Regional Food Security & Nutrition Update

WFP World Food Programme

Regional Bureau Nairobi, August 2021

Highlights :

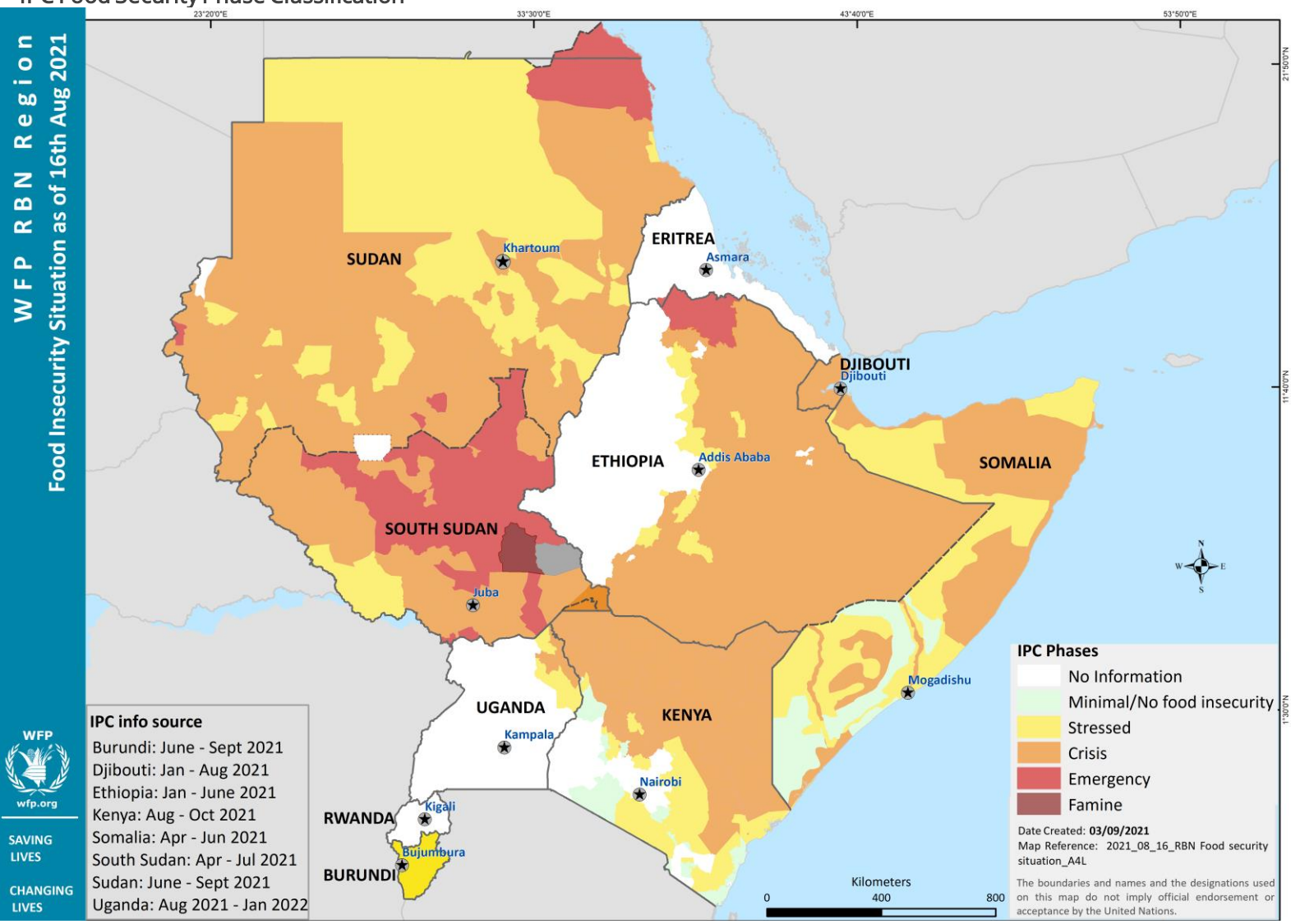
30.4 million people are currently facing severe food insecurity, which is slightly above the same period in 2020 but a decrease from 33.3 million in March 2021, the latter due to seasonality. This is in addition to 15.7 million at the risk of food insecurity in urban areas

An estimated 108,000 and 401,000 people in parts of South Sudan and Ethiopia (Tigray) respectively are in Human Catastrophe and in-need of immediate life-saving humanitarian food assistance. The Tigray situation remains grave and unpredictable.

There is a high burden of acute malnutrition in the region with Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan in that order having the highest burden of undernutrition

The main drivers of high levels of food and nutrition insecurity are; conflict/ insecurity, climatic shocks, macro-economic instability and COVID-19. There is a possibility of a third consecutive drier than normal conditions in eastern Kenya, southern Somalia and southeast Ethiopia between Oct-Dec 2021

IPC Food Security Phase Classification



Source: Most recent IPC analyses as of Jan 2021. Countries like Kenya have not provided updates for the recent SRA. Equally, countries whose IPC validity ended by end of 2020 (Burundi, Sudan) have no updates on IPC.

Food security overview

Food insecurity remains a major concern in the region with more than **30.4 million people** in need of immediate humanitarian food assistance**.** This is a slight decrease from six months ago, mainly because improved access to food from seasonal harvests. **Sudan, Ethiopia** and **South Sudan** account for lion-share of the severely food insecure people (80%).

In **South Sudan**, an estimated 7.2 million people (60% of the population) were projected to be food insecure during April-July 2021, of which 108,000 people were in Catastrophe mainly in parts of Pibor Administrative Area, Jonglei, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States. This is an additional 70,000 people in crisis or worse food insecurity compared to the same period in 2020.

In **Ethiopia,** renewed conflict that has disrupted markets, livelihoods and delivery of the much-needed humanitarian assistance in Tigray, pushed the population into famine-like conditions. The Famine Review Committee estimated that about 400,000 people were in IPC Phase 5 (Catastrophe) between July and September 2021. According to IOM, the spill-over of conflict into neighbouring Afar and Amhara regions continued to displace people, limiting their access to markets, income and livelihood opportunities. By end June 2021, an estimated 2.1 million people were displaced by conflict in Tigray, Amhara and Afar regions. The 2021 *belg* harvests are expected to be below average while livestock production and body conditions in southern and northern pastoral areas are poor because of erratic rains. Preliminary results from the belg assessments indicate that about 649,845 people in Amhara that are dependent on belg season and 827,873 IDPs are in need of emergency support from July through December 2021. In Afar, 76,520 IDPs and 3,430 people affected by floods need emergency support .

In **Sudan,** deteriorated economic environment compounded by concerns over 2021 crop production, diminished labor & income opportunities and removal of government subsidies led to rapid inflationary pressure on basic food items. As many as **9.7 million people** are expected to face crisis or worse food insecurity between June–September 2021 (the peak of the lean season). In addition, the country hosts 2.7 million IDPs and 1.1 million refugees. In **Somalia**, concerns over prospects of below average 2021 "Gu" season harvests, depleted household food stocks, acute pasture and water shortages and high food prices are expected to drive **2.7 million people into** severe food insecurity through September 2021.

In **Kenya,** an estimated **2.1 million** people were severely food insecure between March and May 2021. A deterioration in food security is expected in most of the eastern, northern, and marginal agricultural and pastoral areas due to below average crop and livestock production following erratic seasonal rains that led to faster depletion of forage and water resources. However, near average crop harvests are expected in major maize production areas of the Rift-valley.

Food insecurity in **Karamoja Uganda** is expected continue through September 2021 due to poor and delayed harvests and low agricultural labour income opportunities. Not withstanding current seasonal low food prices, compromised household purchasing power continued to limit food access from markets.

In **Burundi** and **Rwanda,** improved 2021 'Season B' harvests helped reduce food access challenges resulting from weakened purchasing power due to COVID-19 related measures. However, floods destroyed crops in localized hilly areas and neighbouring lowlands areas. In Burundi, the ban on maize imports from the region and COVID-19 restrictions on cross-border trade & labor migration heightened food shortages among border communities. The recent re-introduction of more stringent COVID-19 control measures in Rwanda has curtailed participation in economic activities, affecting household purchasing power.

Country	Stressed	Crisis	Emergency	Catastrophe	Crisis or worse
Burundi	4,200,579	988,419	56,365		1,044,784
Djibouti	389,000	167,000	27,000		194,000
Ethiopia	5,836,394	4,478,178	2,425,984	401,313	7,305,475
Kenya	5,557,860	1,769,839	238,555		2,008,394
Somalia	2,925,900	2,251,900	400,100		2,652,000
South Sudan	3,138,000	4,668,000	2,413,000	108,000	7,189,000
Sudan	16,525,736	7,072,838	2,696,783		9,769,621
Uganda	470,610	159,930	27,725		187,655
Total	**39,044,079**	**21,556,104**	**8,285,512**	**509,313**	30,350,929

Nutrition overview

The nutrition situation in the region remains grave, aggravated by on-going conflict/ insecurity, COVID-19 impacts on incomes and high food and water prices. Phenomenal rise in levels and burden of acute malnutrition (25 precent) has been recorded since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, regional estimates of acute malnutrition show an increase from 8.1 precent to 10.1 percent for MAM and 10.7 percent to 13.4 percent for GAM. Current IPC malnutrition estimates for children under-five years show that at 839,000 in Somalia, 542,000 in Kenya, 4.2 million in Ethiopia, 1.4 million in South Sudan and 3.3M in Sudan are wasted and in need of treatment interventions. New admissions into SAM therapeutic nutrition services grew in the first half of 2021 when compared to the same period last year, hitting 196,394 children in Ethiopia (12.2%), 112,151 children in South Sudan and 27,863 in Burundi. UNICEF projects that more than 102,000 children from Tigray will require SAM treatment in the next 12 months from July 2021. Coincidentally, Ethiopia, Sudan and South Sudan, the same countries facing mounting insecurity and economic crisis have also the highest caseload of acute malnutrition in the region.

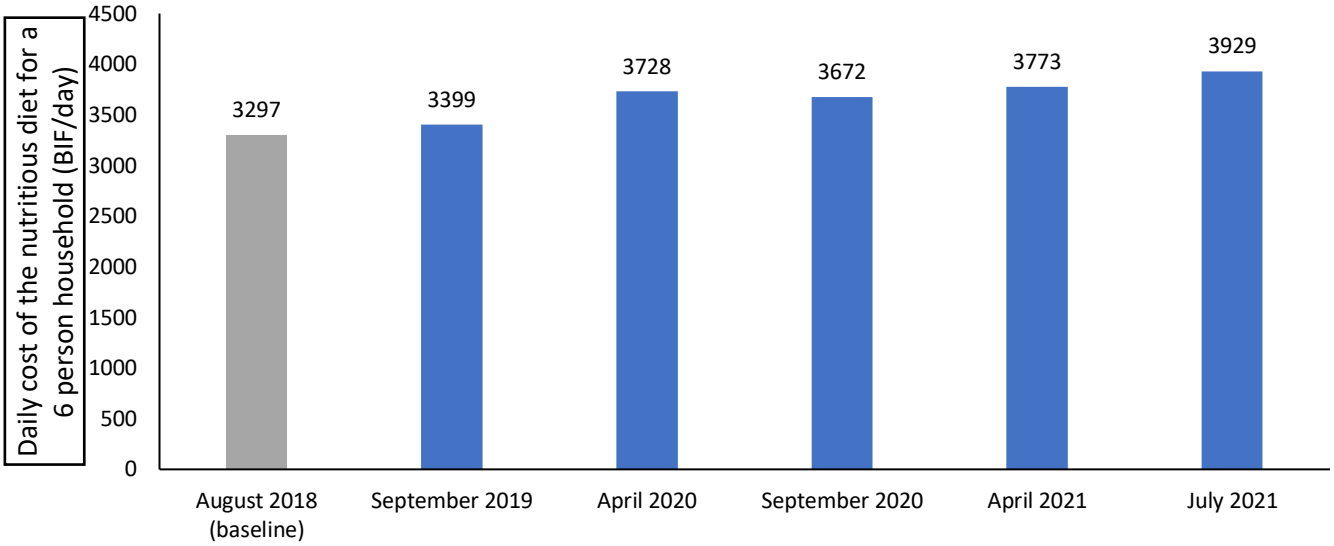
Indicator	Kenya	Somalia	Ethiopia	Uganda	Sudan	South Sudan
Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)	401,000	695,700	3.2M	46,303 (Karamoja); 18,940 (refugee camps)	2.73M	1,078,867
Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)	141,000	143,200	1M	10,257 (Karamoja); 5,641 (refugee camps)	570,000	313,913

UNICEF Somalia child screening centre, Somalia/2019/Knowles Coursin

Cost of a nutritious diet

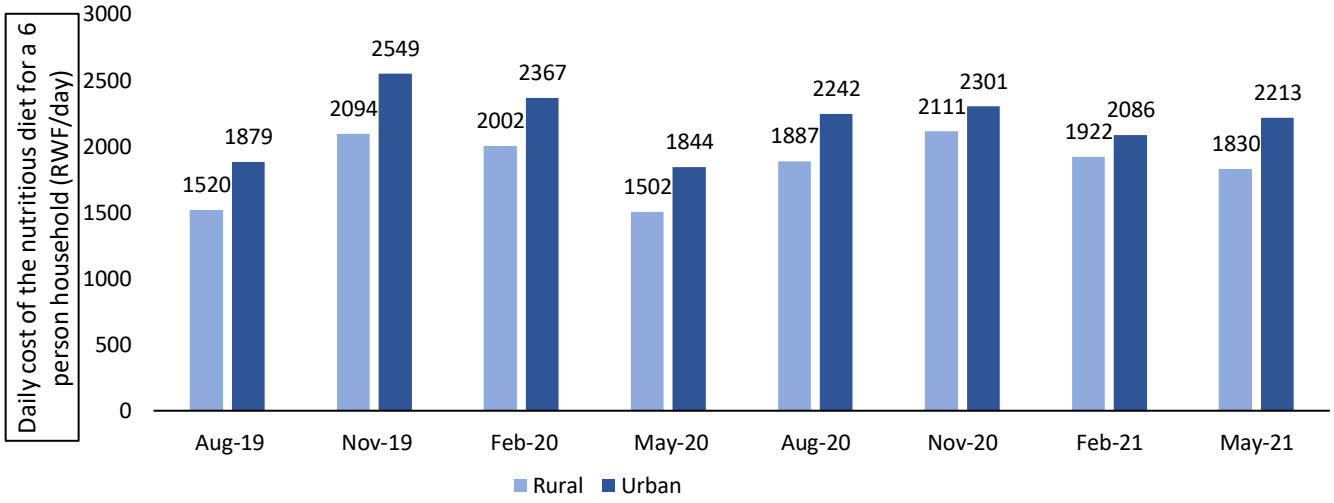
Between August 2018 and July 2021, food price inflation has increased the cost of a nutritious diet for households in Burundi by 19%. The cost of the nutritious diet has remained overall stable in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic (represented between April 2020 and April 2021). An increase in the cost of the diet between April 2021 and July 2021 of 4% reflect seasonal appreciation of the food prices, which also coincides with the peak of the lean season in May.

VARIATION OF THE COST OF THE DIET IN BURUNDI BASED ON CPI INFLATION ADJUSTMENT *(ISTEEBU)*

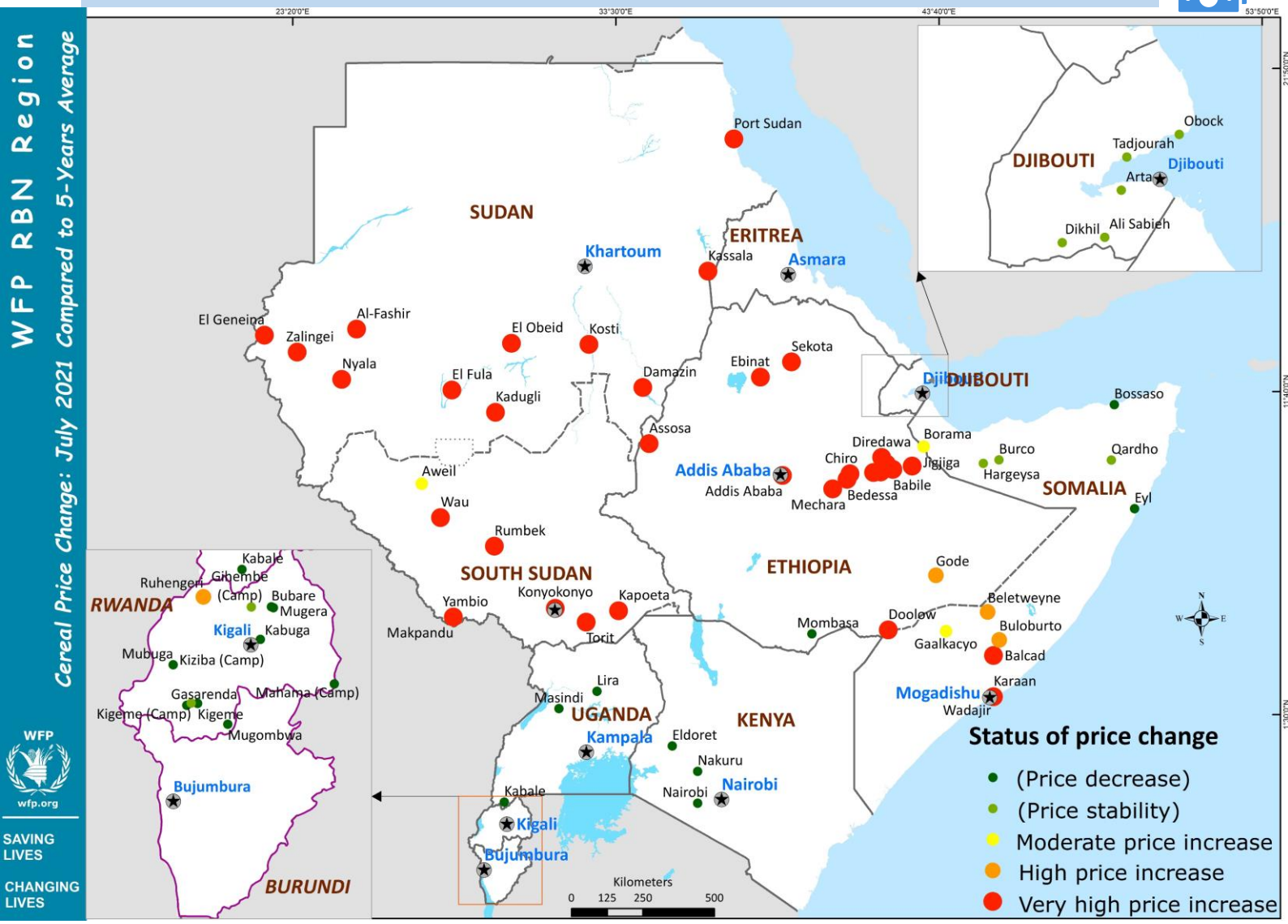


In Rwanda, food price inflation increased the cost of the nutritious diet between August 2019 and February 2020 in rural areas and urban areas by 32% and 21%, respectively. Although the cost of the nutritious diet has remained relatively stable since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, represented by data from February 2020 to May 2021, changes in food prices increased diet costs significantly (41% in rural areas and 25% in urban areas) in the second half of 2020. Diet costs during COVID-19 appear to have peaked in late 2020, but have since decreased.

VARIATION OF THE COST OF THE DIET IN RWANDA BASED ON CPI INFLATION ADJUSTMENT

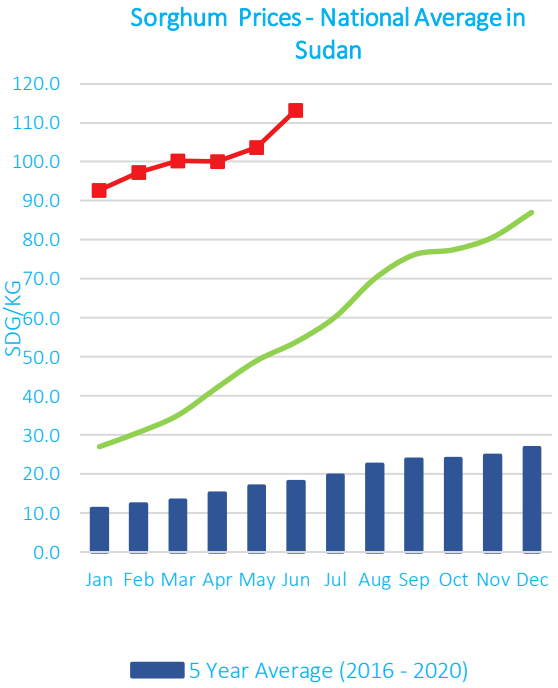


Markets, food prices and cross border trade developments



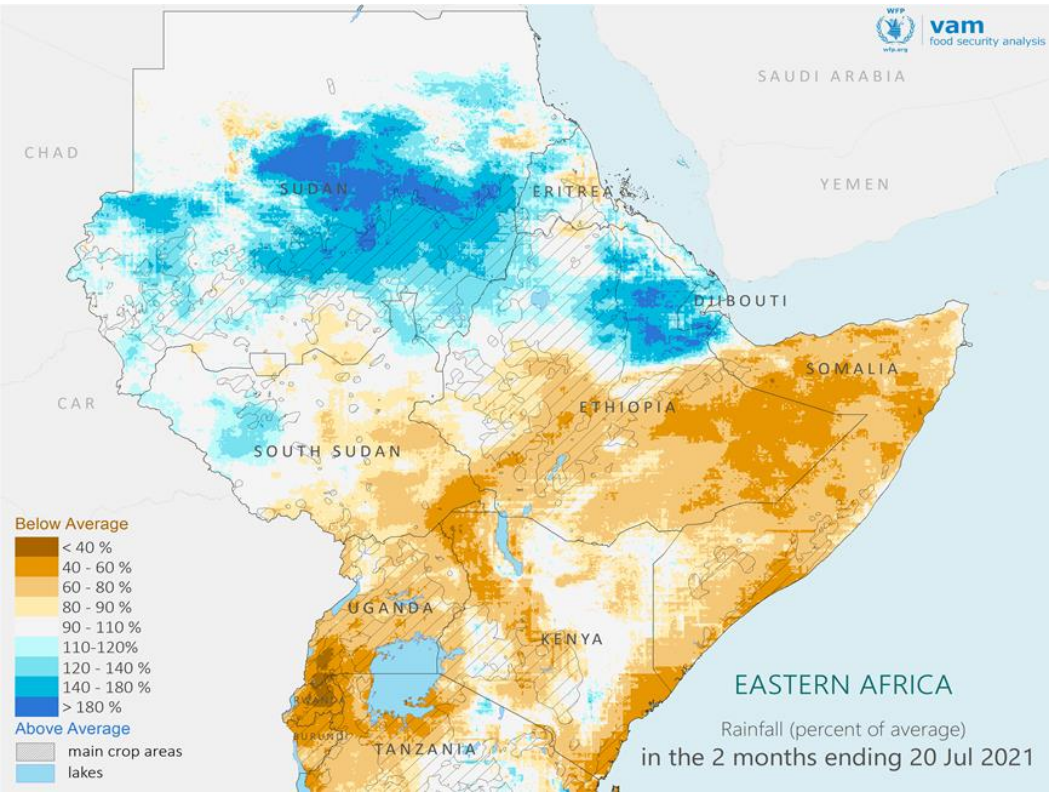
Staple food prices in the region trended seasonally month-on-month during 2021Q2; while they increased modestly in Burundi, South-Central Somalia and Ethiopia, they accelerated rapidly in Sudan but decreased in South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda and were stable in Djibouti. Compared to the 2020 and 5YA levels, staple cereal prices were lower in Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya and Rwanda, but exceptionally high in Sudan and South Sudan while elevated in Ethiopia, Burundi and South-Central Somalia. The low prices were because of improved domestic supplies from recent/ongoing seasonal harvests and also increased cross-border trade flows while the high and elevated prices reflect mainly severe macro-economic difficulties- weak local currencies and high food inflation rates facing these latter countries.

According to the East Africa Cross Border Trade Bulletin (July 2021, Volume 34, cross-border trade volumes of staple foods improved in the second quarter of the year when compared to the recent five-year average and the 2021 Q1 levels, supported by increased supply from the June harvests and availability of US $ for imports in South Sudan. On the converse, livestock cross-trade volumes the region during 2021Q2 were significantly lower than the recent five-year average because of COVID-19 related ban on large gatherings in livestock markets and also reduced demand from Hajj festivities locally and in Arabian Gulf Countries.



Rainfall performance 20th May – 20th July 2021

The June-September period marks the rainfall season in northern parts of the region covering Sudan, South Sudan, western and northern Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti. In the 2 months ending on 20th July, most areas in the north of the region that receive June-September seasonal rainfall recorded heavy rains while the pastoral and agropastoral areas in Kenya, Somalia and southern Ethiopia remained generally dry following the cessation of March-May long-rains. The rains also continued in western Kenya, northern Uganda and to some extent in the coastal areas of Kenya and localized areas of coastal Somalia. Cumulatively, above 150mm of rains were received most of south Sudan, western and northern Ethiopia, southwest Eritrea, northern Uganda and western Kenya with the highest amounts in western Ethiopia and western South Sudan.



Map 3: Rainfall patterns (20th May – 20th July 2021)

When compared to long-term average, the rains were normal to wetter-than-normal in Sudan, northern Ethiopia, and western South Sudan. The southern areas of the region had abnormal dryness given the dry weather that characterises this period of the season.

The heavy rains in the north together with rising water levels in lakes and rivers and already water-logged soils from previous floods led to flooding in eastern Sudan and parts of South Sudan. With the forecast for August-September showing likelihood of continued heavy rains, the flooding situation is likely to worsen in these areas including in low-lying areas of Ethiopia, impacting on people's livelihoods, planted crops and properties.

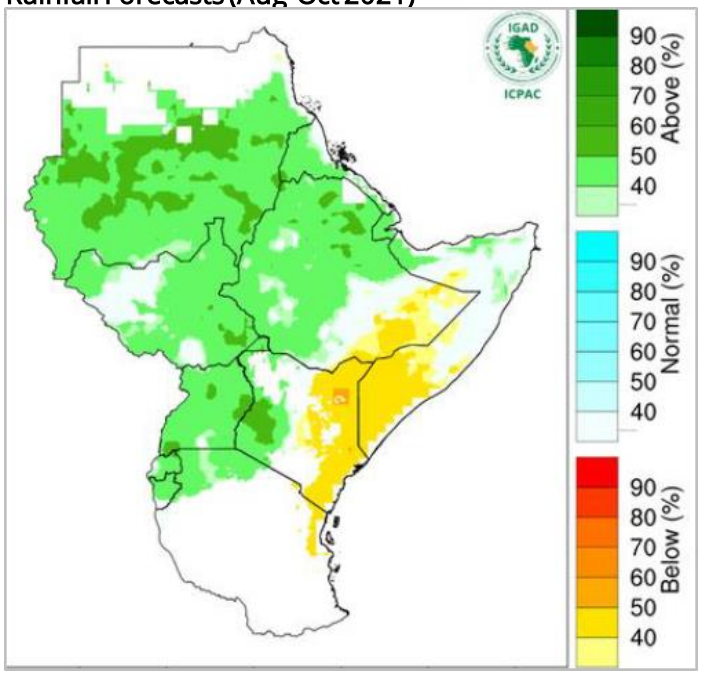
Forecasts point to a continued wetter-than-normal rainfall conditions in August in northern sector countries while temperature will be warmer than usual over most of Kenya, eastern Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, southern and north-eastern Somalia, most of Ethiopia, Djibouti, north-western South Sudan, and northern Sudan.

From September, the rains will then decline in Sudan, northern Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Djibouti as the June – September season comes to an end.

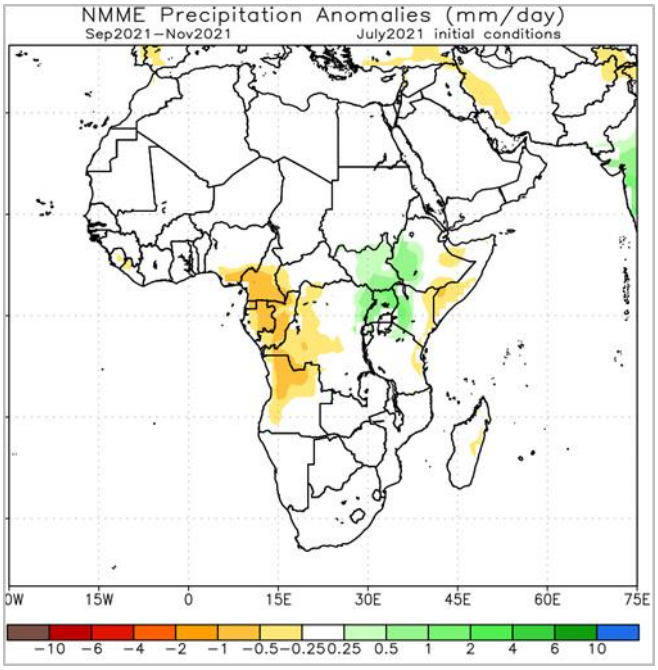
There is concurrence between international and regional forecasting models that the Oct-Dec short rains will be depressed with drier-than-normal conditions particularly in eastern Kenya, Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. Surface temperatures will also be higher than normal. The combined effect of previous seasons rainfall deficit and below-average short-rains will grossly impact on crop growth, rangelands regeneration and water resources replenishment.

The WMO forecast from July identifies a 40-60% chance for below-normal October-December 2021 rainfall because of a negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) that could persist until end of year. The IOD is normally associated with depressed rainfall over the eastern Africa region. The likelihood of a below-average rainfall/dry conditions coupled with warmer-than-normal surface temperatures during the short-rains period is of great concern because it could worsen the drought conditions by desiccating vegetation, forage, vegetation and water resources in pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods, thereby aggravating vulnerability and food insecurity. At the same time it could promote high evapotranspiration and lowering soil moisture vital for plants (and crops) growth. This could lead to a third consecutive poor season since end of 2020, affecting second short seasonal crop harvests. The consecutive multi-season dry conditions together with other concurrent shocks, notably conflict, insecurity and macro-economic challenges will heighten food assistance needs in Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia and ASAL Kenya in the next six months.

Rainfall Forecasts (Aug-Oct 2021)

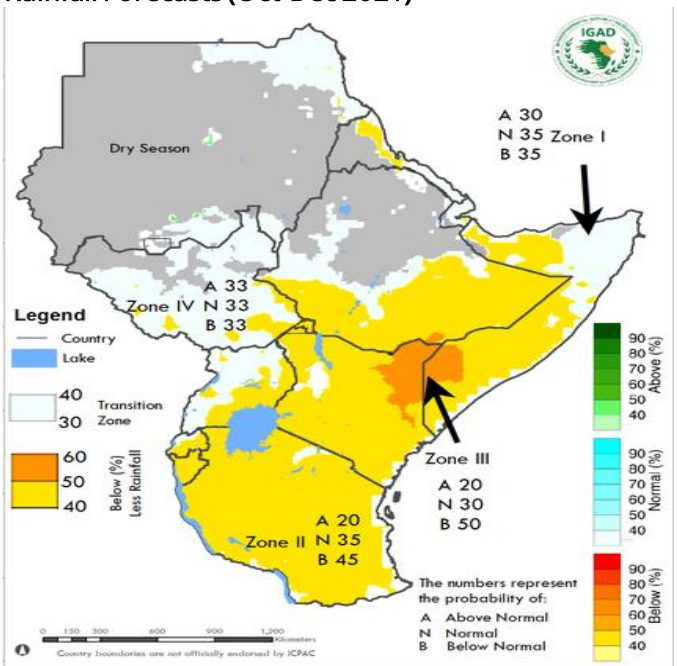


ICPAC probabilistic rainfall forecast for Aug-Oct 2021

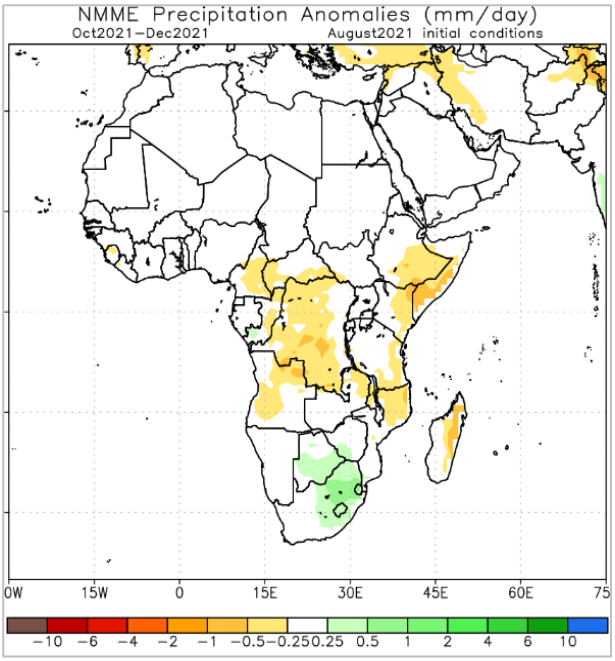


NMME rainfall forecast for Sept – Nov 2021

Rainfall Forecasts (Oct-Dec 2021)



Oct-Dec 2021 rainfall forecast by IGAD-ICPAC



NMME rainfall forecast for Oct – Dec 2021

Update on seasonal crop harvests

Seasonal harvests of cereals is nearing completion in bi-modal cropping areas but there are concerns particularly in South Central Somalia, Belg-producing areas of Ethiopia and ASAL Counties of Kenya (southeastern and coastal marginal agricultural areas) that have been negatively impacted by persistent dry conditions. According to FAO, the poor performance of seasonal rains reduced 2021 harvests prospects in the affected areas.

In Somalia, the onset of seasonal MAM (GU) rains was delayed by one month and ceased earlier than usual. Low river water levels also disrupted irrigation and farming activities along the Juba and Shabelle rivers. Accordingly, FSNAU and FEWS NET, projected the 2021 "Gu" production to be 30-40 percent below the long-term average and will limit access to food and income and lead to increased staple food prices.

In Ethiopia, harvesting of Belg season maize crops has been finalized, although delayed by one-month, under poor conditions due to persistent dryness. Renewed widespread conflict continues to severely disrupt agricultural activities in Tigray, parts of Amhara and neighbouring Afar regions, potentially resulting in below-average crop harvests. In Uganda, below-average seasonal rains in parts of Karamoja is projected to delay and result in poor harvests. Localized crop production failures are also expected in northeastern Arusha, Kilimanjaro and Tanga regions, due to delayed and below-average rains.

In the Sudan, harvests are expected from October, having benefited from early onset and normal rains through August. However, there are concerns over this year's cropping season due to sub-optimal input use and likely reduced crop acreage and yields among small-holder farmers owing to high cost of agricultural inputs and removal of fuel subsidies. Large-holder farmers however have reportedly taken advantage of the increased crop prices to plant more, likely to boost the aggregate national cereal production.

Harvests in the major growing areas of central, rift valley and western Kenya and the bi-modal rainfall areas of Uganda, expected from September are projected to be average to above average. Similarly, Rwanda and Burundi, the "2021B" season crops benefited from above-average rains are projected to result in favourable crop production. In Tanzania, the "Masika" harvests in northern and northeastern bi-modal areas and "Msimu" harvests in central and southern unimodal areas, are projected to be above-average because of favourable rains. In southern bi-modal rainfall areas of the Greater Equatoria Region of South Sudan, despite poor start of the season, improved precipitation in May and June boosted crop production prospects. At the same time, above average rains in May in most of central and northern South Sudan unimodal cropping areas profited crop germination, but triggered floods.

Poor maize Condition in Bamba- Ganze Kilifi County, Kenya, 2021/ NDMA

Good crops in Auiling Boma, Aweil, Northern Bhar El ghazal/ Gummat Abdallatif/ WFP/2021

Update on seasonal livestock performance

Pastoral areas have been affected by two consecutive seasons of poor and below average rains since October 2020. In Somalia, southeastern & northern pastoral Ethiopia and northern and eastern Kenya, rainfall deficits in March and April caused significant deterioration of rangeland and water resources, resulting in livestock emaciation and a substantial decline in milk production. Heavy rains in May improved pasture and livestock conditions in some areas, but the gains were temporary resulting in current below-average levels and rangeland conditions.

In Kenya, ASAL counties are facing a looming crisis because of intensified dry conditions following below-normal long seasonal rains and attendant poor pasture, browse, water and body conditions. According to NDMA, distance to watering points increased by 40% than they were in June while recharge of open water sources is at 30-45% below average while the cost of water in the pastoral livelihoods increased by 40%.

According to preliminary analysis by FSNAU and FEWSNET, drought conditions in most of pastoral and agro-pastoral Somalia, led to increased spending on feed and water because of abnormally high prices. At the same time, livestock body conditions and productivity remained below average in many livelihoods. Accelerated livestock sales is expected to offset debts and higher food and water prices before the onset of Deyr rains in October.

In Ethiopia, due to lack of adequate regeneration in pasture and water conditions because of erratic rains, livestock body conditions and productivity levels are below normal in most pastoral areas in northern pastoral, southeastern and Somali regions. The below-average rains projected for Oct-DEc will compromise rangeland regeneration and water replenishment. As a result, the situation will remain dire in most pastoral areas.

Dry water pan in Samburu County, Kenya 2021/ NDMA

Deteriorated livestock body conditions , Tana Rive, Kenya 2021 NDMA

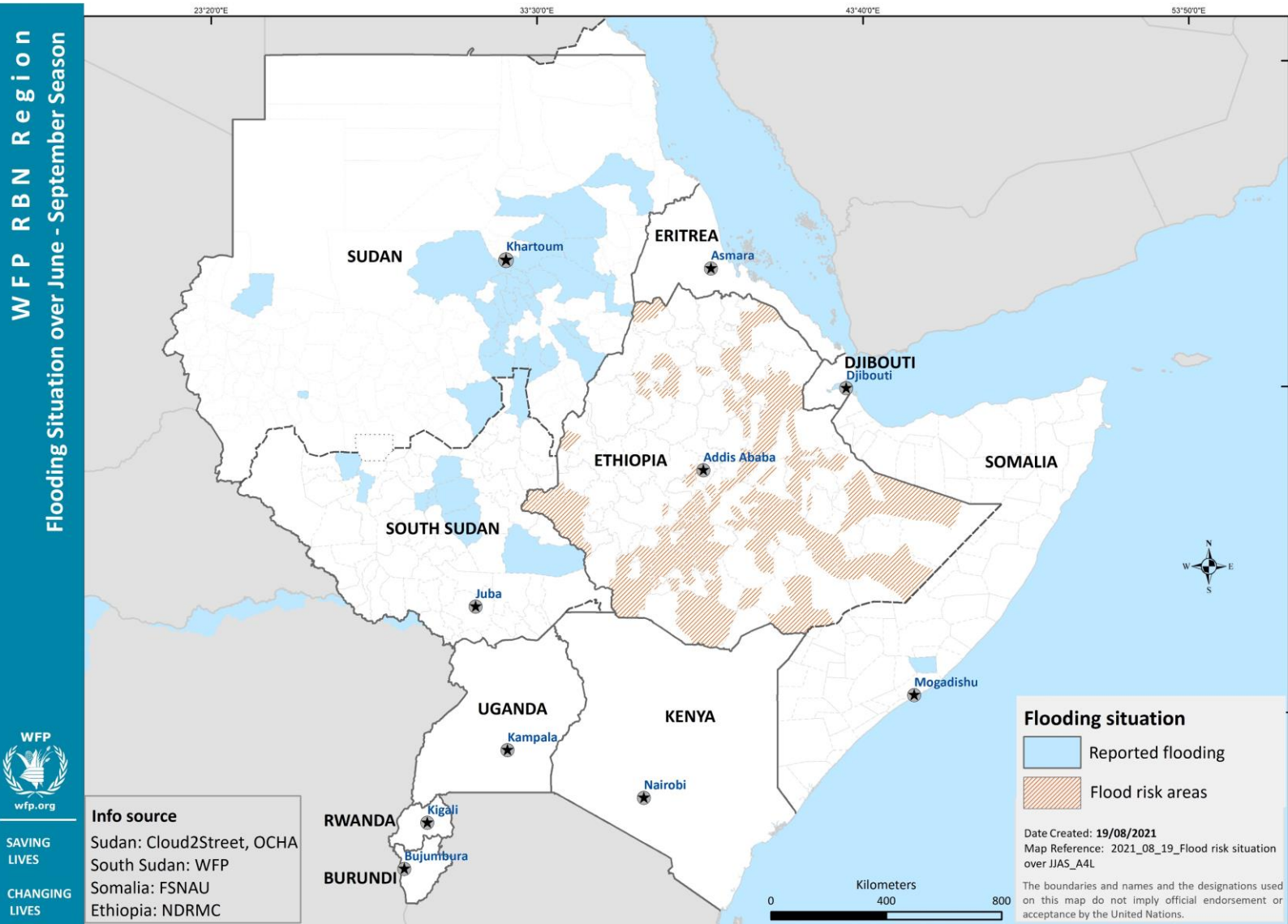
Update on floods

Excessive and torrential seasonal rains in parts of the region resulted in flooding. The flooding situation Map below shows the areas reported as having experienced flooding in Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia (Jowhar due to riverbank breakages) or risk of flooding in Ethiopia. FEWSNET reported heavy rains and attendant flooding during the second week of August 2021 in northern Ethiopia, Eritrea, and eastern Sudan. There have also been reports of massive flooding that inundated neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa in August 2021. In South Sudan, floods have devastated huge swarths of Upper Jonglei (Ayod, Canal and Fangak Counties), Renk County, parts of Northern Bahr el Ghazal, Unity, Upper Nile and Warrap States, covering agricultural fields, displacing families and their livestock to higher grounds.

Flash Floods in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 17 August 2021. Photo by Mayor of Addis Ababa

The situation in South Sudan is worrisome given that this is the third year in a row that the areas have been under flooding or water flogged following excessive rains and overflow of the Nile river basin. In Sudan, OCHA reported that heavy rains and flash floods have affected many states across the country and destroyed farmlands.

The extent of the food security impacts of floods varies by place to place but in general, resulted in loss of lives, destruction of homes and loss of crops and livestock in addition to causing population displacement. These have caused major disruptions to livelihoods and increased food and livelihood support needs.



Update on desert locusts

Overall, the devastation of desert locusts on livelihoods has reduced substantially in the region this year when compared to last year. This is because of unfavourable climatic conditions for breeding and migration and enhanced control operations. However, lingering and potential threats through crop loses and reduced grazing and forage resources still exists in localized areas. According to FAO, locust swarms continue to increase in northeast Ethiopia (Afar region), southern Djibouti and the plateau in northwest Somalia. This is because of ongoing good rains that is favourable for breeding. Current field operations in northern **Somalia** should be maintained while upscaling of surveys is needed in northeast **Ethiopia** and **Djibouti**.

ocusts in Magwi County, South Sudan. Photo: WFP/Peter Louis, larch 2020

Food Security Outlook (October – December 2021)

Overall, food security situation is expected to improve in bi-modal cropping areas following recent harvests as households start consuming/selling own crops. Staple cereal prices are also expected to decrease seasonally in surplus producing Uganda and improve food access through markets, only slowed down by reduced purchasing power.

Given the projected La Niña-like conditions in quarter three of 2021, there is a high likelihood of a third consecutive dry season in parts of eastern, coastal and northern Kenya, north-eastern and central Ethiopia and large parts of Somalia which could potentially lead to below-average harvests in bi-modal cropping areas and reduce livestock productivity in pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods in the affected areas. The continued deterioration of rangelands and water shortage will further impact on livestock body conditions and productivity, increase the need for livestock outmigration, increase competition and conflicts over dwindling resources, and reduce incomes from livestock sales among agropastoral and pastoral communities. This will increase the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance towards the end of 2021 and into mid-2022.

On-going conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia is likely to continue spilling-over and widen to neighbouring Amhara and Afar regions increasing displacement, disrupting livelihoods, markets, humanitarian and commercial supplies, driving more people into severe food insecurity.

On-going macroeconomic challenges (high inflation, currency depreciation and low foreign currency reses) in Burundi, South Sudan, Sudan and Ethiopia are expected to continue depressing the national import capacity resulting in high food prices and unaffordability of nutritious diets.

Even though the restrictive measures instituted by different authorities to control the spread of COVID-19 have gradually reduced in scale, their effects through income losses and erosion of livelihoods will continue to affect household food security particularly in urban areas.

Ongoing and planned assessments, August – December 2021

August

- Rwanda CFSVA
- Sudan HH mVAM
- Kenya LRA
- Somalia Post Gu AFI & AMN analysis
- Uganda (IPC AFI & AMN)
- IGAD Region GACOF Meeting
- Sudan Remote Household Survey
- Rwanda Annual market assessment for HGSF
- KAP study on RBC deworming decentralized campaign

September

- Rwanda Joint Assessment Mission (JAM)
- Sudan mid-season crop assessment
- South Sudan FSNMS
- Kenya MFI Assessment (Kakuma & Dadaab Refugee Camps)
- Kenya Urban FSMS (mVAM)
- Kenya market survey/ cost of diet analysis
- Household Survey in Kisumu, Kajiado, Embu/Mbere
- Kenya IPC
- Burundi (IPC AMN & AFI)
- Uganda MFI Assessment
- Ethiopia Food Security Monitoring iin Tigray
- Ethiopia market baseline assessment (MFI) in Tigray
- Rwanda Standardized Expended Nutrition Survey (SENS)

October

- Ethiopia mVAM Urban assessment
- Ethiopia Belg season and pastoral FSMS
- Ethiopia Urban food security assessment
- Djibouti HIV/TB Food Security Nutrition Assessment
- Rwanda JAM

November /December

- Rwanda JAM
- Rwanda NFSVA (Nutrition, food security and vulnerability of PLHIV survey)
- Rwanda HGSF gender analysis

For further information

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