

# FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY UPDATE KEY MESSAGE

31 MAY 2024



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



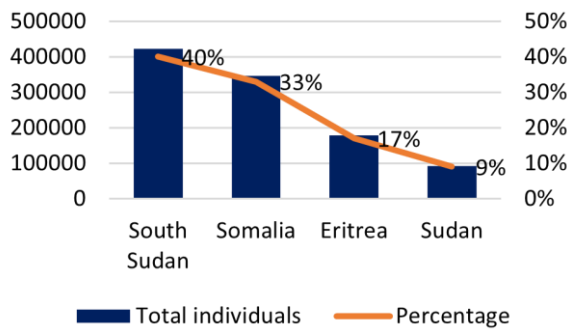
## KEY MESSAGE

Between 20 and 22 million people<sup>1</sup> (18% of the population) are estimated to be food insecure in Ethiopia in 2024. About 80% (15.8 million) of these are considered acutely food insecure and the remaining 20% are chronically food insecure. The HRP is targeting 10.4 million of this population for emergency food assistance<sup>2</sup>.

The acutely food insecure population (15.8 million) includes about 4 million IDPs, and 87% of them are domiciled in Amhara, Oromia, Tigray, and Somali Region. This does not include the refugee numbers.

Ethiopia is home to 1,051,022 refugees and asylum seekers (as April 2024)<sup>3</sup>. Over 90% of these are from South Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Refugees by country of origin

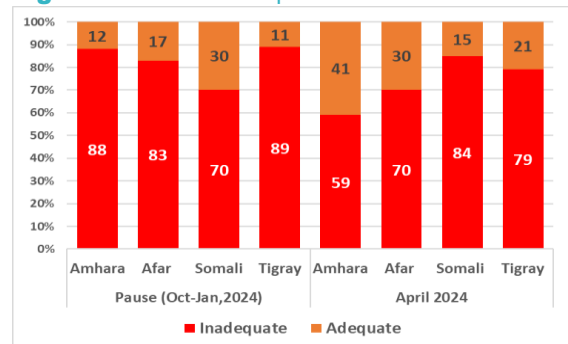


Source; UNHCR

Ethiopia's population of refugees and asylum seekers increased steadily from about 736,000 people in 2019. The number of refugees from Sudan increased from 56,106 in February to 92,435 in April 2024. WFP monitoring in April 2024 shows that 45% of refugee households had inadequate food consumption and 66% were practicing emergency and crisis coping strategies.

WFP monitoring of its relief assistance beneficiaries shows improving but still precarious household food security outcomes among beneficiary households in the Afar and Amhara regions (Figure 2). However, mixed food security outcomes were observed among beneficiary households in the Tigray region, while worsening food security outcomes were recorded in the Somali region.

Figure 2: Food consumption Score

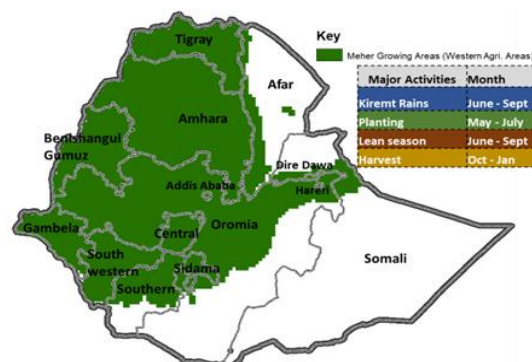


Source: WFP monitoring

The impact of food assistance appears to be limited by unintended household actions (such as sharing the received food assistance with food-insecure but not prioritized households, using and selling the food assistance to repay loans). Additionally, resource-based approaches such as family capping in effect to maximize and stretch limited resources may disadvantage those families that are larger than regional average sizes. In the Somali region, the peak of the pastoral regions' lean season between February and March adds to the poor food security outcomes.

The acutely food-insecure population typically increases from January and peaks in August, in sync with the peak of the major lean season in Ethiopia, which runs from June to September (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Meher growing area with the lean season.

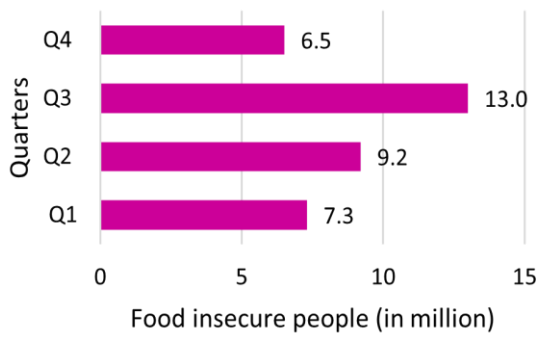


In 2024, the peak acutely food-insecure population is estimated at 13 million people. (Figure 4).

1 VAM estimated range based on HEA analysis, PSNP beneficiaries, HRP estimates and FEWNET projections.

2 Numbers drawn from the 2024 HRP.

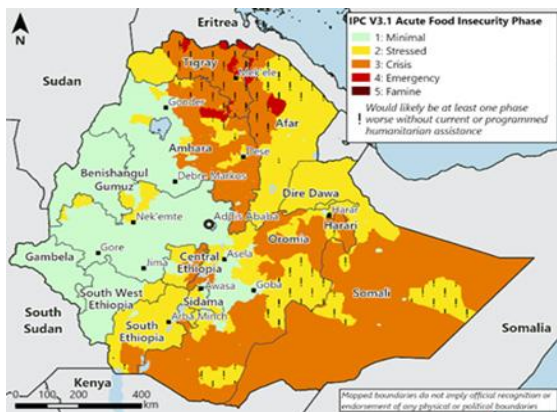
**Figure 4: Acutely food insecure people in 2024 by quarter**



Source: HRP

Assuming the current levels of food assistance to the prioritized acutely food insecure population are maintained, the seasonally increasing food needs are likely to outpace the food assistance during the lean season. Based on this prognosis, FEWSNET is projecting widespread IPC Crisis (IPC 3) food security outcomes in most of the food insecure areas of the country, with patches of IPC Emergencies (IPC 4) food security outcomes in parts of Tigray, Amhara, and Afar regions (Figure 5). This underscores the inadequacy of the projected levels of food assistance.

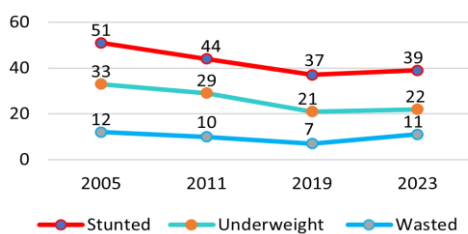
**Figure 5: Projected food security outcomes, June to Sept 2024**



Source: FEWS NET

Undernutrition among children under five years old (CU5) in Ethiopia remains serious. Around 39% of CU5 are stunted, 11% are wasted, and 22% are underweight<sup>4</sup> (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Trends in Malnutrition among children Under 5**



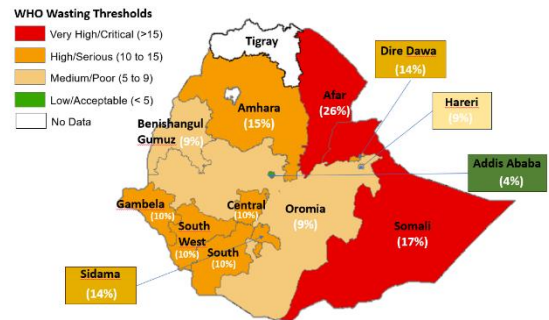
Source: EDHS

3 UNHCR May 2024

4 National Food and Nutrition Baseline Survey, 2023

The prevalence of wasting in CU5 varies across regions, ranging from 4% in Addis Ababa to 26% in the Afar and 17% in the Somali region (Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Wasting Rates Under 5 years.**



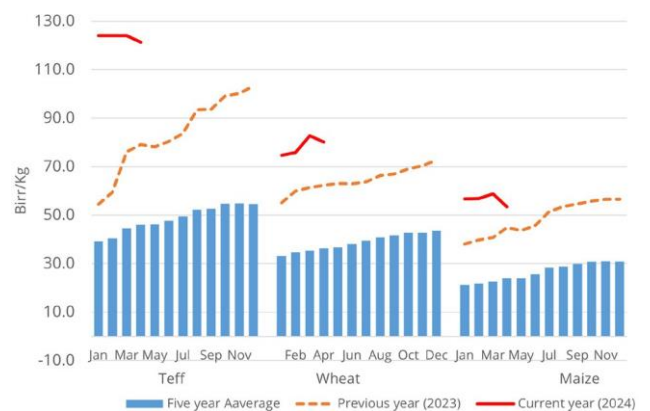
Source: National Food and Nutrition Baseline Survey, 2023

The SMART survey in Tigray (August 2023) shows GAM rates of 15.9% and 26.5% among internally displaced persons (IDPs). In Amhara, a regional nutrition screening (January 2024) in four drought-affected zones shows a proxy GAM rate of 24.4%. The SMART surveys in different localities of Amhara, Oromia, and Somali regions (February 2024) show high GAM rates above the WHO emergency threshold (>15 percent).

The current food and nutrition insecurity in Ethiopia results from multiple overlaying and overlapping shocks, including droughts, floods, conflict, and macroeconomic shocks characterized by high inflation, foreign currency shortages, and local currency depreciation.

While these factors have disrupted domestic food production and distribution, there appears to be no noticeable food shortage in the country's markets. However, poor households' ability to access food is severely constrained by ever-soaring prices (Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Price trends of key staple**



Between 2021 and 2023, food inflation has been hovering above 30%. However, it has declined from 32.2% in January to 25.5% in May 2024, year-on-year.