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International Symposium

Sustaining peace: The **right to food** in conflict contexts and protracted crises

CIHEAM Zaragoza, Campus Aula Dei, Zaragoza (Spain)

25 November 2026



HYBRID FORMAT
with English-Spanish
interpretation





CONTEXT

Around one in six people around the world were estimated to have been exposed to conflict in 2025, which also saw the highest level of violence against civilians in the past five years.¹ Ten countries accounted for two-thirds of all people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 2025 while around 1.4 million people faced Catastrophe in 2025 (IPC/CH Phase 5).²

Armed conflict and violence are a primary driver of acute food insecurity in multiple mutually reinforcing ways, including through the displacement of civilians, the destruction of food systems and constraints on humanitarian access. Conflicts can fuel environmental degradation, exacerbating climate vulnerability and diverting resources away from humanitarian, mitigation and adaptation efforts. Conflicts hinder households' ability to access food in multiple ways. Gender-based and sexual violence violates women's right to life and can impede women's and girls' capacity to physically access lands, markets or natural resources, or even to access food aid. Conflicts can lead to increases in the price of food and food inputs, which hampers households' economic access to food.

Conflicts can be triggered or worsened by weather extremes, climate crises and competition over the changing availability and distribution of natural resources. Economic shocks can also lead to social unrest, violence, conflict, and political instability as a result of rising unemployment, and increasing levels of poverty.

Famines are not inevitable – they are almost always foreseeable, preventable and driven by human actions. Famine is considered a failure of the humanitarian system and tends to occur in contexts of conflict, extreme vulnerability, poverty and marginalization, where livelihoods and coping strategies have been exhausted and access to basic services is increasingly lacking. Greater coherence in political commitments, funding allocations and interventions along the humanitarian-food-peace-development nexus is needed. This includes acting early when signs of acute food insecurity and malnutrition appear, supporting livelihoods, and improving access to essential services, rather than relying on food assistance alone.

Persistent disconnects remain between humanitarian practice, localization agendas, protection frameworks, international humanitarian and human rights normative frameworks, underscoring the need for stronger dialogue, greater technical consensus and more coherent engagement across these communities. Bridging these divides is essential to support more principled, effective and context-responsive action, strengthen accountability, protect livelihoods and food systems, and promote locally grounded and sustainable recovery and resilience pathways in conflict and protracted crisis settings.

¹ Box 6, p. 22 <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9424en>

² <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd9424en>





PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 25 November 2026

09:00 Opening session

09:15 Introductory session. Ensuring the right to food in conflict contexts and protracted crises

09:30 Panel I. Prevention and early warning: anticipatory action to prevent violations of the right to food in conflict contexts and protracted crises

11:00 Coffee break

11:30 Panel II. Gender-based violence, structural discrimination and the right to food in crisis contexts: examining the right to food of women and people in situations of vulnerability and their strategies for resilience

13:00 Lunch break

14:15 Panel III. Armed conflicts, environmental degradation, and disruption of food systems

15:45 Coffee break

16:15 Panel IV. International cooperation, rights-based approaches and people-centered reconstruction for the recovery of food systems

17:45 Closing session



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