d'Ivoire               | 59,028             | 229,552            | 289%                       |
| 9  | DRC                         | 15,577,676         | 21,834,713         | 40%                        |
| 10 | El Salvador                 | 302,258            | 684,118            | 126%                       |
| 11 | eSwatini                    | 232,373            | 366,261            | 58%                        |
| 12 | Ethiopia                    | 7,966,980          | 8,609,537          | 8%                         |
| 13 | Gambia                      | 187,564            | 136,586            | -27%                       |
| 14 | Guatemala                   | 3,060,871          | 3,727,600          | 22%                        |
| 15 | Guinea                      | 286,553            | 267,170            | -7%                        |
| 16 | Guinea-Bissau               | 131,170            | 153,132            | 17%                        |
| 17 | Haiti                       | 3,673,127          | 4,101,280          | 12%                        |
| 18 | Honduras*                   | 963,908            | XX                 | XX                         |
| 19 | Kenya                       | 3,096,614          | 1,883,261          | -39%                       |
| 20 | Lesotho                     | 433,410            | 582,169            | 34%                        |
| 21 | Liberia                     | 41,411             | 450,736            | 988%                       |
| 22 | Madagascar                  | 1,306,975          | 1,063,000          | -19%                       |
| 23 | Malawi                      | 3,306,405          | 2,549,703          | -23%                       |
| 24 | Mali                        | 648,330            | 1,340,741          | 107%                       |
| 25 | Mauritania                  | 606,647            | 609,180            | 0%                         |
| 26 | Mozambique                  | 1,689,408          | 2,674,922          | 58%                        |
| 27 | Namibia                     | 429,268            | 440,610            | 3%                         |
| 28 | Niger                       | 1,444,905          | 2,012,367          | 39%                        |
| 29 | Nigeria                     | 4,997,836          | 9,206,125          | 84%                        |
| 30 | Pakistan                    | 3,067,706          | 1,236,107          | -60%                       |
| 31 | Senegal                     | 359,646            | 766,725            | 113%                       |
| 32 | Sierra Leone                | 347,934            | 1,304,985          | 275%                       |
| 33 | Somalia                     | 2,094,000          | 2,100,000          | 0%                         |
| 34 | South Sudan                 | 6,956,000          | 6,480,000          | -7%                        |
| 35 | Sudan                       | 5,852,810          | 9,578,685          | 64%                        |
| 36 | Tanzania                    | 985,267            | 985,278            | 0%                         |
| 37 | Yemen                       | 15,900,000         | 13,479,500         | -15%                       |
| 38 | Zambia                      | 2,278,098          | 2,278,098          | 0%                         |
| 39 | Zimbabwe                    | 3,580,214          | 4,341,420          | 21%                        |
|    | <b>Total</b>                | <b>108,760,050</b> | <b>131,146,027</b> | <b>21%</b>                 |

# Concluding Thoughts

- The pandemic made the world much more aware of the complexity of food systems (supply chains, institutional segment of the market, importance of school feeding, food sector employment, etc)
- Reinforced the importance of healthy diets and their affordability (far from acceptable)
- Vivid examples of vulnerabilities to adequate food and nutrition and the importance of social safety nets
- Recovery from the pandemic provides an opportunity to put these lessons learned into policy and practice.