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Hunger Hotspots

FAO-WFP early warnings
on acute food insecurity

August to November 2021 Outlook



Global Network
Against Food Crises

Integrated
actions for
lasting solutions

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Cover Photo: © WFP/ Fredrik Lerneryd, Immaculée holds beans in her hand in Nyaruguru, Rwanda on 28th of May 2021.

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Acronyms

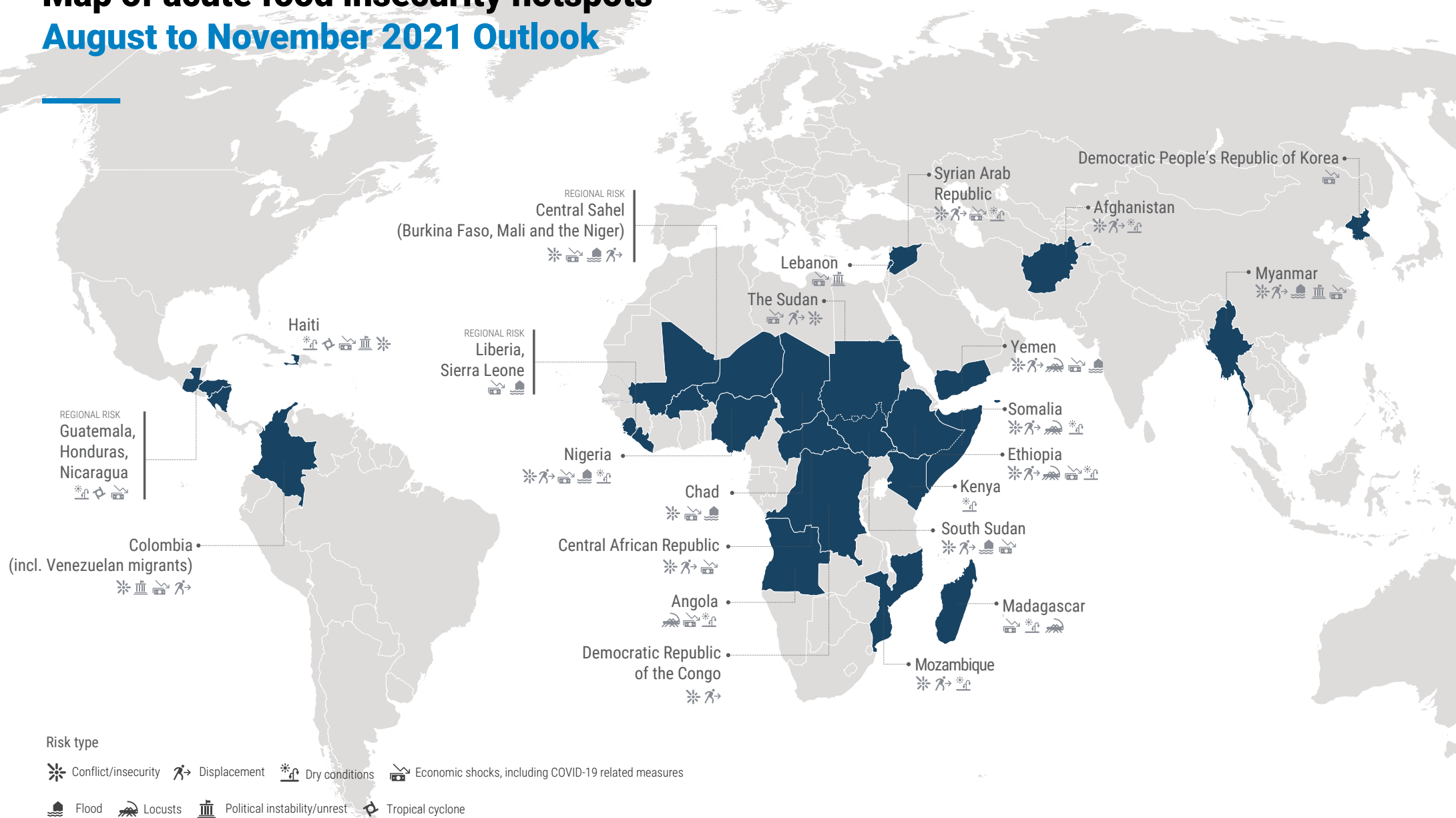
ASAL	Arid and semi-arid lands
AML	African migratory locust
CARI	Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security
CH	<i>Cadre Harmonisé</i>
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
DL	Desert Locust
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FSNAU	Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit
GDP	Gross domestic product
GRFC	Global Report on Food Crises
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
MML	Madagascar migratory locust
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSAG	Non-state armed group
rCARI	remote Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security
RRP	Regional Response Plan
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region
UN	United Nations
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

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Map of acute food insecurity hotspots

August to November 2021 Outlook



Source: FAO and WFP, July 2021. Map conforms to United Nations World Map, October 2020.

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Executive Summary

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) warn that in 23 countries and situations, acute food insecurity is likely to further deteriorate in the outlook period from August to November 2021.

Ethiopia and Madagascar are new highest-alert hotspots. In Ethiopia, up to 401 000 people are projected to be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) between July and September 2021 – the highest number since the 2011 famine in Somalia – due to the impact of conflict in Tigray region. The Famine Review Committee estimates a medium to high risk of famine in three out of four possible scenarios. In Madagascar, a total of 28 000 people are also at risk of famine by the end of 2021, due to the country's worst drought in 40 years.

South Sudan, Yemen and Nigeria remain highest alert level hotspots from the previous edition of this report, with an outlook of catastrophic situations. In South Sudan, famine was most likely already happening in parts of Pibor county between October and November 2020, and was expected to continue in the absence of sustained and timely humanitarian assistance. Two other areas remain at risk of famine. In Yemen, the risk of more people facing famine-like conditions may have been contained, but gains remain extremely fragile. In Nigeria, populations in conflict-affected areas in the northeast may be at risk of reaching catastrophic food-insecurity levels.

Among the other countries and situations highlighted in the report, those of particular concern are those with high numbers of people in critical food insecurity coupled with worsening drivers: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Honduras, the Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

Chad, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, Kenya and Nicaragua have been added to the list of hotspots, compared to the March 2021 edition of the report. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) is not included due to lack of recent data.

The report reiterates the alarming rate at which acute food security is rising globally, as was forewarned in the past three editions of the FAO-WFP Hunger Hotspots report. In 2020, 155 million people were estimated to be in acute high food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) across 55 countries/territories, up by 20 million from 2019; this negative trend is continuing well into 2021. Acute hunger is increasing not only in scale but also severity: overall, over 41 million people worldwide are now at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions, unless they receive immediate life and livelihood-saving assistance.

Conflict is expected to remain the primary driver of acute hunger, alongside economic shocks – including secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic – and natural hazard risks. Higher international food prices risk further constraining vulnerable households' access to food, as they transmit onto domestic food prices. The ongoing increase of climate hazards and weather extremes, and in their severity, is likely to continue during the outlook period, affecting livelihoods in several parts of the world.

Targeted humanitarian action is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods in 23 hotspots. Moreover, in 5 of these hotspots, humanitarian actions are critical to preventing famine and death. The report provides country-specific recommendations on priorities for emergency response, as well as anticipatory action to address existing humanitarian needs and ensure short-term protective interventions before new needs materialize.



Introduction

FAO and WFP are issuing an early warning for urgent humanitarian actions in 23 countries and situations – called ‘hotspots’ – where part of the population is likely to face fast deterioration of acute food insecurity that will put their lives and livelihoods at risk.

Identified through forward-looking analysis, these hotspots have potential for acute food insecurity to rise between August and November 2021, under the effects of often multiple drivers, interlinked or mutually reinforcing. These risks fall under the categories of violence and conflict, economic shocks, ongoing socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, weather extremes and climate variability, plant pests and diseases, and animal diseases. Drivers often co-exist and reinforce one another. As recounted by the 2021 Global Report on Food Crises, conflict continues to be the primary driver for the largest share of people facing acute food insecurity (around 65 percent), while the economic impact of the pandemic is of increasing immediate and long-term concern, as it plays into weakening currencies, rapid inflation, high food prices and widening unemployment, combined with increasing debt and low purchasing power. Weather extremes remain a significant driver, and a major one in some of the countries, through heavy rains, tropical storms, hurricanes, flooding and drought.

Targeted humanitarian action is urgently needed to save lives and livelihoods in 23 hotspots. Moreover, in 5 of these hotspots, humanitarian actions are critical to preventing famine and death. To this end, the report provides country-specific recommendations on priorities for a) anticipatory action: short-term protective interventions to be implemented before new humanitarian needs materialize; and b) emergency response: actions to address existing humanitarian needs.

Situations of acute food insecurity continue to escalate: In 2020, 155 million people were facing Crisis or worse – Phase 3 or above of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) or the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) – across 55 countries/territories covered in the Global Report on Food Crisis 2021.¹ This is a 20-million increase in comparison to the 135 million people reported for 2019. Over 41 million people worldwide are now at risk of falling into famine or famine-like conditions, unless they receive immediate life-saving assistance.² These deteriorating trends are mostly driven by conflict dynamics, as well as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include food price spikes, movement restrictions that limit market- and pastoralists activities alike, rising inflation, decreased purchasing power, and an early and prolonged lean season. Given a strict set of methodological parameters, the hotspot countries and locations were selected through a consensus-based process, which involved WFP and FAO Rome-based and field-based technical teams, as well as analysts specialized in conflict, economic risks and natural hazards.

The parameters employed in the forward-looking analysis include:

- Assessed current levels of recent or current food insecurity and malnutrition, especially in terms of deterioration compared to the same timeframe in the previous year, in order to account for the seasonality aspects;
- Assessed projections of acute food insecurity for the outlook period based on analysis of: a) primary and secondary drivers, which are economic shocks, adverse climate conditions and weather shocks, conflict and insecurity, political instability, and diffusion of plant pests and animal diseases; b) the socio-economic state of each country based on assessments of macro-economic stability (including, among others, debt stocks, foreign-exchange reserves, exposure to balance-of-payment crises), the impact of COVID-19 (including direct impact such as reduced fiscal space due to augmented budget deficits in 2020; and indirect impact such as the contraction of tourism revenues and remittances inflows), and the current rise of international food prices (especially for countries importing large shares of their food requirements);
- Absolute numbers of people projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) and the prevalence of these levels of acute food insecurity on the overall analysed population;
- Presence of natural hazards, economic and conflict risks that are likely to have a direct impact on food insecurity (such as unforeseen climatic shocks) or an indirect one (for example, increased internal displacement) over the outlook period;
- Planned and ongoing agricultural activities during the August-to-November period, and existing or likely disruptions caused by COVID-19-related restrictions or other contingent events;
- Absolute numbers of displaced populations; and
- Presence of operational and humanitarian access constraints.

The main sources of data on acute food insecurity (current and projections) are the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification and the *Cadre Harmonisé*. For countries where IPC/CH analyses were not conducted and where no recent analyses were available, estimates of the number of people in acute food insecurity were primarily derived from the IPC-compatible analysis of the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), WFP assessments using the Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI), including its application to remotely collected data, rCARI, and Humanitarian Needs Overviews.³ WFP’s open-access Hunger Map Live, and specifically near-real time data on insufficient food consumption, was used to inform trend analysis, and as a triangulation tool during the assessment phase.

The cut-off date for the analysis contained in this report is 7 July 2021.

This report is part of a series of analytical products produced under the Global Network Against Food Crises initiative, to enhance and coordinate the generation and sharing of evidence-based information and analysis for preventing and addressing food crises. In May 2021, the Global Network, in collaboration with the Food Security Information Network, released the 2021 Global Report on Food Crises; this provides further information on global acute food-insecurity figures in 2020. It is available at <http://www.fightfoodcrises.net> and <https://www.fsinplatform.org>.

IPC/CH acute food insecurity phase description and response objectives

PHASE	TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY RESPONSE OBJECTIVE
1 None/Minimal	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 Stressed	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 Crisis	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute malnutrition; OR • Are marginally able to meet minimum food needs but only by depleting essential livelihood assets or through crisis-coping strategies. 	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to protect livelihoods and reduce food consumption gaps.
4 Emergency	Households either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have large food consumption gaps which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality; OR • Are able to mitigate large food consumption gaps but only by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. 	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to save lives and livelihoods.
5 Catastrophe/ Famine*	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)	URGENT ACTION REQUIRED to revert/prevent widespread death and total collapse of livelihoods.

* Households can be in IPC Phase 5 Catastrophe even if areas are not classified as IPC Phase 5 Famine. In order for an area to be classified Famine, at least 20 percent of households should be in IPC Phase 5.

The classification of areas in Famine Likely is permitted when all IPC protocols for Famine classification are met, except for the existence of reliable evidence for all three outcomes – food consumption or livelihood change, global acute malnutrition (GAM), and crude death rate (CDR). Areas can be classified as Famine Likely if minimally adequate evidence available indicates that a Famine may be occurring or will occur. Famine and Famine Likely are equally severe, the only difference is the amount of reliable evidence available to support the statement.

Upcoming trends of food insecurity drivers

To identify hotspots, FAO and WFP have assessed how key drivers of food insecurity are likely to evolve and combine across countries in the coming months. Below is an overview of key findings:

Conflict risks

Key hotspots for intensifying violence include **Afghanistan, Central Sahel, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, northern Nigeria, northern Mozambique, Myanmar, the Sudan** and **Yemen**. In these, conflict and other forms of violence are likely to continue driving food insecurity. This can happen through population displacement, abandonment of agricultural land, loss of life and assets, disruption of trade and cropping, and loss of access to markets, for example. Crucially, violence is also likely to disrupt access to humanitarian assistance.

In **Afghanistan**, the ongoing withdrawal of foreign military forces could be completed as early as August, raising concerns over an ensuing escalation of violence, which may lead to additional people becoming displaced and pose serious challenges for humanitarian access. In **Myanmar**, armed conflict between the military and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) risks intensifying further, having already displaced 200 000 people since February.

The **Central Sahel** continues to face deteriorating security, with a consolidation of insurgent groups and a related rise in targeting of civilians and intercommunal violence. 2020 was recorded as the region's single most violent year. In the **Central African Republic**, continued pockets of escalation persist in the northwest and central regions of the country, with rising concerns over humanitarian access in the context of political tensions. **Nigeria** faces one of the sharpest deteriorations in its security environment in recent years, with a territorial consolidation by insurgents in the northeast and spreading violence in the northwest and Middle Belt. In **Chad**, attacks by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in the Lake Chad Basin are driving new displacement and are likely to continue.

In **Ethiopia**, according to the Famine Review Committee, there are three out of four possible scenarios with a medium to high risk of famine, and in all three, different levels of conflict escalation are a major factor. Ethnic violence is also likely to flare up and cause displacement, especially in Benishangul-Gumuz, Amhara and Oromia regions. Similarly, in **South Sudan**, the impact of the current lean season is projected to be the most severe on record, exacerbated by localized conflict across the country. **Somalia** is beset by ongoing tensions over the electoral process, which risks spilling into violence, alongside ongoing violence by NSAGs. In **Sudan**, a volatile security situation is likely to cause further displacement, and ethnic violence, particularly across Darfur, is likely to continue.

Eastern **Democratic Republic of the Congo** is likely to see a continuation of the insecurity that displaced an additional 2.2 million people in 2020, with the Government intensifying operations against NSAGs in North Kivu and Ituri.

Violence in northern **Mozambique** could further escalate after it has already intensified with the NSAGs' assault on Palma in March 2021, which drove the total number of displaced people to 732 000 by the end of April.

In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, conflict-intensity continues to fluctuate in the northeast areas, while **Yemen** faces a risk of conflict escalation, with the prospect of fighting spreading to Ma'rib city; this could displace hundreds of thousands of people.

Economic risks

The COVID-19 pandemic has had vast impact on the world economy, causing a 3.5 percent contraction of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2020.⁴ The International Labour Organization revised upwards to 8.8 percent the estimation of total working hours lost due to the pandemic.⁵ According to the World Bank, income losses caused by the health crisis and movement restrictions that most governments imposed worldwide have pushed approximately 97 million more people into poverty.^{6, 7, 8}

The economic impact of the crisis has been unequal across regions, and Latin America and South Asia have been hit particularly hard.⁹ Similarly, the recovery appears to be occurring unevenly. One critical factor behind this is the difference in the pace of the various vaccine roll-outs across countries and regions. The World Bank forecasts that while poverty rates have begun declining again in most middle- and high-income countries during 2021, in low-income nations they are expected to keep stagnating, and even increasing, at least until 2022, as a result of the macroeconomic deteriorations that the pandemic has caused.¹⁰ Higher debt levels, lower foreign-exchange reserves and reduced fiscal space are likely to cause further economic hardship and food insecurity in several low-income countries over the coming months; this is especially the case where the pandemic's economic impact has exacerbated significant pre-existing fragilities.

Food prices increased steadily from June 2020 to May 2021, led by a surge in prices of vegetable oils, sugar and cereals due to strong demand amid the economic recovery from the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.¹¹ Despite a weakening in June 2021, food prices, measured by the FAO Food Price Index, were more than 30 percent higher year on year.¹² High international food prices, together with elevated freight costs are likely to increase the global food import bill in 2021, especially in developing countries, where the demand for imported foodstuffs is on the rise.¹³ The countries' import capacity is likely to be curtailed by the negative impacts of the pandemic on local economies. High international food prices, once transmitted to domestic markets, will constrain food access of vulnerable households and negatively impact food security.

In 2020, almost all low- and middle-income countries were affected by pandemic-induced economic downturns. As a result, according to the 2021 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI), the increase in the number of undernourished people was more than five times greater than the highest increase in undernourishment in the past two decades. After remaining virtually unchanged for five years, the prevalence of undernourishment increased 1.5 percentage points in 2020 – reaching around 9.9 percent. More than half of the world's undernourished people are found in Asia (418 million) and more than one-third in Africa (282 million).¹⁴

In the **Near East and North Africa**, the economic impact of COVID-19 is overlapping with socio-economic damages caused by the protracted conflicts in **Yemen** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**, leading to a significant rise in poverty and food insecurity. In **Lebanon**, the pandemic aggravated the country's financial and economic collapse, ongoing since the end of 2019. This is poised to cause even-larger food inflation and deplete foreign-exchange reserves, which will further erode food security.

In **Latin America**, COVID-19 exacerbated the region's pre-existing economic fragilities, which are the result of a protracted period of stagnating growth. The region, consequently, has seen the strongest economic output decline and its recovery is expected to be below average in the coming months and years compared to the rest of the developing world.¹⁵ In **Haiti**, meanwhile, currency fluctuations and political instability have been continuously driving down the population's purchasing power. The Central American republics of **Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua** are expected to witness further economic difficulties in the coming months, due to the pandemic's effects on their fragile economies. **Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua** are additionally still recovering from the damages caused by hurricanes Eta and Iota.

In **Asia**, a major second wave of COVID-19 has slowed down the strong economic recovery the region was experiencing since the end of 2020 and led to the introduction of new stringent movement restrictions in several countries.¹⁶ In **Myanmar**, millions of people are pushed into poverty by the impacts of the 1 February military takeover, civil unrest which ensued, conflict and COVID-19, which in combination led to the largest economic downturn in the country's recent history. Several **African countries**, such as the **Sudan, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Liberia**, continue to see high levels of currency depreciation and food inflation, which is reducing people's purchasing power. Considering that some of these countries import substantial amounts of food to meet domestic needs, elevated international food prices will likely reduce food consumption of poor segments of the population in the coming months.

Natural hazard risks

Although **La Niña** conditions have subsided – after they contributed to severe rainfall deficits in **Afghanistan, Madagascar**, southwestern **Angola** and parts of **East Africa** – weather extremes and climate variability are likely to affect several parts of the world during the outlook period. In **Haiti**, reduced precipitation during the main growing season, which ended in May, is likely to have impacted yields, while continued below-average rainfall is likely to reduce yields for the main rice season. **Nigeria's Middle Belt** and the **Dry Corridor** in **Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua** are currently facing rainfall deficits, which forecasts predict will continue for the remainder of the season. This is likely to lead to reduced yields and crop losses, as well as less pasture for livestock. Drought conditions affected major crop producing areas in the east of the **Syrian Arab Republic**, and early indications from seasonal forecasts suggest, with moderate likelihood, another below average rainy season starting in September.

In **South Sudan**, above-average rainfall is expected to continue between July and September in most of the country, including

the northeast, southeast, central and northwestern parts, with an increased likelihood of major floods in some areas. This may lead to displacement and crop damages. These floods would follow massive ones in 2020, which displaced more than 1 million people in the country, nearly half of them in southeastern regions including Jonglei.

In central and eastern **Sahel**, the forecast is suggesting an increased likelihood of above-average rainfall, likely leading to flooding along the **Niger river**. Average to above-average rainfall is also expected in the **Gulf of Guinea countries**, with increased likelihood of flooding in low-lying areas.

Hurricane activity is forecast to be above-average in the **eastern Pacific** and the **north Atlantic**, increasing the risk of flooding, landslides, crop damage and reduced numbers of livestock in the **Caribbean** and coastal areas of **Central America**. Meanwhile, cyclone activity in the **northwestern Pacific** will enter its peak in August and September, also threatening the **Democratic People's Republic of Korea**.

Transboundary threats

Important desert locust infestations remained in the **Horn of Africa** at the beginning of July, while other regions were calm. Current field operations, as well as extreme vigilance, should be maintained in **Ethiopia**, northern **Somalia** and **Yemen**, among the hotspot countries. The effectiveness of current survey and control operations in northern Somalia and eastern Ethiopia will determine the scale of swarm migration to northeast Ethiopia, and the scale of breeding in the summer in the Afar region of Ethiopia will be influenced by the number of swarms arriving from the east and Yemen.

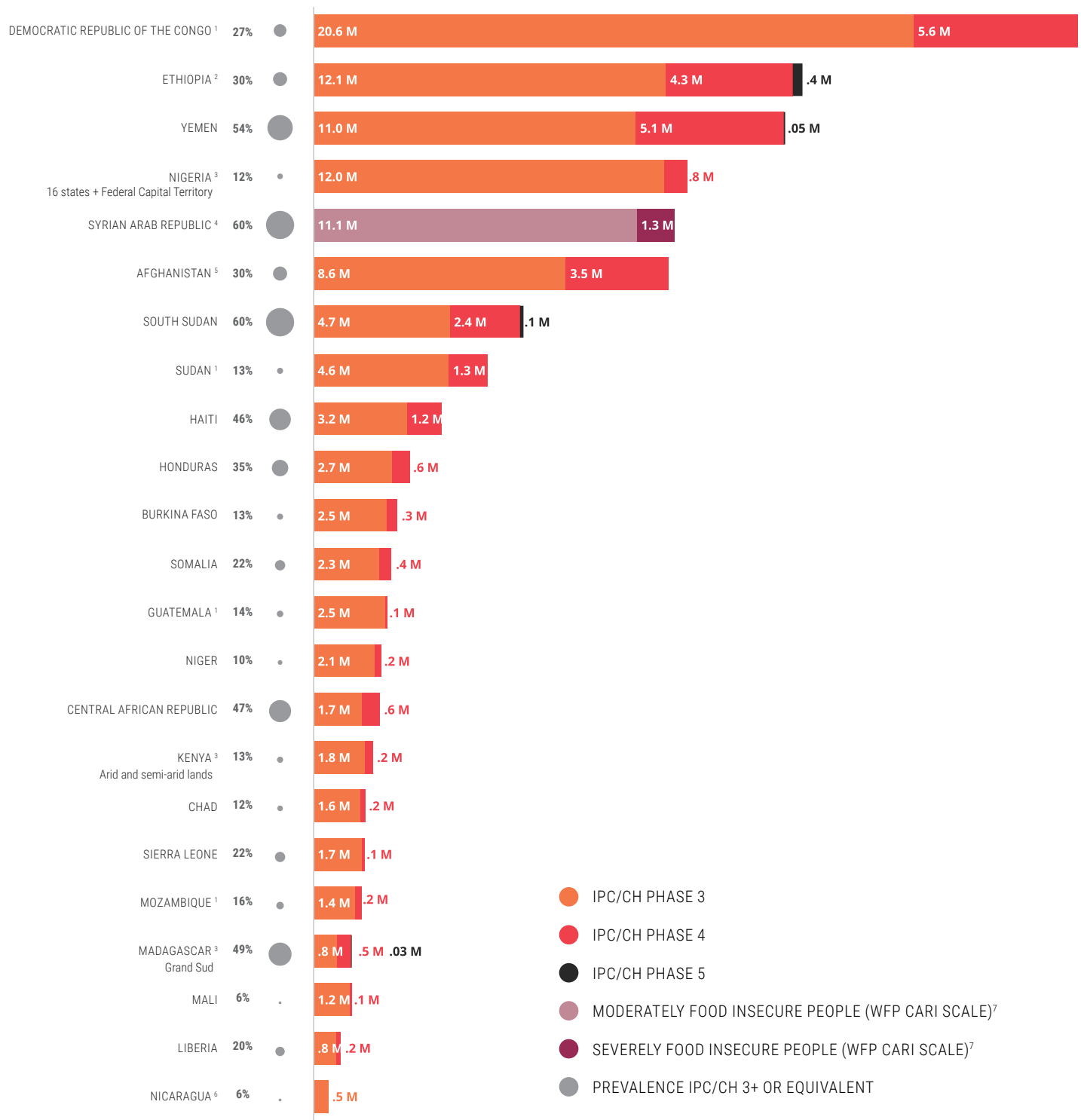
Low densities of African migratory locust (AML) are still prevalent in traditional breeding areas of Southern Africa, including among the hotspot countries **Angola** and **Madagascar**; the latter is affected by the Madagascar migratory locust (MML). No new outbreaks have been reported, owing to a combination of factors but more significantly the effects of a seasonal drop in temperatures. Monitoring of locust outbreaks is ongoing but currently being hampered by new COVID-19 regulations and restrictions on the movement of response and surveillance teams in the affected countries. The number of AML is likely to grow as we go into the hot season, which will require increased surveillance and monitoring from August 2021 to March 2022, to protect farmers in the next cropping season.

Aggravating factor: humanitarian access constraints

In all the hunger hotspots, as parts of the population are likely to face deteriorating levels of acute food insecurity, urgent assistance is required to protect the livelihoods of vulnerable people and increase their access to food. This would avoid a food emergency or, at the more critical levels, prevent starvation, death and the total collapse of livelihoods (IPC Phase 5). When access of humanitarian actors to people in need is restricted, the risk of deterioration rises. Humanitarian access is limited in various ways, including administrative or bureaucratic impediments, movement restrictions, security constraints and physical constraints related to the environment.

Number of people in acute food insecurity in hotspot countries

In 2021 (most recent projection), in millions.



The data presented is most recent projection, data is from 2021 except for the Syrian Arab Republic (2020). For the remaining hotspots, no recent IPC/CH or CARI data is available.

¹Most current data reported is non-peak. Peak numbers are presented in the graph on page 14.

²Less than 50% of population covered by IPC/CH. The IPC analysis released in May 2021 is an IPC global product. It is based on the conclusions reached by the Ethiopia IPC analysis team. This report has not been endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia. For July to Sep 21, IPC estimates are available for a smaller area in populations covered (Belg-dependent areas, with 7.4 M in IPC 3+ and 401 000 in IPC 5).

³Less than 50% of population covered by IPC/CH.

⁴Based on CARI. Data is from 2020. The 12.4 million include also 1.7 million people residing in camps which are considered highly food insecure and in need of full support according to the Whole of Syria Food Security Sector.

⁵Most current data reported is non-peak. Peak numbers are presented in the graph on page 14. Data from IPC projection based on Flowminder population.

⁶Based on FEWSNET estimate, upper bound of range is reported.

⁷The Consolidated Approach for Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) is used to classify individual households according to their level of food insecurity. All indicators included within the CARI approach can be incorporated within IPC analysis. The IPC technical manual provides guidance on where each indicator sits within the IPC analytical framework. For details see http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/manual/IPC_Technical_Manual_3_Final.pdf. Overall comparability between IPC/CH and CARI is not established.

Amongst the hunger hotspots, **Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia**, the **Syrian Arab Republic**, and **Yemen** are classified as having Extreme access constraints according to the recently published ACAPS Humanitarian Access Overview. Countries classified as having Very High constraints include the **Central African Republic**, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mozambique**, the **Niger**, the **Sudan**, and **South Sudan**.

Countries of highest concern

Countries with catastrophic situations: famine-like conditions or factors leading to a risk of famine.

New highest alerts are issued for **Ethiopia** and **Madagascar** for the outlook of August to November 2021. These countries add to **Yemen, South Sudan** and **Nigeria**, which remain highest alert hotspots also for this report.

While the humanitarian response is set to expand its outreach to most-at-risk populations with the creation of new humanitarian hubs, the conclusions of the most recent IPC analysis, and the alerts of the Famine Review Committee, remain valid in **South Sudan** in absence of signs of significant improvements across all the main food insecurity drivers.

Four *payams* (Gumuruk, Pibor, Lekuangle and Verteth) in western Pibor County have been facing famine likely conditions through the lean season running up to July, according to the projections of the Famine Review Committee. The committee had identified that famine was most likely already happening between October and November last year in these areas, and was expected to continue in absence of sustained and timely humanitarian assistance. Two other *payams* of Pibor County (Kizongora and Marow) were identified as being at risk of famine if conflict reached levels similar to 2020 and humanitarian access was disrupted.

For the lean season months of April to July in South Sudan, around 7.2 million people – or 60 percent of the population – were projected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) levels of acute food insecurity, including 2.4 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 108 000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). Compared to the projections for December 2020 to March 2021, the number of people facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Pibor and five other counties – Akobo, Aweil South, Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South – in Jonglei, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states, was estimated to increase by approximately 3 000 people during the lean season.

In the outlook period, these already critical levels of food insecurity could become worse, as all drivers of food insecurity are evolving in concerning directions. While armed violence has not escalated to levels close to 2020 so far, the security situation remains fragile. In June, intercommunal clashes involving several hundred people were reported in the Greater Pibor Administrative Area (Jonglei). Several parts of the country, mainly in the southeast and east, including Jonglei,¹⁷ are at a heightened risk of major floods from July to September. In parallel, households' access to food is likely to be further reduced due to increasing inflation, among the main factors.

As predicted in the last report, the impact of the conflict in the Tigray region has considerably aggravated already worrisome projections of acute food insecurity in **Ethiopia**. This situation is now reaching a catastrophic level and expected to further worsen in the outlook period. In Tigray, over 353 000 people were in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) already between May and June 2021, the highest number of people in such conditions since the 2011 famine in Somalia. The situation is expected to worsen through September 2021, with the number of people facing starvation and death (IPC Phase 5) expected to rise to 401 000 if humanitarian assistance is not provided.¹⁸ Overall, in *Meher-* and *Belg-*dependent areas of Ethiopia, 16.8 million people were estimated to be in high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between May and June 2021, including a total of 5.5 million people in Tigray and neighbouring areas of Afar and Amhara; of these, 2.1 million people are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).¹⁹ The Famine Review Committee estimated a medium to high risk of famine in three out of four scenarios, including a worst case scenario in which this could happen in the short-term (July – September).²⁰

Nationwide, rising food prices are increasingly affecting access to food within a deteriorating economic situation, while poor rainfall is likely to lead to below-average harvest levels in southern Tigray, eastern Amhara, eastern Oromia and northeastern parts of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR).

The high proportion of population in IPC 3 or above in Northern Ethiopia may overshadow the population in equally worrisome position (IPC 3 or above) in other parts of the country.

Since the last warning, the risk of more people facing famine-like conditions in **Yemen** may have been contained because of increased humanitarian assistance funding and outreach, although food security monitoring data suggest that anticipated seasonal improvements in food security made during the month of Ramadan are being reversed to pre-Ramadan levels.²¹

Between January and June 2021, 16.2 million people – or 54 percent of the total population – were projected to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above). Out of these, 5 million people were estimated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and approximately 47 000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), which were mainly located in Al Jawf, Amran and Hajjah governorates. The latter is an expected threefold rise from the 16 000 people recorded in December 2020. These projections assumed a significant reduction of humanitarian assistance due to an unfavourable funding outlook when the IPC analysis was undertaken. At present, humanitarian funding for food assistance is partly mitigating a previously worrisome funding outlook for 2021, which was stressed in the IPC projections. With the more positive funding outlook and despite continuous humanitarian access constraints, WFP has been gradually resuming monthly distributions. More than 350 000 people, in the 11 districts where 47 000 people were expected to face famine-like conditions, have received monthly assistance since February. An additional 6 million people, in the nine governorates with the highest rates of Emergency (IPC Phase 4) levels of acute food insecurity, are planned to receive monthly support starting from June. The attention on Yemen remains high, however, as these gains are fragile and any progress may be rapidly undone. From August to November, the factors that drive food insecurity show signs that suggest a further deterioration is likely and alarming trends in acute food insecurity are expected to continue.

The economic decline, featuring a downward trend of the Yemeni rial combined with the exhaustion of foreign-exchange reserves and the increase in fuel and food prices, will continue affecting people's purchasing power and access to food. Within the protracted conflict, more people may become displaced and there is a risk that conflict in Marib governorate will escalate. Small-scale breeding of desert locust, meanwhile, could negatively affect the agricultural sector, including smallholder subsistence farmers.

In **southern Madagascar** – under the effects of the worst drought in the past 40 years, combined with rising food prices and pests affecting staple crops – a sustained deterioration of acute food insecurity is expected to push 14 000 people into catastrophic acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 5) by September.²² This number is expected to double by the end of the year, with 28 000 people requiring urgent action to prevent widespread deaths and starvation. Around 1.1 million people – or 43 percent of the population analysed in the Grand South – are estimated to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) through September, including around 392 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

All people facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) conditions are in the district of Amboasary Atsimo, where nearly 75 percent of its population is in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above); 10 percent of households have virtually exhausted their coping strategies to access food and income, such as selling their productive assets, resorting to illicit or risk-induced activities, migrating or begging. Also of concern are the districts of Ambovombe, Ampanihy Ouest, Beloha and Tsihombe; they face critical levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 4), with 55 percent to 60 percent of their populations acutely food insecure and in need of urgent action to protect livelihoods, reduce food-consumption deficits and save lives. As households deplete their assets and exhaust their coping strategies, a total collapse of livelihoods is highly possible and, without timely assistance at scale, there is a risk of famine occurring in some areas by the upcoming lean season.

The situation remains extremely concerning in the conflict-affected areas of **northern Nigeria**, given the marked deterioration of acute food insecurity projected for this lean season (June to August), combined with an outlook of worsening food-insecurity drivers. Conflict is likely to rise further in Borno State, as well as violence in the northwest, in the coming months, driving further displacement and constricting already extremely challenging humanitarian access. Nationwide inflation and high food prices, meanwhile, are projected to increase further, affecting access to food.

The updated CH analysis issued in April confirms the overall trend of worsening acute food insecurity, which FAO and WFP warned of in the previous edition of the Hunger Hotspots analysis, with a slight improvement in the number of people affected by CH critical acute food insecurity (CH Phase 4).²³

In northern Nigeria, a total of 12.8 million people were expected to face Crisis or worse (CH Phases 3 or above) during the lean season (June-August 2021), including 798 000 people projected in critical acute food insecurity (CH Phase 4). This sharp deterioration in food security compared to the same period last year, with an

approximate 48 percent increase – up from 8.7 million people – is likely to continue in the coming months unless ongoing humanitarian assistance and resilience building are intensified.

The northwest is the area with the highest number of people in Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3, 5.7 million people projected in Kaduna, Katsina, Kano, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto and Zamfara), while the prevalence of acute food insecurity remained the highest in the northeast (Borno, Adamawa, Yobe).

The majority of people experiencing critical levels of acute food insecurity (CH Phase 4) remain located in some areas with ongoing conflict in the northeast, particularly in Borno State. It is estimated that over 800 000 people in these areas, who are projected to be in need of urgent assistance, cannot be reached by humanitarian agencies. In Borno State, the localities of Abadam, Dikwa, Marte, Guzamala and Kukawa, among others, as well as some hard-to-reach garrison towns, remain of extreme concern. Given the continuous deterioration of food-insecurity drivers, populations in these areas may be at risk of reaching catastrophic food-insecurity levels, facing starvation and death. In northern Nigeria, as of March, no population or area was projected to be in Catastrophe/Famine (CH Phase 5), but some food security indicators such as food-consumption patterns suggest that a proportion of the population (less than 10 percent) may be facing such dire conditions.²⁴

Explanatory note

Famine is the most severe type of hunger, and accordingly, it is the most extreme phase of the IPC scale. As per the IPC definition, famine occurs in areas where: "at least one in five households has or is most likely to have an extreme deprivation of food. Starvation, death, destitution and extremely critical levels of acute malnutrition are or will likely be evident. Significant mortality, directly attributable to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease, is occurring or will be occurring."²⁵ As such, famine classification and projections are subject to a rigorous technical process at country level which is validated by an external Famine Review Committee led by international food security nutrition and mortality experts.

The information contained in this section should therefore not be interpreted as a statement that famines are imminent in these countries.

The purpose of this section is to highlight those situations where specific factors are contributing to a risk of famine should certain conditions persist.

It is important to note that talking about the risk of famine does not mean that famine is the most *likely* scenario in these contexts but that it is a *possible* outcome. Given the severity of these situations, an understanding of the key drivers and how they may deteriorate over the forthcoming period provides critical early warning information which can support a scale-up of monitoring efforts as well as advocacy and interventions to curb further deterioration. Within the framework of the IPC, work has been initiated to define technical parameters and processes to better identify countries and areas facing a risk of famine. At this early stage, the following context-specific parameters are tentatively being considered, among others, to work towards the identification of contexts facing a risk of famine: prevalence of IPC Phase 4 in the population, constraints to humanitarian access and co-presence of compounding shocks to food security.

Other countries of highest concern

Afghanistan, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and **Haiti**, as well as the **Sudan** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**, are hotspot countries of imminent concern. In each of these countries, over one million people are estimated or projected to experience critical acute food insecurity (IPC/CH Phase 4), or are severely food insecure as per WFP's CARI or rCARI methodology, or with a high prevalence rate, combined with worsening food insecurity drivers. In these countries, life-threatening conditions are expected to intensify in the outlook period up to November 2021, as a result of worsening conflict or armed violence, economic decline, weather extremes and climate variability, often combined with humanitarian access constraints.

In **Afghanistan**, a total of 3.5 million people are expected to face IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) from June to November.²⁶ While this may be a slight improvement in acute food security in comparison to the March-to-May period, the situation may become more critical in the outlook months. This is due to the impact of severe drought, combined with rising displacement resulting from the intensification of conflict, COVID-19 secondary impacts, high food prices and widespread unemployment.

Without yet counting the disruptions and displacement caused by the volcanic eruption in Goma – where most of the IDPs had returned as of June – and potential conflict escalation in North Kivu and Ituri regions, over 5.6 million people are already estimated to face critical acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** between August and December 2021.^{27,28} The country continues to have the highest estimated number of food-insecure people worldwide, given the combination of protracted violence, natural disasters, epidemics, refugee inflows, economic decline and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19.

Expected declines in crop production, due to below-average and irregular rains, political instability, worsening food inflation and the effects of COVID-19-related restrictions, will underpin alarming levels of acute food insecurity in **Haiti**, where 1.2 million people were estimated to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between March and June. Increasing gang-related violence and reduced mobility due to recurrent civil unrest are further affecting households' access to food in urban areas.

In the **Sudan**, over 2.7 million people are projected to be in critical acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) during the peak lean season (June to September), as a result of a deteriorating economy marked by exceptionally high food prices and continuing localized conflict triggering displacement. During this past year, the proportion of people in this critical condition has increased by 1 percentage point, or more than 500 000 people.

In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, the impact of the protracted conflict and economic crisis on food security is likely to increase beyond the already alarming figures that WFP recorded in February 2021, when 12.4 million people – over 60 percent of the population – were identified as food insecure based on the CARI methodology, including 1.3 million severely food insecure people. Among the 12.4 million, there were also 1.7 million people residing in camps, which

are fully dependent on external assistance. In the outlook period, food insecurity is likely to be exacerbated by ongoing economic deterioration, a reduced cereal harvest, increasing difficulties in securing supplies of essential items, and fluctuations in localized conflict intensity in the north.

In addition, the **Central African Republic** and **Honduras**, are hunger hotspots, with more than half a million people experiencing critical food insecurity levels (IPC Phase 4).

In the **Central African Republic**, despite the scale-up of food assistance, the estimated number of people in critical food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) has increased to 633 000 in the April to August projection, up by 100 000 people compared to earlier projections for the same timeframe, while high levels of violence and insecurity are expected to persist and prices to continue rising; this will further affect access to food. The gains from assistance are fragile, as humanitarian operations are beset by insecure funding and high access constraints, in light of rising targeting of humanitarians. Access challenges are acute in Ouham, Ouham-Pendé and Haut-Mbomou prefectures, which also host high numbers of people facing critical food insecurity.

The food security situation in **Honduras** is projected to further worsen between July and September 2021, given that about 3.3 million people are expected to face Crisis or worse, including almost 615 000 in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This is likely to be exacerbated by the rising fuel and food prices, which are reducing households' purchasing power.

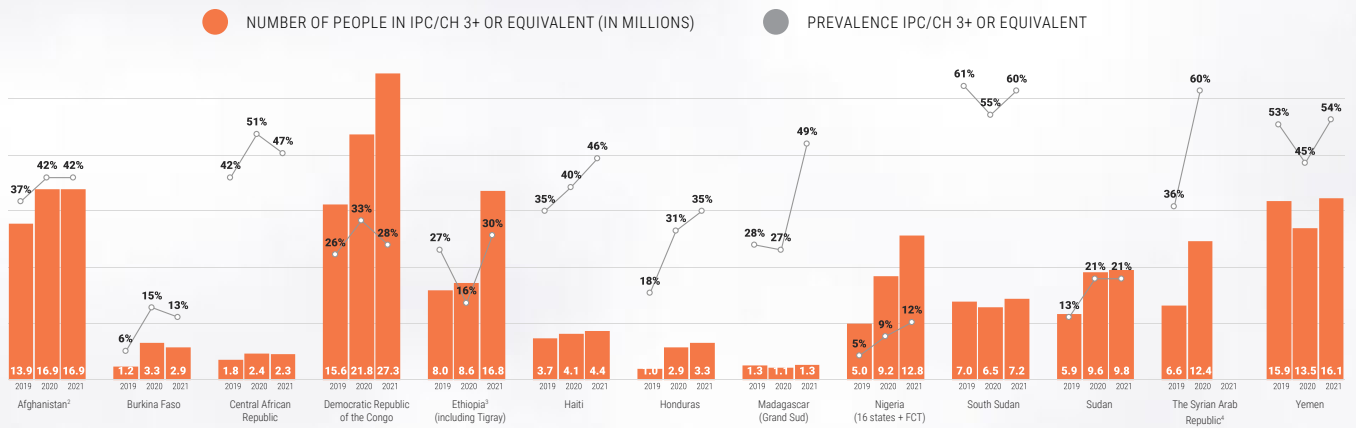
For **Burkina Faso**, the alert level compared to the last report is lowered, due to a slight decrease in food insecurity numbers, including no people in IPC Phase 5 and a significant scale-up of humanitarian assistance. However, given much higher food insecurity levels than the average of the past few years, the situation in Burkina Faso remains very concerning. In the latest CH analysis, a total of 2.9 million people are expected to face Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) between June and August, including more than 344 000 people in Emergency (CH phase 4), up by around 100 000 people compared to earlier projections for the same timeframe. Forced displacement – which already quadrupled in just two years due to a protracted security deterioration – is expected to continue rising, with further impact on livelihoods and food insecurity. This adds to the secondary impacts of COVID-19, which is restricting the movement of people and animals and slowing down trade, and a harsh and prolonged lean season up to September.

In **Colombia**, disruptions due to protests have compounded secondary COVID-19 impacts, leading to an economic crisis. This has significantly affected the food security situation of both Colombians and Venezuelan migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. In 2020, 3.5 million people were severely food insecure, based on WFP's rCARI reported in the 2021 Humanitarian Needs Overview.²⁹ Additionally, there were 460 000 severely food insecure Venezuelan migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Colombia (based on WFP rCARI).³⁰

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), despite being a country of high concern, could not be comparatively assessed. Reasons for this include unavailability of updated food insecurity data, comparable projections or food insecurity trends.

Acute food insecurity trends in the hotspots of highest concern

2019-2021¹ peak numbers and prevalence



¹ Data for 2021 is considered as expected peak based on information available as of July 2021. For the Syrian Arab Republic, no data is available for 2021.

² Based on Flowminder population data.

³ 2021 peak number is a combination of the Dec 2020 IPC covering entire Ethiopia and the May 2021 IPC covering Tigray, Amhara and Afar. The IPC analysis released in May 2021 is an IPC global product. It is based on the conclusions reached by the Ethiopia IPC analysis team. This report has not been endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia.

⁴ Based on CARL.

Disclaimer: Comparison over time indicates a general trend however comparability issues exist in terms of (i) geographical/population coverage for Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Significant increase of population analysed), Ethiopia (Significant increase in population analysed), Honduras (Significant increase in population analysed), Nigeria (Only part of the population covered. In 2020, the state of Zamfara was not analysed) and Sudan (In 2019, the state of West Darfur was not analysed) and in terms of (ii) analysis time periods for Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Honduras, Nigeria, Yemen. Caution in reading and using this analysis should be observed.



Country Narratives

Asia and Pacific

Afghanistan

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict and drought

In Afghanistan, the security situation is expected to further deteriorate in the wake of the withdrawal of international military forces, which is progressing rapidly and could be completed as early as August. Amid fiercely intensified hostilities, non-state armed groups have made significant territorial gains in past weeks and the levels of violence have risen significantly and are likely to cause further displacement within and outside the country.³¹ So far, 92 000 people have been forcibly displaced in 2021.³² Decreasing security also poses major challenges for humanitarian access in an already highly constrained context, with Afghanistan classified among the 10 countries with Extreme access constraints by ACAPS.³³

In June, the Government officially declared a drought in the country due to effects of La Niña, which have persisted into spring. Drastically reduced rainfall has caused food and water scarcity across 25 provinces, at a level not seen since the drought of 2018, which displaced a quarter of a million people. The weather has impacted winter wheat crop in 2021, with rainfed wheat-crop production down by 62 percent when compared to 2020. As a result, the wheat deficit has doubled since 2020.³⁴

In the outlook period, decreased production and high food prices are likely to reduce livelihood opportunities for casual agricultural labour,³⁵ constrain farmers' incomes, force herders to carry out distress sales or abandon their rural livelihoods, and drive up debt such that vulnerable families are forced to migrate.³⁶ Remittances have been further affected by the severe economic situation in neighbouring Iran. Food insecurity will likely become even more critical over the next few months, due to the impact of displacement, COVID-19, high food prices and widespread unemployment. Food prices could increase further in the outlook period due to reduced local production and increased import prices.

Between June and November 2021, a slight improvement in food security in comparison to the March to May period is expected, with 8.6 million people in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and 3.5 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).³⁷ However, while IPC numbers indicate an improvement, the impact on livelihoods of the ongoing drought-like conditions may further aggravate these projections.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute livestock protection kits with veterinary support in areas where pastures are depleted due to drought, especially targeting vulnerable Kuchi herders throughout their migration to lower elevations.
- Make use of food- or cash-for-assets programmes to repair water-management systems (to either improve water flow or to mitigate the potential risk of flooding, which commonly follows drought) in safe areas, so farmers and herders can continue to earn an income.
- Establish community gardens in pre-identified "safe spaces", allowing families to access fresh food despite increasing conflict or instability. This can include the provision of alternative livelihood options such as backyard poultry – especially targeting women – to not only produce food but also generate income.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The 2021 update of the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) calls for USD 553.9 million for food security and agriculture, and USD 72 million for nutrition interventions.
- Increase unconditional cash transfers for people in rural and urban areas as a short-term income boost to meet their emergency needs for food, nutrition and other essentials.
 - Provide emergency food and livelihood assistance to people in IPC Phase 3 or above, including people not yet covered by current programmes.
 - Increase coverage for prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition in drought and conflict-affected areas. Wherever possible, these interventions should be delivered as part of an integrated package of health, nutrition, and water and sanitation services.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Key drivers of food insecurity: limited humanitarian access and trade disruptions

Concerns are mounting over the food security situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, due to strained access and the potential impact of trade limitations, which may lead to food gaps.

Since the early stages of the pandemic, the country has imposed strict measures, including border controls and restrictions to trade and domestic travel,³⁸ which are likely to continue throughout the outlook period. Humanitarian access is highly constrained and tightly controlled by the authorities.³⁹ Food production was further impacted by climate extremes in 2020, including several typhoons, and by heavy rainfall from early August to mid-September 2020.⁴⁰ The ongoing cyclone season will reach its peak between August and October.

While data is extremely limited, the recently published food balance sheet by the country's Central Bureau of Statistics, and further

analysis by FAO's Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), highlight a worrying cereal deficit. As in previous years, the total need for cereals exceeds domestic availability, with the total import requirements (in cereal equivalent) estimated at 1.1 million tonnes for the 2020/21 marketing year (November/October) – close to the five-year average.⁴¹ However, with commercial imports officially planned at 205 000 tonnes, the uncovered food gap over the coming months is estimated at 860 000 tonnes, equivalent to approximately 2.3 months' worth of food use.⁴² Measures to facilitate the import of bilateral and multilateral food assistance, and/or significant levels of commercial imports, will be required if this gap is to be covered. Otherwise, households could experience a harsh lean period, particularly between August and October, when the 2021 main season is harvested.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Support the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in establishing corridors to increase cereal imports, taking into account measures to prevent a further spread of COVID-19.
- Advocate for conducting crop and food security assessments.
- Closely monitor climate risks and, in particular from May to October, typhoons, which could further compound the situation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- With the Government, survey ongoing programming, and work with agencies and donors on ways to redirect resources to address the potential food gap.

Myanmar

Key drivers of food insecurity: political unrest, economic instability, conflict and intercommunal tensions, natural hazards, and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19

The 1 February military takeover, civil unrest which ensued, and intensified conflict have reversed hard-earned development gains in Myanmar, coming on top of the significant economic losses caused by COVID-19 which continue until the present.

Armed conflict between the military and NSAGs has been intensifying. This is driving further displacement, disrupting agricultural activities and limiting humanitarian access, rated as extremely constrained by ACAPS.⁴³ More than 200 000 civilians have been displaced since the beginning of February.^{44 45}

In a worst-case scenario, UNDP estimates that nearly half of the population could fall into poverty by the beginning of 2022, doubling the rate of 2017.⁴⁶ The economy is expected to contract by 10 percent in 2021.⁴⁷ Job losses, high food and fuel prices, plus declining remittances, are impacting vulnerable households' access to food, particularly families living in informal settlements on the outskirts of towns. The ongoing COVID-19 third wave in the region has also hit Myanmar, where cases are increasing.

This is expected to have a negative impact on food systems and add pressure on food security, as critical land-preparation activities for the upcoming monsoon cropping season (rice and maize) will be disrupted, including access to agricultural inputs and hiring of agricultural labourers. In addition, the monsoon season (June to October) adds another layer of risk, placing pressure on infrastructure and transport systems, which can become easily overwhelmed due to heavy downpours or flooding. The months from July to September are likely to be the hardest, as the peak of the lean season could force the most vulnerable people to significantly increase their use of negative coping mechanisms.

Up to 3.4 million additional people could be at risk of food insecurity due to the economic slowdown between April and September. At the peak of COVID-19 in mid-2020, the scale of food insecure people was estimated at about 2.8 million.⁴⁸ Active conflict, the presence of checkpoints, disruptions of transport, banking-system disturbances and COVID-19 containment measures are severely constraining the delivery of humanitarian aid. Humanitarian access is categorized as facing Very High constraints.⁴⁹

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Support farmers with agricultural inputs such as vegetable seeds, fertilizers and poultry feed, to improve their income and nutrition, and support local community market conditions (including for the benefit of non-farming households). Such inputs will further ensure that farmers can partake in the monsoon season agricultural activities and ease the impact of the lean season in September.
- Establish green corridors for rural farmers and fisherfolk to sell produce in peri-urban and urban areas, once monsoon harvests of rice, maize and vegetables become available.
- Conduct cash-for-work activities to support landless labourers, targeting newly displaced people and landless families.
- Provide preservation equipment to fisherfolk who have problems accessing markets, to ensure the long shelf-life of products.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The 2021 HRP calls for USD 79.3 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 21.2 million for nutrition interventions.
- Continue and further expand food and cash-based assistance to vulnerable households in rural, urban and peri-urban areas.
 - Integrate malnutrition-prevention activities for the most vulnerable (children under 5 years of age and pregnant and lactating women) with general food distributions.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Colombia (including Venezuelan migrants)

Key drivers of food insecurity: political instability and economic crisis

Since the end of April, social discontent amid the third and most severe wave of COVID-19 infections has translated into protests that have disrupted economic activities nationwide. Protests have caused road blockades, which have paralyzed imports and exports, and caused shortages of fuel, food and other supplies.⁵⁰ Many agricultural producers have reportedly been unable to conduct activities or are at risk of losing crops due to lack of inputs such as fuel and fertilizers. Thousands of jobs have been lost in the sector, and blockades have resulted in challenges to the transport of agricultural products to markets.⁵¹ This could have significant implications for an already alarming food insecurity situation – despite favourable production prospects for the 2021 crop season – with harvest of the main maize and rice season due to end in September.

An end to unrest is not in sight, considering that the protest leadership is fragmented and negotiations with the Government have recurrently failed. The impacts on food markets are estimated to have significant implications on the already escalating acute food insecurity situation. In parallel, food inflation increased by over 9 percent year-on-year in May 2021, likely because of supply chain disruptions, among other factors.⁵² Due to the secondary effects of COVID-19, poverty levels reached 42 percent in 2020. This amounts to 3.5 million additional people falling below the poverty line and brings the total of people at potential risk of losing access to food to 21 million.⁵³

The domestic currency has lost 7 percent of its value since January 2021 and is likely to depreciate further on international markets

following a downgrade of the country's debt in May, with potential for further downgrades.⁵⁴ This could result in further currency depreciation, affecting the import of food and agricultural inputs, and therefore access to food.

Additionally, the number of displaced people more than doubled from January to May 2021 compared to the same period in 2020, and at least 27 000 people have been confined due to insecurity. Most violent events occur in rural areas and affect peasant and ethnic populations; they could continue to weaken the productive capacities of vulnerable communities and increase dependence on food assistance.⁵⁵

According to the Humanitarian Needs Overview, in 2020, there were 3.5 million severely food insecure people in Colombia,⁵⁶ and 73 percent of the 1.7 million people making up the Venezuelan migrant, refugee and asylum seeker population in Colombia was moderately or severely food insecure, both based on WFP rCARI methodology.⁵⁷ With the deterioration of the economic situation, food assistance needs for the Venezuelan migrant, refugee and asylum seeker population in Colombia could increase in 2021, particularly considering they rely strongly on the informal labour market and lack access to public services. The situation of refugees, asylum seekers and migrant populations across the region, particularly Ecuador and Peru – which host more than 1 million and more than 400 000 Venezuelans, respectively – is also likely to deteriorate, as these economies continue to experience the secondary effects of COVID-19.⁵⁸

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute cash to the most vulnerable people in rural and urban areas, to mitigate the impact of expected increases in food prices on food security.
- Provide essential agricultural inputs to vulnerable rural communities – where an increased risk of high prices or scarcity of inputs could affect rural agricultural livelihoods – in order to protect local food production.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 34.6 million for food security, nutrition and livelihood interventions.
- Support Venezuelan migrants and host communities in bordering rural areas by rehabilitating water systems, establishing areas for rapid food production, and supporting rapid fodder production (fodder banks, protein banks and live fences).
 - Advocate for immediate resources – and access – to deliver emergency food and livelihood assistance to the most vulnerable, including people not yet covered by food assistance and/or social protection programmes.

Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

Key drivers of food insecurity: below-average rainfall, and the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19

The food security situation in Central America, particularly in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras, is expected to continue worsening as a result of rainfall deficits in May and a below-average rainfall forecast for July. This will have negative consequences on crop yields during the main cropping season – the *Primera* – compounded by the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Erratic and uneven rains in May delayed planting and affected crops, particularly in Dry Corridor areas in eastern Guatemala, southern Honduras, and western and eastern Nicaragua. This follows on the heels of last year's damage to crops, livestock and fisheries during hurricanes Eta and Iota. Continued below-average rains, forecast for July over northern Guatemala and southeastern Honduras, may continue to threaten crop conditions. In addition, there is a risk of flooding and further crop damage, especially in low-lying areas, as a result of the forecast above-average hurricane season (June to November) in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean.

Despite a moderate likelihood of average to above-average rainfall for the second harvest season – the *Postrera* – (mid-August to November), vulnerable households who are recovering from livelihood losses following the 2020 hurricanes, and potential reduced crop harvests in the *Primera* season, are likely to continue to resort to negative coping strategies. Household purchasing power in rural and urban areas of Central America continues to suffer under the

secondary effects of COVID-19, which is particularly impacting key sectors such as tourism, and disproportionately affecting the informal sector.

The food security situation in Honduras is projected to further worsen between July and September 2021: about 3.3 million people are expected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), including almost 615 000 in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This is likely to be exacerbated by rising fuel and food prices, which are reducing households' purchasing power.

In Guatemala, a total of 3.5 million people are projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) by August 2021, including over 174 000 in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), also due to the lean season. This is expected to decrease to 2.5 million people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between September 2021 and January 2022.⁵⁹

In El Salvador, over 1 million people are projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) by August 2021.

In Nicaragua, 250 000 to 500 000 people are estimated to be in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or worse, or equivalent) between April and July,⁶⁰ with their food security situation likely to worsen further in the upcoming months. Poor households are still recovering from the impact of hurricanes Eta and Iota last year, which caused localized damages to agricultural production and fisheries and affected around 100 000 hectares of cropland.⁶¹

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Increase water harvesting and storage and set up new micro-irrigation systems, to support the most vulnerable farmers in cultivating crops, raising fish and covering their household consumption, with emphasis on women and youth.
- Support farming households with inputs and tools to cultivate short-cycle crop varieties and backyard gardening kits for rapid food production to mitigate impacts of rainfall deficits during the primera agricultural season.
- Provide livestock keepers with animal-health support to reduce drought-induced mortality and morbidity, such as vaccination kits and treatments. Distribute fodder seeds that allow them to set up pasture plots rapidly for direct grazing.
- Provide resources and technical assistance to strengthen seed processing and storage infrastructure of community seed banks, with emphasis on those led by women producer associations. This will also support households in storing black bean seeds for planting in the *Postrera* agricultural season in August.
- Expand communication campaigns to scale up drought prevention and mitigation measures, and share early warnings and agricultural advice, across the Dry Corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- Provide emergency response and livelihood recovery support to hurricane-affected smallholder farmers by, for example, restocking livestock, promoting rainwater harvesting, and rehabilitating infrastructure for seed processing, storage and irrigation, and to fisherfolk by providing fishing gear and materials to repair artisanal boats, in the most affected areas of Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.
- Support household income and food security by extending the reach and quality of national school meals programmes, while providing a platform for community engagement, a market for local produce, and increasing the income of small farmers.
- Expand CBT beneficiary coverage, transfer amounts of national CBT and food assistance programmes, as well as increase in duration and coverage of ongoing emergency CBT and food assistance programmes.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Improve the responsiveness of emergency preparedness of national systems including climate-forecasting tools, and strengthening targeting mechanisms and national registries, as well as delivery systems.
- Support capacity strengthening by engaging with private/public sector partners, providing training and temporary employment schemes to women, returnees and at-risk youth.
- Encourage financial service institutions to enable access to insurance and financial services (such as savings and loans) for the most vulnerable and food insecure people.

Haiti

Key drivers of food insecurity: political instability, economic crisis, dry conditions, criminal gangs-related violence

The economic crisis in Haiti will continue and contribute to alarming levels of acute food insecurity, while political instability is deteriorating following the assassination of President Moïse on July 7. After a significant appreciation in late 2020, the local currency has been steadily weakening – as of May 2021, it had lost more than 37 percent of its value compared to November 2020.⁶² This trend will likely continue over the coming months. Prices of mostly imported rice have generally increased from January to April 2021, mainly reflecting the weakening of the currency.⁶³

Recurrent socio-political unrest has disrupted market activities, especially in urban areas. Reduced mobility, due to road blockages, and increasing insecurity have further limited access to food.⁶⁴ In mid-June, a constitutional referendum was postponed, casting doubts on the calendar for the presidential and legislative elections.⁶⁵

High levels of insecurity and crime are likely to persist or worsen, as urban gang violence has been on the rise since the end of May and is likely to increase further.

This, in turn, is displacing more people. Along with social instability, this violence will disrupt the regular functioning of markets, drive up prices of main staples, and limit people's access to food and humanitarian aid.

After a favourable start to the first cropping season, reduced rainfall back in May is likely to limit yields of first-season crops such as maize – for which planting is typically completed by the end of May. The main rice season is likely to see reduced yields as well, as continued below-average rainfall is forecast for July when the sowing of the main season begins.⁶⁶ Around 4.4 million people – representing 46 percent of the population analysed – are estimated to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between March and June 2021, including 1.2 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). This amounts to an increase of 6 percent in people classified in IPC Phase 3 or above, compared to the same time last year. The next IPC analysis is planned for August.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute seeds of early maturing and drought-tolerant crop varieties along with tools to vulnerable households with access to land by August, in order to quickly revive production in areas affected by dryness.
- Drill and rehabilitate wells to improve water access for drought-affected farmers and livestock raisers.
- Plant forage and distribute feed, nutrient supplements, veterinary protection products, water collection tanks and small livestock to vulnerable breeders in drought-affected areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 156 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 5.2 million for nutrition interventions.
- Supply vulnerable households in IPC Phase 3 or above with unconditional cash transfers accompanied by agricultural and livestock inputs (in-kind, Cash+ or multi-purpose cash) to restore their livelihoods and support productive safety nets.

West Africa and the Sahel

Central African Republic

Key drivers of food insecurity: violence and insecurity, economic impacts of COVID-19 and food price increases

Continuing high levels of insecurity are leading to more people being displaced, and increasing humanitarian needs. More than 1.4 million people are displaced, an increase of about 50 percent in comparison to a year ago.⁶⁷

The slowdown in trade flows, caused by the instability on the main supply road linking the country with Cameroon, caused unprecedented disruptions to the supply of goods and humanitarian assistance. During the rainy season, degradation of roads will increase difficulties in supplying markets and further exacerbating humanitarian access constraints, rated as Very High,⁶⁸ possibly resulting in higher food prices during the lean season. The harvest is not expected to improve the food security situation, as farmers have very limited access to land, struggle with disease outbreaks in cassava and the increased prevalence expanding incidence in of fall armyworm.⁶⁹

Compared to the same period last year, pulse and cassava prices rose by 18 percent and 15 percent, respectively, in May 2021.⁷⁰ Price increases, expected to continue, are mainly caused by disruptions in

the supply chain that result from COVID-19-related measures, and by high levels of insecurity.⁷¹

The updated IPC projection from April 2021 estimates the number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) at 2.3 million (nearly half the total population) during the April to August 2021 lean season, with 633 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). While numbers show a slight improvement in comparison to the same period in 2020, the above estimated number of people facing Emergency levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 4) increased by more than 100 000 compared to the previous projection for this timeframe, which was 525 000. Also, results from phone surveys show a clear deterioration of the situation, with the share of people reporting insufficient food consumption increasing from 48 percent to 55 percent over the past 90 days.⁷² Moreover, humanitarian operations are beset by insecure funding and high access constraints,⁷³ with access challenges being particularly acute in Ouham, Ouham-Pende and Haut-Mbomou prefectures, which also host high levels of people facing critical food insecurity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute vegetable seeds and early maturing, disease-free cassava cuttings to support food production during the off-season period, targeting in particular food insecure IDPs, returnees and host communities in areas experiencing IPC Phase 3 or above.
- Distribute livestock kits, targeting in particular food-insecure IDPs, returnees and host communities in areas experiencing IPC Phase 3 or above.
- Pre-position and rapidly distribute agricultural inputs and/or provide unconditional cash transfers to displaced populations and host communities, in the event of new conflict outbreaks, to anticipate and mitigate the immediate consequences on livelihoods and food security.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 168 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 35 million for the nutrition interventions.
- Provide immediate life-saving assistance to populations caught in the middle of recent fighting in the north, notably in Ouham prefecture.
- Maintain and expand humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas in the northern prefectures.
- Secure timely additional funding and scale up the provision of food and nutrition assistance.

Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger)

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict and violence, economic impacts of COVID-19, and climatic shocks

Across Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, food insecurity will remain high. This is due to violent insurgencies and counter-insurgencies, which are displacing people and disrupting food markets and livelihoods, the secondary impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which are restricting the movement of people and animals and slowing down trade, and a harsh and prolonged lean season.

A protracted deterioration in security – 2020 was the single most violent year in terms of fatalities with 2 400 civilians killed – is likely to worsen further.⁷⁴ As a result, the number of forcibly displaced people – which has already quadrupled in just two years, mostly in Burkina Faso – is expected to rise more. Violence is expected to intensify between NSAGs and self-defence groups, with an interlinked risk of increased intercommunal violence. Intra-regional insurgencies are highly likely to further consolidate in Mopti and Ségou in Mali; to further expand in Center-Nord, Sahel and East regions in Burkina Faso; as well as in Tahoua, Tillabéry, Maradi and Diffa in the Niger. In these locations, insecurity will likely displace even more people, affecting agropastoral activities and food insecurity. The number of displaced people is increasingly high: 1.2 million in Burkina Faso and 372 000 in Mali, while in Niger 300 000 people are internally displaced.⁷⁵ The harsh and prolonged pre-harvest lean season up to September, with

the risk of localized floods along the Niger river basin, will increase food insecurity and humanitarian needs in the first part of the outlook period.⁷⁶ With the harvest season, access constraints will increase due to poor road conditions and insecurity, mostly in the tri-border area. This may further disrupt markets and increase food prices, as well as tensions and competition over already limited natural resources.⁷⁷ This is especially the case in the Niger, where food prices are on a marked upward trend compared to the past five-year average.⁷⁸

According to March 2021 Cadre Harmonisé (CH) projections for June to August 2021, in Burkina Faso 2.9 million people are expected to face Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above). This includes more than 344 000 people in Emergency (CH Phase 4), concentrated in the regions of Sahel, Center-Nord, Nord and East. The Niger CH analysis projects 2.3 million people in Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above), including 218 000 in Emergency (CH Phase 4), while in Mali 1.3 million people are projected to be highly acute food insecure, of whom around 62 000 people would be in Emergency (CH Phase 4). In addition, 2.9 million children are projected to be acutely malnourished in Central Sahel in 2021.⁷⁹

Humanitarian access constraints are High in Burkina Faso, Very High in the Niger, and Extreme in Mali.⁸⁰

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute home-gardening inputs to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and host populations to support low-mobility agricultural activities.
- Provide support to home-gardening and flood-receding crop cultivation to boost agricultural production, taking advantage of the potentially higher than average availability of water.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for: Burkina Faso: USD 251 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 46.4 million for nutrition interventions; Mali: USD 232.4 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 66.2 million for nutrition; the Niger: USD 110.2 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 104 million for nutrition.
- Scale up life-saving assistance during the lean season, to meet the vital needs of crisis-affected populations.
 - Strengthen and expand humanitarian access in conflict-affected areas, to provide the necessary, consistent assistance and to mitigate additional populations' movements.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Strengthen livelihoods and food security evaluation, and rapid response capacities in the existing Rapid Response Mechanism.
- Establish a flood early warning systems by integrating the latest seasonal projections and forecast-based impact analysis.

Chad

Key drivers of food insecurity: food inflation and localised insecurity

Food insecurity is increasing considerably due to the interplay of a steep rise in food prices,⁸¹ violence and displacement occurring in the Lac province, as well as the severe socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 restrictions.

In the Lake Chad Basin in recent months, increasing attacks by NSAGs have led to new displacement of 60 000 people,⁸² with insecurity in the area expected to persist in the outlook period. As of April 2021, the number of IDPs in the Lac region had increased by 92 percent compared to a year earlier, reaching more than 401 000 people.⁸³ As of late May, more than 1 million people (refugees, IDPs and returnees) had been displaced in the country.⁸⁴

Food insecurity will remain very high in August and September. While levels may start to decrease from October thanks to harvesting activities, the uncertain outcome of the current agricultural season, which may suffer under the high levels of localised insecurity, may diminish this favourable projection. High prices have reduced access to production inputs, which may impact agricultural prospects.⁸⁵

Humanitarian assistance is hampered also by the very low level of resource mobilization – one of the lowest in the region.⁸⁶ This means that populations in need of food and livelihood assistance, who did not receive support during these crucial months, may require prolonged support well after the current lean season. Climate predictions for the ongoing rainy season indicate higher chances of above-average rainfall.⁸⁷ While this may lead to good agropastoral prospects, floods may also cause considerable crop and livestock losses as well as new displacement.

According to the latest *Cadre Harmonisé* analysis of March 2021,⁸⁸ around 1.8 million people will face Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) during the current lean season (June to August 2021), out of which 165 000 will be in Emergency (CH Phase 4). This represents an increase of around 75 percent compared to the previous year, and the worst lean season in the past nine years. A total of 1.5 million children are projected to be malnourished.⁸⁹ High levels of localised insecurity, coupled with the incoming rainy season, are likely to continue to constrain humanitarian access across large areas of the country.⁹⁰

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Provide support to home-gardening and flood-receding crop cultivation, to boost agricultural production, taking opportunity of the potentially higher than average availability of water.
- Scale up preparedness efforts in support of pastoralists and farmers at risk of flooding, through cash distribution and pre-positioned inputs, such as phytosanitary products for crop protection and tools.
- Pre-position food, animal feed and waterproof containers in flood-prone zones of southern Chad, and rapidly distribute in case a flood is forecast.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 158 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 76 million for nutrition interventions.
- Prioritize lean season food and nutritional assistance in provinces with a high number of IPC Phase 4 populations, notably in Lac province.
 - Scale up emergency response to provide unconditional food and cash transfers, and emergency livelihood assistance, to local populations (IPC Phase 3 or above), returnees and IDPs.
 - Integrate malnutrition-prevention activities for the most vulnerable (children under the age of 5 and pregnant and lactating women) with general food distributions.

Liberia and Sierra Leone

Key drivers of food insecurity: food inflation, economic crisis and secondary impacts of COVID-19

Despite the lifting of COVID-19-related restrictions and the slow resumption of economic activities, especially those linked to extractive industries, the food security situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone will continue to worsen at least until the next harvest expected in October.

The economic crisis will continue to impact vulnerable households during the outlook period. Macro-economic indicators have deteriorated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a steady devaluation of the exchange rates,⁹¹ restricted and delayed import of basic food commodities, and a rise in food prices on international and national markets.

The mining sector, which contributed a significant portion to GDP in Sierra Leone before the crisis and serves as an important income source for rural populations, experienced a sharp decline of over 40 percent.⁹² In Liberia, a worrying cereal deficit in the 2020/21 harvest, compared to the previous harvest, is reported.⁹³ Government revenue and public expenditure is expected to decline drastically between 2021 and 2022 in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, due to limited economic activity and loss of revenue from commodity exports.⁹⁴ Reduced government expenditure on social services will adversely affect the most vulnerable populations.

The Consumer Price Index in Sierra Leone and Liberia has increased significantly over the past four years, with a particularly rapid increase in food prices.⁹⁵ Since May 2020, food inflation has remained above 15 percent each month in Sierra Leone and 8 percent in Liberia,⁹⁶ reducing access to staple foods such as rice. Even if a slow recovery of the mining sector is expected in Sierra Leone in the second half of 2021, the overall macro-economic situation, particularly in terms of food prices, is not expected to improve, leading to continued high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition.

The outlook period (August to November 2021) covers the lean season for most parts of both countries, which is from June to September. This period also brings a risk of additional hikes in the price of staple foods, floods due to above average rainfall, worsened road conditions and declining rural household incomes.⁹⁷

Around 2.7 million people are projected to be in Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above) in Sierra Leone and Liberia during the June-August 2021 period. In Sierra Leone, nearly 1.8 million people are projected to face Crisis or worse (CH Phase 3 or above), which represents an increase of more than 35 percent compared to 2020. Of these, 90 000 people are in Emergency (CH Phase 4). In Liberia, 940 000 people are facing Crisis conditions or worse (CH Phase 3 or above), of which more than 163 000 are in Emergency (CH Phase 4).⁹⁸ No CH analysis was conducted in Liberia for the June-to-August 2020 period, but figures increased by over 108 percent in June to August 2021 compared to the September-to-December 2020 period.⁹⁹

<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Anticipatory actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute seeds and tools, and provide extension services to the most vulnerable farmers to cultivate irrigated crops and home-gardens. Continue to monitor the nutritional status of vulnerable people, to ensure early detection of any deterioration in the situation.
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Emergency response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively advocate for funding to ensure unconditional assistance to vulnerable populations during the lean season, and to leverage resilience-building activities for vulnerable farming households. Build and rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure through cash-for-work initiatives involving vulnerable communities. Establish a strategic food-reserve system.
<p>OTHER KEY ACTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue cross-border disease surveillance and screening of Ebola virus, while maintaining open trade and movement of people across borders. Increase investment in crop production, food safety and social protection.

Nigeria

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict and high food prices

Rising violence across northern Nigeria and persisting nationwide inflation are likely drive up acute food insecurity. This will increase the risk of some areas in the northeast falling into catastrophic levels of food insecurity should the situation continue to deteriorate.

In the conflict-affected northeast, the consolidation of power to NSAGs is paving the way for increased attacks, particularly in Borno State, displacing more rural communities and worsening humanitarian access constraints, rated as extreme.^{100 101} As of May 2021, the number of IDPs had risen to 2.2 million people, 40 000 higher than in November 2020. Violence is also deepening in the northwest, where criminality and herder-farmer conflict had displaced close to 700 000 people as of June 2021.¹⁰² In the Middle Belt, endemic herder-farmer conflict is displacing people and compounding already-high food inflation, given the region's status as Nigeria's food basket. Middle Belt states are currently experiencing rainfall deficits, which are expected to continue throughout the season, while risk of flooding is expected. Food-price inflation is projected to increase further, up from 23 percent in March 2021.¹⁰³

The March 2021 CH analysis projects 12.8 million people will face high levels of acute food insecurity (CH Phase 3 or above) during the lean season from June to August 2021. Of these, 798 000 are projected to be in Emergency (CH Phase 4), if humanitarian assistance and resilience interventions are not intensified.¹⁰⁴ This marks a sharp deterioration in food security compared to the same period last year, with an approximate 48 percent rise from 8.7 million people in 2020. Around 2.9 million children are expected to be acutely malnourished in 2021.¹⁰⁵

Of the 12.8 million, 5.6 million acutely food-insecure people in need of urgent action are in the northwest, 4.4 million are in the three northeastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, and 2 million are in the Middle Belt. The majority of people experiencing critical levels of acute food insecurity (CH Phase 4) remain located in some areas with ongoing conflict in Borno State. Estimates suggest that over 800 000 people in need of urgent assistance cannot be reached by humanitarian agencies at this point.

Should the situation continue to deteriorate in Borno State – particularly in local government areas with increasingly constricted humanitarian access as a result of NSAGs intensified activities – the risk of catastrophic food insecurity (CH Phase 5) is likely. While, as

of March, no population or area was projected to be in Catastrophe/Famine (CH Phase 5), some food security indicators such as food-consumption patterns suggest that a proportion of the population (less than 10 percent) may be facing such dire conditions.¹⁰⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute home-gardening inputs to IDPs and host populations, to support low-mobility agricultural activities (backyard vegetable gardening) and mitigate the impact of further hikes in food prices on food security and nutrition.
- Support fish production through distribution of aquaculture inputs and training, to increase food availability and household income-generation, and to mitigate the impact of food-price increases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 354 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 129 million for nutrition interventions.
- Maintain and expand humanitarian access to conflict-affected areas in the northeast, allowing for the lean-season scale-up of life-saving assistance, including food, agricultural-based livelihoods and livestock restocking.
 - Expand life-saving assistance, including food, agricultural-based livelihoods and livestock restocking, to all conflict-affected households in the northwest and the Middle Belt.
 - Ensure continued supplemental nutrition assistance to women and children in the northeast and the northwest, in coordination with Government and existing nutrition partners.

East Africa

Ethiopia

Key drivers of food insecurity: armed conflict and ethnic violence, economic deterioration, erratic or below-average rainfall and desert locust

The resumption of hostilities in northern Ethiopia, despite the recent unilateral ceasefire, and the obstructions to emergency assistance, will further compromise humanitarian access and disrupt agricultural activities at the peak of the main planting season.^{107 108} At least 2 million people have been displaced, mostly inside Tigray.¹⁰⁹ High levels of violence and attacks by armed groups are also likely to further intensify and displace more people, especially in Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Oromia and Tigray regions.

Monthly food price inflation rose from 0.5 percent, in the past five months of 2020, to 2.4 percent in the first five months of 2021.¹¹⁰ The combined effect of constrained access to Tigray on one side, and the breakdown of basic services such as cash, banking, communication and fuel on the other, is resulting in food shortages and disruption of humanitarian operations.¹¹¹ It is important to note that the conflict in Tigray started in November 2020, at the peak of the Meher harvest season, preventing most farmers from harvesting their crops. The subsequent 2021 Belg and Meher seasons were equally badly affected by the conflict. As a result, food from domestic production will likely remain drastically below normal levels, even after the next Meher harvest period (October–January). In addition, erratic rainfall between February and May is likely to lead to a delayed and below-average secondary Belg season harvest in southern Tigray, eastern Amhara, eastern Oromia and northeastern parts of the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region (SNNPR), while forecast above-average rainfall from June to September increases the likelihood of floods and waterlogging incidents in flood-prone areas of Afar, eastern Amhara and SNNPR.¹¹² There has been a recent increase in swarm sightings in the Afar region of northeast Ethiopia.¹¹³

While there is catastrophic food insecurity in Tigray and surrounding areas, the situation is also dire in other parts of Ethiopia. Between May and June 2021, about 16.8 million people were estimated to be facing

high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) across Meher- and Belg-dependent areas of the country;¹¹⁴ this includes 5.5 million people – 61 percent of the population analysed – in Tigray and neighbouring areas of Afar and Amhara, of which 2.1 million people are in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). In Tigray, 353 000 people were in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) conditions because of the conflict – the highest number since the 2011 famine in Somalia. The number of people in catastrophic acute food insecurity is expected to further increase through September.

In Meher-dependent areas (including Tigray and neighbouring areas of Amhara, but also Oromia and SNNPR regions), an estimated 7.4 million people are projected to experience Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between July and September 2021. This includes 2.4 million in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) conditions and 401 000 people facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). Compared to the May – June period, this represents an increase of 500 000 people in Crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) in the Meher-dependent areas. Importantly, these estimations take into account an expansion of humanitarian assistance to reach 60 percent of the population. Although it is impossible to predict how the situation most likely will evolve, due to the highly dynamic nature of this conflict-driven crisis, the IPC Famine Review Committee estimated a medium to high risk of famine in three out of four scenarios, including a worst-case scenario in which this could happen in the short-term (July–September).¹¹⁵ Which scenario will materialize depends on a combination of risk factors such as the intensity of conflict; humanitarian supply lines, access and level of operations; private sector and informal supply lines; and availability of commercial goods and services. The extreme human suffering and humanitarian needs are however evident, even if an area-based classification of famine is not yet determined.¹¹⁶

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Protect and safeguard the livestock assets of vulnerable people through treatment and vaccination; distribution of animal feed for core breeding animals; and training, extension and advisory services.
- Strengthen surveillance, monitoring and early-warning systems to prevent locust outbreaks, through coordinated national and cross-border cooperation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

The Northern Ethiopia Response Plan calls for USD 416 million for food, USD 60.2 million for nutrition, and USD 38 million for agriculture interventions.

- Strongly advocate among all actors for unhindered and unrestricted humanitarian access to conflict-affected populations in need.
- Strongly advocate and support the continued scale-up and distribution of full rations for people in IPC Phase 4 and IPC Phase 5, with special attention to IDPs.
- Scale up the emergency nutrition response and increase the coverage of nutrition programmes, by leveraging all opportunities to access the most vulnerable, with special attention to IDPs.
- Distribute unconditional cash and agricultural inputs to enhance production capacity, especially among the most vulnerable people.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Support a full food security and nutrition survey in all areas of Tigray, especially among IDPs.
- Continue to advocate for formalizing the use of simplified approaches and community-based nutrition-assistance models, to overcome the current breakdown of the health system.

Kenya

Key drivers of food insecurity: dry conditions

The impacts of two consecutive poor rainy seasons on pastoral and agropastoral livelihoods are likely to worsen the food security situation, in particular in arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) counties over the coming months.

The 2020 short rains (October-December) were erratic and below-average in several northern and eastern pastoral areas, and in southeastern and coastal agricultural areas. Subsequently, a late onset of the 2021 long-rains season (March-May), with uneven and poor rainfall distribution in many ASAL areas including Lagdera (Garissa), Rabai and Kilifi-south (Kilifi) counties,¹¹⁷ has resulted in severe vegetation deficits. This threatens the coping capacities of pastoralist households, which have not been able to replenish hay stocks for their livestock before the lean season. In nearly all counties affected by lack of rainfall, low pasture availability, coupled with long distances covered by livestock in search of pasture and water, has led to poor livestock body conditions.¹¹⁸ As such, pastoralist households are likely to face constraints in the consumption and marketing of

livestock products, an uptick in resource-based conflicts due to poor pasture conditions, and livestock disease outbreaks in the dry season. Poor crop yield is anticipated for agricultural households. Furthermore, poor households are expected to face food-reserve shortages, forcing them to depend on local markets to access food in a period of constrained purchasing power and high food prices.

Already between March and May 2021, IPC projected about 2 million people to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), including 239 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4), representing an increase of about 600 000 people compared to February 2021. These figures do not account for the impacts of rainfall deficits. The most-concerning counties, which are projected to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of acute food insecurity, are Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Tana River, Turkana and Wajir. In addition, the nutrition situation is also expected to deteriorate as a result of the deterioration in livestock body conditions and resulting poor milk production and consumption.¹¹⁹

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Provide assorted feed supplements and conduct animal health campaigns before drought drives rapid deterioration in pastoral resources and animal conditions, targeting the most vulnerable pastoralist households.
- Identify, establish and activate emergency slaughtering points/areas, and undertake slaughter destocking and meat distribution.
- Provide water-trucking interventions for domestic and livestock usage, with distribution of water-storage tanks.
- Provide farmers with assorted seeds for fast-maturing crops and drought-tolerant crops, in areas expected to receive below-average rainfall.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- Support cash-for-work operations to meet the immediate food needs of the at-risk population, and to protect the livelihoods of populations affected by severe climate variability.
- Integrate nutrition interventions across food and social-protection systems, to address both chronic and acute malnutrition, including treatment of acute malnutrition (SAM and MAM), Positive Deviance/Hearth approaches, and Social and Behaviour Change Communication.

Somalia

Key drivers of food insecurity: below-average rainfall, conflict and desert locust

The effects of below-average rainfall, compounded by previous flooding, desert locust infestation and conflict, are driving food insecurity in Somalia. Overall rainfall deficits since the start of the 2021 *Gu* rainy season, in April, continued until end of the season in June. Poor and erratic rains reduced pasture, water availability and crop cultivation in many of the key rain-fed southern and central areas. Cereal production is expected to be below-average for a consecutive season. This will further reduce the coping capacities of vulnerable households, which still suffer from the impact of previous shocks.¹²⁰ Moreover, immature swarms of desert locust were increasing in the northwest from the beginning of July.¹²¹

Long-delayed parliamentary and presidential elections are scheduled for July and October, respectively, after violent clashes between competing parties in late April. The electoral period brings a risk of renewed violence between opposition and Government-aligned clans and security forces. In addition, NSAGs have escalated coordinated offensives in the Bay and Lower Shabelle regions. Displacement due to conflict and violence recently increased, with nearly 200 000 people newly displaced around Mogadishu alone in April, including many who

had been previously displaced from their place of origin.¹²²

Between April and June 2021, 2.7 million people across Somalia were expected to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) conditions of food insecurity. This is 1.4 million more than in the same period in 2020, and is projected to further increase with approximately 2.73 million to 2.83 million people expected to face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes through September 2021, according to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) and FEWS NET,¹²³ reflecting the deteriorating food security situation in the country.¹²⁴ In addition, 420 000 people are projected to be in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) between April and June.¹²⁵ On top of this, approximately 839 000 children under the age of 5 are acutely malnourished, including 143 000 severely malnourished. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are likely to persist in most poor pastoral households in northern and central Somalia throughout September.¹²⁶ These numbers could increase further if violence erupts, leading to more displacement and the disruption of humanitarian operations, in a context marked by extreme access constraints.¹²⁷

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Pre-position agricultural inputs and prepare for rapid in-kind and cash support to vulnerable households potentially affected by electoral violence.
- Provide livestock supplementary feed, Cash+ packages and animal-treatment services to pastoralists potentially affected by a below-average rainy season.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 396.6 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 157.5 million for nutrition interventions.
- Advocate for consistent funding to ensure continued operations that target immediate food needs of the population and restore community productive assets, to prevent households from adopting negative coping mechanisms to absorb the impact of multiple shocks on the country's food systems.
 - Advocate for additional funding for prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition.

South Sudan

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict, macroeconomic challenges and flooding

The lean season from May to July 2021 was projected to be the most severe on record, with the country facing its highest levels of food insecurity and malnutrition since its independence in 2011.¹²⁸ Seasonal forecast for July to September, meanwhile, points to above-average rainfall over northeastern, southeastern, central and northwestern parts, with a heightened risk of major floods. This may lead to further displacement of people and deterioration of food security, as agriculture in these areas may at the same time be affected by rain deficits in the planting period, which will likely reduce yields.

Overall, the security situation in South Sudan remains fragile. Widespread insecurity and localized conflict across the country continue to displace people and destroy sources of food and livelihoods.

Households are likely to see their purchasing power diminish even more as inflation and currency depreciation increase prices of food and non-food items, with the prices of main staples well above the five-year average.¹²⁹

The conclusions of the most recent IPC analysis, and the alerts of the Famine Review Committee, are expected to remain valid for the

outlook period, given ongoing challenges to humanitarian access and drivers, with potential to aggravate food insecurity in the outlook. That means that between April and July 2021, around 7.2 million people – 60 percent of the population – were facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) levels of food insecurity. This includes more than 2.4 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 108 000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).¹³⁰ In four *payams* (Gumuruk, Pibor, Lekuangle and Verteth) in western Pibor County, the Famine Review Committee concluded that famine was most likely happening already in October and November 2020. Two other *payams* of Pibor (Kizongora and Marow) were identified as being at risk of famine for the same period, if conflict reaches similar levels as in 2020 and worsens humanitarian access constraints, already classified as Very High,¹³¹ Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) outcomes are projected among the population (Akobo, Aweil South, Tonj East, Tonj North and Tonj South) in Jonglei, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap.¹³²

Despite the challenges, humanitarian actors have made significant efforts over recent months to become more efficient in delivering assistance in at-risk areas, and three new humanitarian hubs in Pibor, Kajo-keji and Leer, and three hubs in Kodok, Mandeng and Jiech, will be operational by the end of 2021.¹³³

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Pre-position agricultural inputs and equipment, and distribute them to the most vulnerable people as soon as floods are forecast to protect their livelihood assets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 644 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 205 million for nutrition interventions.
- Advocate for and negotiate humanitarian access in conflict-affected areas, and unimpeded supply corridors for the movement of essential goods and personnel.
- Continue the scale-up plan to provide unconditional food and cash transfers, and emergency livelihood assistance, to vulnerable populations, returnees and IDPs, particularly women and children, in areas where famine is most likely happening or identified as a risk.
- Leverage life-saving humanitarian programming in hotspots for hunger and violence, including in hard-to-reach locations, across large areas of the country, for more proactive contributions to peace.
- Maintain nutrition assistance to women and children in areas with high malnutrition rates, and reinforce integration with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions and health partners.

Southern Africa

Angola

Key drivers of food insecurity: drought and macro-economic challenges

People in Angola's drought-stricken southern provinces of Cunene, Cuanza Sul, Cuando Cubango, Benguela, Huambo, Namibe and Huila are likely to experience an extended hunger season. Seasonal rainfall is more than 30 percent below the long-term average, and above-normal temperatures have led to the worst drought since 1981.¹³⁴ This is the second consecutive poor agricultural season, pushing households in southwestern provinces into extreme vulnerability, increased food insecurity and livelihood losses. The current economic downturn and an outbreak of African migratory locust worsen these pressures on vulnerable families.¹³⁵ Crop losses due to the drought are estimated at almost 40 percent. Locust outbreaks were largely contained by Government-led control operations, with the support of FAO. A consequent increase in import needs, mostly maize, is expected during the 2021/22 marketing year.¹³⁶ Admissions for severe wasting in southern provinces continue to be higher than the previous three years.¹³⁷

The economy, which is highly dependent on oil exports, is expected to grow only marginally in 2021, following a 4-percent GDP contraction in 2020.¹³⁸ Oil export revenues are expected to remain low throughout 2021, following a decrease of exports in the first quarter of 2021.¹³⁹ The annual inflation rate, as of May 2021, stood at 25 percent, driven by increasing prices of foodstuffs and a sharp currency depreciation of nearly 30 percent against the US dollar in 2020. Lockdown measures reintroduced in late April,¹⁴⁰ amid a second COVID-19 wave, will likely continue in the outlook period, putting pressure on the already eroded resources of the most vulnerable households.

In January, an estimated 3.8 million people had insufficient food consumption,¹⁴¹ with 62 percent of households resorting to crisis or emergency coping strategies. Given that people have been struggling to cope with multiple shocks, the total population in need of urgent assistance is likely to rise sharply in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Provide drought-tolerant seeds (cereal, sweet potato propagules and vegetable seeds) to support the start of the agricultural season between September and October.
- Provide livestock support to mitigate drought and disease-induced mortality and morbidity, such as vaccination kits, treatments and fodder seeds for the rapid establishment of pasture plots for direct grazing.
- Install and maintain water-harvesting structures ahead of the rainy season, such as water-reservoir tanks.
- Strengthen capacity for monitoring locust swarms and scale up support to mitigate the impact of locusts on agriculture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- Implement a Cash+ approach, to allow vulnerable households to meet their immediate food and livelihood needs.
- Provide livelihood assistance and acute malnutrition treatment in the most affected regions in southwestern parts of the country.
- Ensure that the drought response includes commodity stock pre-positioning, capacity strengthening and knowledge mapping, as well as targeted nutrition interventions.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Key drivers of food insecurity: protracted conflict and the impact of a recent volcano eruption

The protracted crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will likely worsen as a result of continuing insecurity and access constraints in eastern provinces, which also experienced the impact of the Nyiragongo volcanic eruption.

Since 6 May, the Government has placed the eastern provinces of North Kivu and Ituri under a 'state of siege', leading to the transfer of powers from civilian to military authorities and allowing for increased troop deployments.¹⁴² The measure follows rising violence in both provinces since early 2020, a trend that contributed to more than 2.2 million additional people becoming displaced last year, and which persisted in the first half of 2021.¹⁴³ The state of siege was extended four times and appears likely to be lengthened further.

The ensuing militarization and intensification of operations against NSAGs are likely to impact the humanitarian situation by limiting access to vulnerable populations, already facing Very High constraints,¹⁴⁴ raising protection concerns and shifting conflict hotspots to new areas. This, in turn, is expected to displace more people, degrade livelihoods and cause looting of property.¹⁴⁵ The humanitarian situation has also worsened as a result of the Nyiragongo eruption, which disrupted the provision of goods and services and displaced over 400 000 people from the Goma area.¹⁴⁶ Most of the IDPs had returned the area as of June.¹⁴⁷

The Democratic Republic of the Congo remains the country with the highest number of food-insecure people globally, with approximately 27.3 million experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) between February and July 2021.¹⁴⁸ This is a result of multiple consecutive shocks, including protracted violence, natural disasters, epidemics, refugee inflows, economic decline and the impact of COVID-19.

While a slight improvement is projected for the period from August to December 2021 thanks to a better economic and agricultural outlook, 26.2 million people are still expected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). This includes 5.6 million people in critical food insecurity (IPC Phase 4), not yet accounting for the effects of the Nyiragongo eruption and the potential conflict escalation in North Kivu and Ituri.¹⁴⁹

<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Anticipatory actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish community gardens in pre-identified 'safe spaces', for families to access fresh food despite increasing conflict or instability. • Pre-position stocks of agricultural inputs and food commodities in strategic locations in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, to provide rapid support to households affected by new episodes of conflict, thus mitigating the immediate consequences on livelihoods and food security.
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Emergency response</p>	<p>The HRP calls for USD 830.9 million for food security and USD 260.5 million for nutrition interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for immediate resources and unhindered/unrestricted humanitarian access to deliver emergency food and livelihood assistance to people in IPC Phase 3 or above, including people not yet covered by food assistance and/or social protection programmes. • Provide rapid in-kind and cash support to vulnerable households displaced as a result of the volcanic eruption and resurgence of conflict, including IDPs, refugees and host communities at risk of food security deterioration. • Scale up nutritional support interventions, including treatment and prevention of acute malnutrition.
<p>OTHER KEY ACTIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a conflict analysis to inform conflict-sensitive planning and management of activities for targeted communities. Connected to this, develop potential scenarios on the impact of insecurity and conflict on food security and on operations in the coming months.

Madagascar

Key drivers of food insecurity: drought, high prices of staple-foods, and outbreaks of crop and livestock diseases

A severe and extended lean season is rapidly increasing food insecurity in the Grand Sud of Madagascar where about 50 percent of households lost their crops to drought.¹⁵⁰ The situation – which is the result of the worst drought in 40 years, among other factors – is likely to deteriorate sharply during the outlook period. Households' income and purchasing power will continue to be constrained, amidst a dramatic economic downturn. Moreover, COVID-19 has caused significant job losses, while last season's very low harvest resulted in low crop sales for farmers and low labour demand, affecting farmworkers' livelihoods.^{151 152} Fall armyworm led to maize crop losses while a locust invasion caused considerable crop damage. The lack of pasture and water led to livestock deaths and poor body conditions, while an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever has affected pastoralist livelihoods. Prices are likely to remain high due to lower supplies from the poor harvest.

From April to September 2021, more than 1.1 million people are estimated to face Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) conditions of food insecurity. Extremely concerning is the most affected district

of Amboasary Atsimo, with 208 770 people or 75 percent of its population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above), which includes 70 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and 14 000 people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) by September.¹⁵³ The number of people projected in the Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) is expected to double by the end of the year, from 14 000 to 28 000 people, or 10 percent of the population in Amboasary Atsimo. More than 80 percent of households in Amboasary Atsimo, Tsihombe and Ambovombe experienced hunger as they lacked resources to access food, and more than 10 percent of households in the districts classified in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) exhausted their emergency coping strategies.

The early arrival of a more severe lean season will increase the population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) to more than 1.3 million through December, including around 484 000 people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). As households deplete their assets and exhaust their coping strategies, a total collapse of livelihoods is highly possible and without timely assistance at scale there is a risk of famine occurring in some areas by the upcoming lean season.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Anticipatory actions should be implemented in districts affected by the prolonged drought in the Grand Sud, to mitigate any further impacts on agriculture and livestock in the upcoming season.
- Provide an integrated package of training, vegetable seeds, drought-tolerant cereal seeds, tools and fertilizer before the planting season between September and November, promoting staged production that will be sold in local markets first.
- Provide livestock support to mitigate drought and disease-induced mortality and morbidity, such as vaccination kits, treatments and fodder seeds for the rapid establishment of pasture plots for direct grazing.
- Provide storage equipment (e.g. hermetic bags) and train vulnerable smallholder farmers in post-harvest storage and management, in order to reduce crop losses.
- Enhance surveillance and control of desert locust to avoid impacts on the next crop production campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

The Madagascar Grand Sud Flash Appeal calls for USD 126.3 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 25.8 million for nutrition interventions.

- Scale up emergency food, nutrition and Cash+ assistance, with special attention to households in IPC Phase 4 and IPC Phase 5. Advocate for full food rations to be distributed to these extremely vulnerable populations.
- Provide immediate treatment to children aged 6 to 59 months suffering from acute malnutrition, particularly in Amboasary Atsimo and Ambovombe districts.
- Rehabilitate water points to improve access to water for agriculture, livestock and human consumption.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Sustain and support analysis and monitoring systems, to ensure a constant tracking of price fluctuations and other indicators of economic instability, in order to inform anticipatory action programming.
- Reinforce continuous nutritional screening and assistance in the southern area affected by crisis.

Mozambique

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict, rainfall deficits and recurrent natural shocks

Food insecurity in northern Mozambique may deteriorate further, driven by rising violence, displacement and recurrent natural shocks. Ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado, combined with rainfall deficits in both northern provinces of Cabo Delgado and Nampula, disrupted farming activities in Mozambique. This was partially recovered in the first quarter of 2021, but agricultural output for the year will likely be below average.¹⁵⁴

As anticipated in the previous report, violence intensified in late-March in Cabo Delgado, when NSAGs attacked the strategic town of Palma, highlighting their increasing offensive capabilities. The attack displaced almost 70 000 people,¹⁵⁵ bringing the total number of IDPs within Cabo Delgado and towards other provinces to more than 732 000 by the end of April 2021.¹⁵⁶ Meanwhile, the Southern African Development Community and Rwanda announced the deployment of troops to Mozambique.¹⁵⁷ Under these circumstances, there is a risk of further escalation of violence in coming months, which would exacerbate humanitarian needs.¹⁵⁸

Nationally, acute food insecurity is expected to improve between April and September in rural areas, as households access food from their

own production and food prices stabilize. Around 17 million people in rural and urban areas are nevertheless expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above) during that period. This includes 901 000 in the three northern provinces, of which 227 000 people will be facing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) conditions of hunger.¹⁵⁹ A recent IPC analysis targeting IDPs and host households in seven districts of Cabo Delgado also indicated that food insecurity would increase further in the outlook period. Between April and September, an estimated 37 percent of IDPs and 23 percent of people from host households are projected to be in Crisis (IPC Phase 3 or above). In the lean season, between October 2021 and February 2022, the proportion of IDPs and people from host households in Crisis (IPC Phase 3 or above) will increase to 58 and 38 percent, respectively, as a result of the early depletion of cereal reserves and rising food prices.¹⁶⁰

The humanitarian response to IDPs in the provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nampula, Niassa and Zambezia has been scaled up, but resources are available only until August 2021. Insecurity and access constraints also continue to hamper the response,¹⁶¹ especially in conflict-affected districts.¹⁶²

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

Proposed actions will be implemented in drought-affected districts in Northern Sofala and Manica Provinces, Cabo Delgado and IDP-hosting provinces, supporting IDPs in resettlement sites and host communities, and thus preventing further deterioration of food security.

- Provide drought-tolerant beans, maize, sorghum and vegetable seeds and equipment, to start the production of staple crops and provide adequate inputs for vegetable-gardening in August and September.
- Introduce crop and cereal varieties that could be cultivated and harvested prior to the cyclone season.
- Promote management of pre- and post-harvest losses, including training, distribution of storage technology to IDPs and host populations, and construction of storage facilities through food assistance for assets.
- Install rainwater-harvesting infrastructure ahead of rainy season and provide training on water-efficient growing techniques such as keyhole gardening.
- Support small-scale fishers with cool boxes, to improve fish storage during transportation to the market, and provide additional fishing gear to increase their fishing capacity in the off-season from August to September.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

The HRP calls for USD 136 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 15 million for nutrition interventions.

- Boost local livestock production by providing vulnerable households with chickens and offer them training in ways to diversify their diets in the off-season from August to September.
- Distribute unconditional cash transfers to support immediate household consumption needs for IDPs and host families for August–October, so they do not eat seed intended for planting.
- Implement food assistance for assets programmes for IDPs and vulnerable households in host communities for seeds protection, to rapidly (re)build crucial agricultural livelihoods and household assets.

Near-East and North Africa

Lebanon

Key drivers of food insecurity: economic crisis and political instability

Economic collapse will exacerbate the ongoing deterioration of livelihoods of both Lebanese citizens and more than 1.5 million refugees officially or unofficially living in the country. This will heighten the risk of political instability, violence and a further increase in extreme poverty and food insecurity.¹⁶³ The World Bank has ranked the current Lebanese crisis among the top three economic meltdowns recorded worldwide since the middle of the 19th century.¹⁶⁴ The country's GDP plummeted from USD 55 billion in 2018 to an estimated USD 33 billion in 2020, and the currency has lost 90 percent of its value.¹⁶⁵ ¹⁶⁶ Such deteriorating economic conditions are eroding the purchasing power of the population and limiting the country's ability to finance its imports of essential items.¹⁶⁷ In March, the country's Central Bank began phasing out subsidies for the import of basic items,¹⁶⁸ including reducing the number of subsidized food items and wheat subsidies. The Central Bank's reduced foreign allocations for fuel importers, as well as the anticipated reduction of fuel subsidies, have also caused severe fuel shortages.¹⁶⁹

Food inflation was 228 percent year-on-year in April and it is likely to grow even further over the next months.¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹ Almost 9 out of 10 Syrian households in Lebanon lived in extreme poverty at the end of 2020, a 34 percent increase compared to 2019.¹⁷² A phone survey conducted on the general population by WFP during November and December 2020 found that 41 percent of households reported challenges in accessing food and other basic needs¹⁷³ while the preliminary results of a new survey conducted in April 2021 show that 23 percent of Lebanese households are food insecure (based on rCARI).¹⁷⁴

With the ongoing political stalemate, increasing risks of unrest and political instability, high levels of unemployment, the exhaustion of foreign-exchange reserves and phasing out of subsidies, and steeply increasing inflation that's likely over the next months, the food security and poverty situation is poised to deteriorate even more.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Distribute drought-resistant seeds, fertilizers and other inputs to vulnerable smallholder farmers ahead of the fall planting season, coinciding with below-average rainfall forecasts, with particular emphasis on wheat and barley.
- Distribute feed for small ruminants to vulnerable small herders, ahead of the winter-feeding season.
- Provide animal-health treatments such as vaccinations and deworming tablets to vulnerable livestock herders, before animal health deteriorates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- Sustain advocacy efforts to enhance resource mobilization, visibility and flexible funding (and advanced financing for confirmed contributions), in order to reach those most in need, regardless of nationality, in a timely manner.
- Continue the scale-up of cash-based transfer operations, including the roll-out of the Emergency Social Safety Net, to reach an increased number of vulnerable households, in collaboration with the Government.
- Maintain (and augment) the capacity to deliver life-saving assistance in an environment where banking services, supply chains, prices and currency stability are increasingly challenged.

The Sudan

Key drivers of food insecurity: macroeconomic crisis and intercommunal violence

A protracted economic crisis will underpin already exceptionally high food prices and continue to worsen acute food insecurity in the Sudan.

With the complete removal of fuel subsidies in June, prices have doubled¹⁷⁵ and food production costs are up. This is likely to reduce the planted area for the June-to-September sorghum and millet main season and cause above-average food prices at harvest time. Along with commodity prices, the inflation rate is expected to stay above the 379-percent year-on-year increase recorded in May.¹⁷⁶ The value of the Sudanese dinar on the black market has been depreciating as well.

The June-to-September rains are expected to be good and have a positive impact on crop yields. That said, they are likely to result in waterlogging, the overflow of the Blue Nile and White Nile rivers, and flash floods, and may cause localized crop production shortfalls.¹⁷⁷

In light of increased access to international funding and debt relief, the Government will likely expand its Sudan Family Support Program,¹⁷⁸ thanks to which 80 percent of the population would receive cash transfers.

Challenges related to funding and targeting, however, are likely to limit its effects.

A volatile security situation is likely to cause further displacement and ethnic violence, particularly across Darfur. As a result, the number of IDPs – currently more than 2.5 million people will remain high.¹⁷⁹ The number of refugees fleeing violence in northern Ethiopia, and potentially intensified cross-border clashes, is likely to increase.¹⁸⁰ Around 9.8 million people are projected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between June and September, during the peak lean season. That includes 2.7 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4). The total population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) has remained similar to the same period last year, but the severity has increased.¹⁸¹ Looking ahead, food availability is likely to improve in the harvest and post-harvest period. As a result, about six million people are expected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) between October 2021 and February 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Prepare and share tailored early-warning messages with rural households, including advice on how to protect their livelihood assets in case of a flood alert, especially with those living along the Blue Nile and White Nile.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP calls for USD 520.9 million for food security and livelihoods, and USD 149 million for nutrition interventions.
- Provide host communities with agricultural livelihood and food assistance through in-kind and cash transfers, to back up the Sudan Family Support Program Sustain life-saving assistance to refugees who have fled into the Sudan from Ethiopia's Tigray region, and those from Benishangul-Gumuz region.
- Provide comprehensive food security and nutrition programming in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, where – for the first time in ten years – UN agencies have been able to enter.

Syrian Arab Republic

Key drivers of food insecurity: economic crisis, conflict and drought

Conflict in northern pockets of the Syrian Arab Republic continues to drive a high level of insecurity and extreme access constraints, as well as worsening humanitarian needs.¹⁸²

The national economy continues to weaken,¹⁸³ as a result of depleted foreign-exchange reserves and reduced ability to circumvent international sanctions due to the ongoing economic meltdown in neighbouring Lebanon.¹⁸⁴ This has affected the capacity of Government-held areas to produce and import primary goods, including food and fuel. Since the end of 2019, the Syrian pound has lost over two-thirds of its value, while the prices of basic food items have seen a 247 percent increase.¹⁸⁵ Due to ongoing shortages, in April the national average price of fuel in the black market saw a 48-percent month-on-month increase.

Drought conditions caused by erratic rainfall in major crop producing areas in the east of the Syrian Arab Republic, and low water levels in the Euphrates River, could reduce availability for irrigation. Moreover, the Government is unlikely to be able to purchase sufficient quantities

of wheat from farmers to secure adequate supplies.¹⁸⁶ In addition, lack of foreign-exchange reserves and rising international food prices are likely to complicate sourcing from abroad.¹⁸⁷ Early indications from seasonal forecasts suggest, with moderate likelihood, another below-average rainy season (September 2021–May 2022), which could result in below-average harvests and potential water shortages in the northern and eastern areas. While this is still uncertain given the long lead time, if it does materialize it will further increase food insecurity.

As a result, the number of food insecure people is likely to increase beyond the 12.4 million people – or almost 60 percent of the population – identified by the CARI scale between November and December 2020. This includes 1.3 million people who are severely food insecure. Among the 12.4 million, there were also 1.7 million people residing in camps, who are fully dependent on external assistance.¹⁸⁸ Overall, 6.7 million people remain internally displaced within the Syrian Arab Republic, the largest IDP population in the world, and 75 percent of the total population is dependent on humanitarian assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Provide quality seeds for the barley and wheat planting starting in October, given current season failure and the associated shortage of saved seed.
- Install, rehabilitate and maintain water-harvesting structures, pumping stations and water infrastructure ahead of the rainy season.
- Support livestock herders affected by depleted (or inaccessible) pastures with high-nutrient feed and mineral supplements.
- Reinforce inter-agency efforts to assess feasibility and set up cash-based transfers in the northwest, including to mitigate the expected impact of reduced cereal harvest on food security.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

- The HRP 2020 calls for USD 174.4 million for early recovery and livelihoods, USD 1.1 billion for food security and agriculture, and USD 79.3 million for nutrition interventions.
- Increase fundraising efforts and continue scenario and prioritization planning, to explore ways of reaching a higher number of beneficiaries.
 - Strengthen high-level advocacy to maintain access to northwest Syrian Arab Republic, enabling provision of life-saving assistance currently authorized until July 2021.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Further improve analysis of food system failures, the economic situation and inflation, including tracking prices, to inform contingency planning for emergency programming.
- Conduct training on climate-smart agriculture, as well as management of agriculture and livestock under drought conditions.

Yemen

Key drivers of food insecurity: conflict, floods and economic crisis

Alarming levels of acute food insecurity are likely to persist in a context of protracted conflict and economic crisis in Yemen, while humanitarian access constraints are extreme.¹⁸⁹

If conflict in Ma'rib governorate escalates and fighting extends to Ma'rib city, hundreds of thousands of people could be displaced.

Across the country, pockets of localized conflict could drive additional displacement. The economic crisis will continue to affect people's purchasing power and access to food. The Yemeni rial was trading close to multi-year lows in June, and will likely dip more, which is making it harder to finance imports.¹⁹⁰

In June, the price of the minimum food basket was up 20 percent at the national level compared to January,¹⁹¹ while fuel prices have doubled from last year,¹⁹² constraining people’s ability to access local markets. While Yemen produces only a small share of its main staple foods,¹⁹³ the agricultural sector remains an important source of rural livelihoods. Floods and small-scale breeding of desert locust could both impact the sector in the outlook period. A few swarms appeared recently in the northern highlands, and most should move to the interior for summer breeding.¹⁹⁴ A high likelihood of above-average rainfall for the July-September rainy season, meanwhile, is increasing the risk of flooding in low-lying areas.

Between January and June 2021, 16.1 million people were projected to experience high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 or above), including 5 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and approximately 47 000 (a threefold increase from December 2020) in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), the latter mainly located in Al Jawf, Amran and Hajjah governorates.¹⁹⁵ More than 2.2 million children are projected to be acutely malnourished in 2021, among whom 395 000 are severely malnourished.¹⁹⁶

Humanitarian funding for food assistance is currently better than expected, and WFP has been gradually resuming monthly distributions in the north. As a result, more than 350 000 people in the 11 districts where 47 000 people are expected to face famine-like conditions have received monthly assistance since February. Nearly 6 million people across the nine governorates with the highest rates of Emergency (IPC Phase 4), were scheduled to receive monthly support starting from June.¹⁹⁷

Compared to the previous edition of this report, the risk of more people facing famine-like conditions may have been contained. That said, food-security monitoring data suggests that anticipated seasonal improvements of food security made during the month of Ramadan are being reversed.¹⁹⁸ Moreover, by the end of April, only 34 percent of the nearly USD 3.9 billion required for the HRP was funded. The aforementioned gains are fragile, and progress may be undone in Yemen’s unpredictable and challenging environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anticipatory actions

- Provide high-nutrient animal feed and animal-health treatments to vulnerable livestock herders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Emergency response

The HRP calls for USD 1.7 billion for food security and agriculture, and USD 442.9 million for nutrition interventions.

- Improve access to livelihood opportunities and rehabilitate food security assets and infrastructure in areas with high levels of food insecurity.
- Distribute emergency agricultural, livestock or fisheries kits to severely food-insecure households, to increase food availability and enhance capacity to sustain productive assets.
- Ensure continued advocacy among external partners, that provided substantial support in 2021, to maintain funding for key activities.
- Strongly advocate for additional funding for malnutrition prevention and treatment programmes, to sustain planned levels of food assistance over the next six months.
- Urgently generate the funding required to sustain services for the humanitarian community for the next six months: The WFP-led United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) is set to face partial breaks in August, increasing in severity from August onwards. The Logistics Cluster is set to break in September.
- Continue to provide humanitarian actors with fuel-services, by supplying and delivering vessels to Hodeida port.

OTHER KEY ACTIONS

- Support the implementation of SMART surveys (Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions) between July and December, to assess the nutrition situation in all governorates.

Glossary

Acute food insecurity

Acute food insecurity is any manifestation of food deprivation that threatens lives or livelihoods regardless of the causes, context or duration. The IPC Acute Food Insecurity scale categorizes acute food insecurity into five Phases of severity, ranging from IPC Phase 1, corresponding to No/Minimal acute food insecurity, to IPC Phase 5, corresponding to Catastrophe/Famine. Each of these phases has important and distinct implications for where and how best to intervene.

Chronic food insecurity

Chronic food security refers to food insecurity that persists over time, largely due to structural causes. Chronic food insecurity has relevance in providing strategic guidance to actions that focus on the medium- and long-term improvement of the quality and quantity of food consumption required for an active and healthy life.

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

The IPC results from a partnership of various organizations at the global, regional and country levels, and is widely accepted by the international community as a global reference for the classification of food insecurity.¹

Cadre Harmonisé (CH)

The Cadre Harmonisé is the multi-dimensional analytical framework used by the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), for the analysis and identification of areas and groups at risk of acute food insecurity in the Sahel, West Africa and Cameroon.²

Emergency – IPC/CH Phase 4 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Emergency Phase 4 is a level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale at which households either have large food-consumption gaps – which are reflected in very high acute malnutrition and excess mortality – or are able to mitigate large food-consumption gaps by employing emergency livelihood strategies and asset liquidation. Households face critical levels of acute food insecurity/critical acute food insecurity. Urgent action is needed to save lives and livelihoods. If nothing is done, the population could face starvation or death.

Catastrophe – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) is a level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale at which households face 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. Urgent, immediate action is needed to stop widespread starvation and death, and the total collapse of livelihoods. Households can be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) even if areas are not classified in Famine (IPC Phase 5).

Famine – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Famine is the highest level of the Acute Food Insecurity scale. 'Famine' exists in areas where at least one in five households has, or is most likely to have, an extreme deprivation of food and face starvation, death, destitution. Extremely Critical levels of acute malnutrition (at least 30 percent of children malnourished) and significant mortality, directly attributable to outright starvation or to the interaction of malnutrition and disease (at least 1 person for every 5 000 dies each day), are occurring. Urgent action is needed to stop widespread starvation and death.

Famine Likely – IPC/CH Phase 5 of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale

Famine Likely is the highest level of the Acute Food Insecurity Scale (Phase 5), used to classify situations when famine is likely occurring. If there is insufficient data for famine classification, usually because either nutrition or mortality data are lacking, but the available information indicates that famine is likely occurring or will occur, then the famine classification is called "Famine Likely". Famine and Famine Likely are equally severe; the only difference is the amount of reliable evidence available to support the statement.

1 For further details, please see http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_Famine_Factsheet_2020.pdf.

2 For further details, please see <http://ecoagris.cilss.int/index.php/analyse-cadre-harmonise/>.

Risk of famine

Risk of famine refers to the reasonable probability of an area going into Famine in the projected period. While this is not perceived necessarily as the most-likely scenario, it is a worst-case scenario that generally has a realistic chance of occurring.

Food security

A situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. There are usually four dimensions of food security: food availability, food access, food utilization and stability over time.

Food access

Access by households/individuals to adequate resources for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.

Food availability

The availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports.

Livelihoods

People's capabilities, assets – both material and social – and activities required for a means of living linked to survival and future well-being; and the policies and institutions that shape or constrain access to assets and choices about activities.

Coping strategies

Activities to which people resort in order to obtain food, income and/or other essential goods or services when their normal means of livelihood have been disrupted or other shocks/hazards affect their access to basic needs.

Malnutrition

Malnutrition is an umbrella term that covers undernutrition and overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer. Undernutrition is a consequence of inadequate nutrient intake and/or absorption, and/or illness or disease. Acute malnutrition, stunting, underweight and micronutrient deficiencies are all forms of undernutrition.

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Global Network Against Food Crises

FAO and WFP are the founding members of the Global Network Against Food Crises, together with European Commission for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) and European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO). The Global Network seeks to better link, integrate and guide existing programmes and policy processes to sustainably address the root causes of food crises along the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus.

Within the Global Network's approach and framework, FAO and WFP together with relevant partners have established a coordinated monitoring system for food security, livelihoods and value chains in order to identify and inform critical anticipatory actions.

This report is the first joint FAO-WFP early warning analysis of food insecurity hotspots and is part of a series of Global Network's analytical products contributing to the generation and sharing of consensus and evidence-based information for preventing and addressing food crises.

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