Balochistan and Sindh are two of Pakistan’s provinces having the highest prevalence of food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty. In 2020, the population faced multiple shocks including high food prices, locust outbreaks, rains/flooding/snowfall/drought, all exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this IPCC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, ten rural districts of Balochistan and nine rural districts of Sindh were analysed.

In total, around 3.8 million people (26% of the population analysed) are estimated to be facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) in the current period of March to June 2021, corresponding to the end of the lean season and the beginning of the harvest season. These include around 2.8 million people (19% of the population analysed) in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and almost 1 million people (7% of the population analysed) in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) across the nineteen districts analysed. At least 5% of the population analysed in all the districts is in Phase 4 in both Balochistan and Sindh, while between 20% to 35% in Balochistan and between 15% and 30% in Sindh are in IPC Phase 3 or 4.

When comparing with the previous IPCC Acute Food Insecurity analysis of Balochistan and Sindh, which took place in 2019, the situation appears to have improved substantially, in both magnitude and severity. However, food insecurity remains high, and urgent action is required to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps of people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and save lives and livelihoods of people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

### Key Drivers

- **High Food Prices**: Nationally, food prices went up by 9.1% for rural consumers on a year-over-year basis in February 2021. High food prices of commodities and high inflation led to low purchasing power of households, particularly for low income groups e.g., small farmers, wage labor, households relying on petty trades etc.

- **COVID-19**: COVID-19 had an economic impact on income and purchasing power, due to limited income opportunities in agriculture and the non-agriculture sector.

- **Locust Infestation**: Most of the districts analysed are heavily reliant on agriculture where locust infestation was experienced, that adversely affected food crop and fodder production.

- **Drought (Balochistan)**: Most of the districts falling under arid-zones with high dependency on rainfall did not receive rainfall between April and November, due to deficiency of pre-winter and winter rainfall, a moderate drought-like condition has emerged in southern and western parts of Balochistan.

- **Flooding (Sindh)**: The majority of the households in Sindh were also affected by heavy rain/flooding that affected agriculture crop production.

### Humanitarian Assistance

- **Improve access to food** through appropriate modalities such as cash and voucher assistance aimed at reducing food consumption gaps for populations classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3).

### Livelihood Support

- **Ensure timely provision of quality seeds for high-yielding crops and vegetables and toolkits, especially to subsistence level farmers**. In drought-prone areas, drought-resistant crop varieties should be introduced to ensure sufficient production. Support livelihood diversification activities for local communities to increase income-generation and employment opportunities, including training on ‘online business opportunities and management’.

### Livestock Programmes

- **Scale up livestock protection and management interventions** such as vaccination campaigns to prevent diseases and provide access to multi-nutritional feed and Pastures to help in preventing distress sales. Livestock programmes should target vulnerable households and women farmers.

### Water Infrastructure

- **Construct and rehabilitate water infrastructure for agriculture and livestock such as tube-wells, water channels and reservoirs for better conservation and management. Resilient water infrastructure can help in reducing the impact of recurring floods and droughts**.

### Recommended Actions

- **2.8M Population analysed**
- **11.9M Population analysed**
- **20%**
- **39%**
- **36%**
- **38%**

### Projected Acute Food Insecurity Situation and Assumptions (July - September 2021)

The analysis of the projection period (July-September 2021), corresponding to the post-harvest season, indicates that the number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above in Balochistan and Sindh is expected to reduce to 3.3 million (23% of the population analysed), which includes around 2.4 million people (17% of the population analysed) in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and over 0.8 million people (6% of the population analysed) in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency).

Projection classifications used the following assumptions: The COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on health, livelihood and food security of households will reduce with the availability of vaccines and increased awareness. Food stocks and livestock production will improve slightly because of the harvest. The Eid al Adha festival may benefit livestock holders in the month of July because of the significant increase in the demand for livestock. Livelihood opportunities for farming households are expected to increase slightly due to planting and harvesting of crops during the projection period. There will be uncertain climatic conditions (drought/flood), as forecasted by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), with the consequence of a possible increase in livestock diseases. Increasing food prices trend is expected to decrease or stabilise but remain high in comparison with the long-term average. Low purchasing power is expected to continue for rural households because of the lingering effect of COVID-19 and high food prices. Humanitarian Food Assistance is expected to continue at the same levels included in the current analysis.