

FSNWG¹ Food Security and Nutrition Update

Key messages

- Consecutive seasons of below-average rains have led to moderate to severe drought conditions in various parts of the region, including southern and south-eastern Ethiopia, northern and eastern Kenya, most of Somalia and localised parts of Uganda.
- According to the IPC Global Support Unit (IPC-GSU) for East and Central Africa, an estimated 58 million people in 11 of the 13 countries covered by the FSNWG were highly food insecure (IPC² Phase 3+) and in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in March 2022. Of these, about 29 million were from seven of the eight IGAD member states.
- The number of children requiring treatment for acute malnutrition is sharply increasing across the region. Compared to similar periods in the recent years, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) admissions were up significantly in January and February 2022 in most countries.
- Food prices remained generally high across the region, exceeding the 2007|2008 economic crisis
- levels in various parts of the region, due to the compounding impact of the Ukraine-Russia crisis, ongoing drought, the long-running effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and insecurity, and macroeconomic challenges in various parts of the region.
- As seasonal forecasts show drier than average conditions for the remainder of the season, it is likely that the food security and nutrition situation across the region will further deteriorate, with some populations facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in worst-affected areas. A recent analysis in Somalia also indicates a risk of Famine in some areas in a worst-case scenario.
- Despite the ongoing crisis in the region, the humanitarian response so far remains underfunded. Increased advocacy for resources to respond to the increasing humanitarian needs is, therefore, needed.

Food insecure population estimates, as of March 2022

Country	Stressed (IPC Phase 2)	Crisis (IPC Phase 3)	Emergency (IPC Phase 4)	Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5)	Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3+)
Djibouti	389,000	167,000	27,000		194,000
Ethiopia ³	5,998,068	4,550,479	2,434,519	401,313	7,386,311
Kenya	5,242,796	2,728,313	757,796		3,486,109
Somalia	3,839,690	3,645,730	1,200,240		4,845,970
South Sudan	3,371,000	4,401,000	2,375,000	55,000	6,831,000
Sudan	15,007,696	4,631,480	1,324,529		5,956,009
Uganda	470,610	159,930	27,725		187,655
IGAD Total	34,318,860	20,283,932	8,146,809	456,313	28,887,054
Burundi	3,938,184	1,059,233	0		1,059,233
CAR	1,652,643	1,475,713	619,565		2,095,278
DRC	47,830,924	20,463,608	5,415,900		25,879,508
Tanzania	785,080	415,463	21,780		437,243
Total	88,525,691	43,697,949	14,204,054	456,313	58,358,316

Source: IPC Global Support Unit (GSU) for East and Central Africa

¹ The East and Central Africa Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) is a multi-stakeholder regional forum, chaired by IGAD and FAO, mandated to provide adequate and timely information of food security and nutrition to relevant stakeholders for improved decision making

² The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a set of standardised tools used to classify the severity of food insecurity using a five-phase scale, that is, Minimal (IPC Phase 1), Stressed (IPC Phase 2), Crisis (IPC Phase 3), Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and Catastrophe or Famine (IPC Phase 5)

³ Figure represents estimates from September 2021, and includes findings from an IPC update on Tigray and neighbouring zones of Afar and Amhara, which were not endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia. It, therefore, does not include estimates of populations affected by the ongoing drought in the country

Sector updates

Food security

The food security situation in the region is rapidly worsening, driven by the compounding impact of intensified drought conditions, conflict and insecurity, and macroeconomic challenges, including high food prices, in various parts of the region.

The IPC-GSU for East and Central Africa estimates that 58 million people in 11 of the 13 countries covered by FSNWG were highly food insecure (IPC Phase 3+) and in need of urgent humanitarian assistance in March 2022. Of these, about 29 million were from seven of the eight IGAD member states – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. The other 29 million were from Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Tanzania.

An additional over 88 million were Stressed (IPC Phase 2), about 34 million of them from the IGAD region, and in need of livelihood support.

Intensifying drought in various parts of the region, particularly in southern and south-eastern Ethiopia, the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) of Kenya, and most of Somalia has resulted in significantly below-average cereal production, poor pasture and rangelands conditions, widespread livestock deaths, severe water shortages and to a notable extent, drought-induced displacement.

Looking at the 2021 short| Deyr crop harvest, which wrapped up in February 2022 in most areas, cereal harvests were significantly below average, leaving some of the worst-affected households with little to no food stocks. In Kenya for instance, the national maize production was estimated at 47% of the recent five-year average⁴, while in Somalia, this was the third lowest Deyr cereal harvest since 1995, after the 2010 and 2016 harvests⁵. Consequently, cereal prices have sharply increased, due to rising demand, constraining household purchasing power especially among poor households who have to purchase most of their food in local markets. As of February 2022, maize prices were 9-21% above the recent five-year average across most pastoral markets in

Kenya⁶. Similarly, in southern Somalia, maize and sorghum prices in various reference markets were 51-160% above the recent five-year average⁷.

Pasture and rangeland conditions are also well below average. The Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) reveals poor vegetation conditions in many pastoral areas across the region. Combined with severe water deficits, this has resulted in poor livestock body conditions and production, unseasonal livestock migration and excess livestock deaths. Available estimates at the time of reporting indicated that more than 3 million livestock had died across Ethiopia and Kenya due to the drought (1.5 million in each country)⁸. Similarly, households across many areas in Somalia reported losing about 30% of their livestock holdings since mid-2021 due to the drought⁹. Of further concern, especially for the pastoral households, are unfavourable terms of trade as food prices rise at the same time that livestock prices decline in various parts of the region, driven by increased distress sales.

These factors have caused an increase in population displacement. At the time of reporting, an estimated 286,000¹⁰ and 719,000¹¹ people in southern Ethiopia and Somalia respectively, had been displaced due to the drought.

As the situation is expected to further deteriorate, the number of food insecure people, due to the drought, is likely to go up, and some of the worst-affected households could face Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). In Somalia, a risk of famine is projected in six areas in a worst-case scenario where the rains fail, food prices rise sharply diminishing household purchasing power, and humanitarian assistance is not scaled up in the hardest hit parts of the country.

Conflict and insecurity continue to have the most severe impacts on food security in northern Ethiopia and South Sudan. This is as a WFP-led Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) conducted between November and December 2021 in Tigray classified 83% (4.6 million people) of the analysed population as food insecure, representing a sharp increase in comparison to the pre-

⁴ FEWS NET. Kenya Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022

⁵ FEWS NET and FSNAU. Somalia Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022

⁶ FEWS NET. Kenya Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022

⁷ FEWS NET and FSNAU. Somalia Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022

⁸ OCHA. Horn of Africa Drought - Humanitarian Key Messages. March 2022

⁹ FEWS NET and FSNAU. Somalia Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022

¹⁰ OCHA. Ethiopia - Drought Update No.3. April 2022

¹¹ IOM et al. Somalia Drought Displacement Monitoring Dashboard. March 2022

conflict period in October 2020, when just 0.4 million people were classified as food insecure¹².

Meanwhile in South Sudan, 6.83 million people (55% of the population) faced high levels of food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+), largely due to the impact of conflict and insecurity, in addition to floods and macroeconomic challenges. Of these, 55,000 were in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Fangal, Canal Pigi and Uror counties in Jonglei, Pibor county in Greater Pibor Administration Area, Tambura county in Western Equatoria and Leer and Mayendit counties in Unity¹³.

Macroeconomic shocks, combined with skyrocketing global food prices, are also exacerbating food insecurity in most of the countries. Likely to aggravate the situation are the potential market impacts of the Ukraine crisis. While it might be a bit too early to estimate the impacts of the crisis on the availability and prices of commodities such as wheat, sunflower oil, fertilizer and fuel in the region, there are prospects for shortages and above-average prices which could have severe implications on household food access.

Nutrition

Country updates

The number of children requiring treatment for acute malnutrition is sharply increasing across the region, driven by the drought conditions in various parts, conflict and insecurity and the long-running impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Ethiopia, severe acute malnutrition (SAM) admissions in January 2022 were significantly higher compared to the same period in 2019, 2021 and 2022, largely driven by worsening food insecurity and conflict. Of particular concern are the conflict-affected regions of Afar, Amhara and Tigray. In Amhara, for instance, preliminary findings from a Find and Treat campaign conducted in March 2022 indicated SAM rates of 6% in Waghimra, 3.1% in North Wollo and 2.7% in North Gondar among under-five children¹⁴. High global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates – 39% in Waghimra, 25.7% in North Wollo and 22.3% in North Gondar – were also recorded.

In addition are the drought-affected Oromia, Sidama, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP), and Somali regions. In Oromia, results from a Find and Treat campaign conducted between January and February 2022 indicated a GAM prevalence ranging between 14-31% across some 18 worst-affected woredas. In the Somali region, the GAM prevalence across three targeted woredas was estimated at 13%¹⁵.

In the ASALs of Kenya, the nutrition situation is also rapidly deteriorating, largely driven by prevailing drought conditions, along with high morbidity, inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, and gaps in nutrition commodities supply chain. In this respect, the number of under-five children requiring treatment for acute malnutrition is estimated to have risen to nearly 755,000. This includes about 184,000 children in need urgent lifesaving treatment. Notably, findings from a SMART survey conducted in March 2022 in Mandera county point to an extremely critical malnutrition situation with a GAM prevalence of 34.7% and a SAM prevalence of 7.9%.

Similarly, heightened acute malnutrition levels were also noted in Somalia, attributed to reduced food and milk availability, severe water shortages and rising disease incidences, including a measles outbreak. In Baidoa, Bay region for instance, it is estimated that GAM admissions rose by 130% between January and February 2022¹⁶. Generally, in comparison to the last five years, January and February 2022 recorded the highest SAM admissions.

In South Sudan, an estimated 1.34 million children were acutely malnourished, 302,163 of them severely so¹⁷. Jonglei, Upper Nile, Unity and Western Bahr el Ghazal states had the highest burden. Looking at month-on-month admission trends, 44,803 SAM admissions were reported between January and February 2022, representing a 34% increase compared to the same period in 2021. Most of the admissions were from Jonglei (23%), Unity (17%) and Northern Bahr el Ghazal (12%) states. Similarly, an increasing trend in admissions to nutrition feeding programmes was also noted in Sudan, especially in the 115 (61% of total localities in the country) dry spell affected localities. Most of these

¹² [WFP. Emergency Food Security Assessment-Tigray, Ethiopia. January 2022](#)

¹³ [South Sudan IPC TWG. IPC Acute food insecurity and malnutrition analysis February-July 2022. April 2022](#)

¹⁴ Based on mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC)

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ [FEWS NET and FSNAU. Somalia Food Security Outlook February-September 2022. February 2022](#)

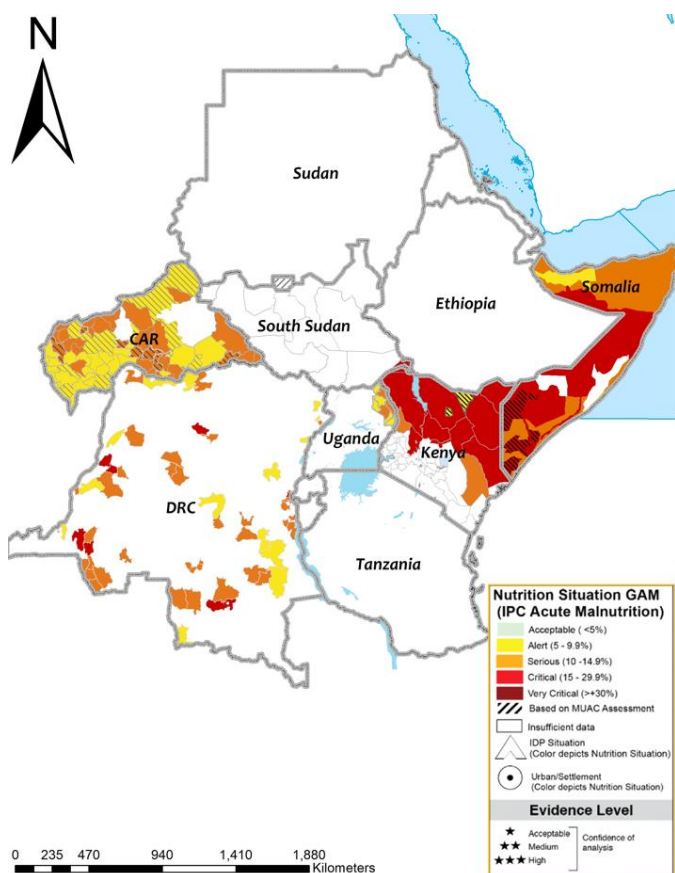
¹⁷ [South Sudan IPC TWG. IPC Acute food insecurity and malnutrition analysis February-July 2022. April 2022](#)

localities are in South Darfur, South Kordofan and Gedarf states.

Meanwhile in the Karamoja sub-region of Uganda, SAM admissions in January and February 2022 were the highest compared to similar months in the last four years. Amudat, Kotido, Nabilatuk and Napak districts were estimated to be in a Serious situation (GAM is 10-14.9%), while Kaabong and Moroto districts were estimated to be in a Critical situation (GAM is 15-29.9%). Food insecurity, the most severe observed in the sub-region in recent years, is considered one of the key drivers of the situation.

The nutrition situation is also concerning in Eritrea. A routine screening of 53,466 under-five children, conducted between January and March 2022, found a GAM prevalence of 19.8%, exceeding the international emergency threshold of 15%. Increased acute malnutrition cases were also noted in most regions when compared to similar periods in the previous years.

Regional acute malnutrition situation, March 2022



Source: IPC-GSU for East and Central Africa

Markets and trade

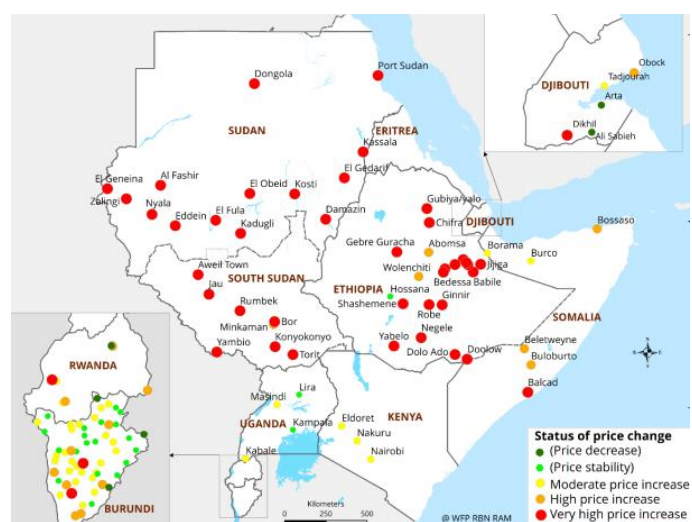
Looking at month-on-month prices in February 2022, staple cereal¹⁸ prices increased in Ethiopia, the ASALs of Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. In southern Ethiopia, the ASALs of Kenya and Somalia, this was as a result of multiple consecutive seasons of below average harvests. Further driving high prices in Ethiopia is conflict as well as inflation. In Sudan, the high prices were due to expectations of below-average harvests, linked to dry spells, and a deteriorating macroeconomic situation.

In Djibouti, certain parts of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, staple cereal prices remained typically stable due to an increase in supply from the below-average to average 2021 OND harvest in January 2022.

On the other hand, staple cereal prices declined in Burundi and Rwanda on a backdrop of ample supplies from 2021 Season A harvests. They are, however, expected to increase seasonally as from March 2022.

In comparison to the recent five-year average, staple cereal prices were very high in Ethiopia, southern Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. They were moderately high in Burundi, Djibouti, Kenya and Rwanda, and relatively stable in Uganda.

Staple cereals price change, February 2022



Source: WFP

Looking at the likely market implications of the Ukraine crisis, there is a likelihood of a further increase in the already high wheat, vegetable oil and fuel prices, thereby limiting household food access.

Overall, it is estimated that food prices in various parts of the region have exceeded the 2007 | 2008 economic crisis

¹⁸ Maize, sorghum, teff and beans

levels due to the compounding impact of the Ukraine-Russia crisis, ongoing drought, the long-running effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict and insecurity, and macro-economic challenges in various parts of the region.

Conflict

Conflict remains a key driver of food insecurity in the region.

Looking at the different conflict-related issues affecting the region, cattle rustling remains a challenge. In Kenya, cattle raids are on the rise, particularly in Baringo county. In South Sudan, banditry attacks were reported in Duk and Nyirol counties in Jonglei state, causing injuries and casualties among affected groups. Generally, cattle rustling risks an increase in illegal arming among affected communities.

Inter-communal conflicts also reportedly intensified in Baringo and Marsabit counties in Kenya, Benishangul-Gumuz in Ethiopia, Tonj East, Rumbek and Abyei in South Sudan, and in Jebel Moon (West Darfur) in Sudan, where about 150,000 families were displaced as a result. Notably, the ongoing drought in various parts of the region is expected to intensify resource-based conflict across the region as communities compete for the already scarce water and pasture resources.

In relation to electoral processes, heightened political contestation are expected in Kenya and Somalia as the general elections date nears, warranting close monitoring of the situation.

Climate

According to the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC), drier than normal conditions were generally observed over most parts of the region in March 2022.

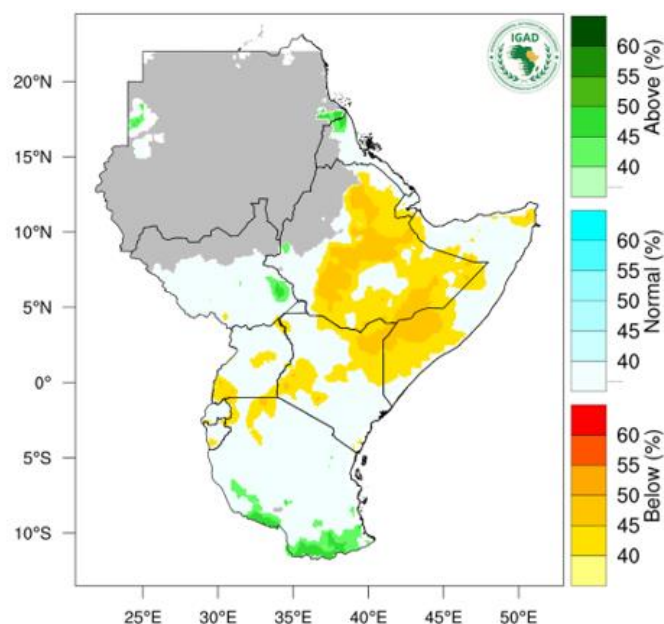
Looking at the April rainfall forecast by ICPAC, drier than normal conditions are expected over most parts of Ethiopia, parts of Kenya, southern parts of Somalia and parts of Uganda.

Near normal conditions are forecast over Burundi, much of Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

¹⁹ Associated with drier than usual conditions in equatorial eastern Africa

Wetter than usual conditions, meanwhile, are forecast over small areas in southeast South Sudan.

Rainfall probabilistic forecast, April 2022



Source: ICPAC

A review of the state of climate drivers reveals that La Niña¹⁹ remains active in the tropical Pacific Ocean, and will likely return to a neutral state in June 2022.

Humanitarian response

Despite the ongoing crisis in the region, the humanitarian response so far remains underfunded, calling for increased advocacy for resources to respond to the life-threatening levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, protect livelihoods, and ultimately return affected populations to self-reliance.

HRP²⁰ funding by country (million USD), March 2022

Country	Required	Funded	Funded (%)
Somalia	1,460	56.1	3.8%
South Sudan	1,670	130.6	7.8%
Sudan	1,940	166.1	8.6%

Source: OCHA

Countries also received funding outside the HRPs – Ethiopia (USD. 222.5 million), Somalia (USD. 64.9 million),

²⁰ Humanitarian Response Plan

South Sudan (USD.63.6 million) and Sudan (USD. 24.6 million).

At the time of reporting, Ethiopia was in the process of developing a Drought Response Plan, Kenya was in the process of revising its initial Drought Flash Appeal and Somalia was in the process of developing a Famine Prevention Plan.

Recommendations

The FSNWG recommends:

- Immediate, coordinated and multi-sectoral life-saving assistance, especially in areas with a high number of people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).
- Significant scale-up of contributions to country HRPs, as well as to other existing and future funding appeals.
- Rapid scale-up of nutrition interventions to treat malnutrition cases and prevent a deterioration in the overall nutrition situation. Additionally, mass screening exercises should be prioritised and nutrition services expanded to areas with low coverage.
- Scale-up of livelihood programmes to safeguard livelihoods, and support recovery and return to self-reliance for households facing Stressed (IPC Phase 2) or worse outcomes.
- Close monitoring of the remainder of the 2022 March-May rainfall season, which risks being below-average and thereby putting the region into a drought of an unprecedented length (four consecutive seasons).
- Close monitoring of areas where the food security situation is already dire and at risk of further deterioration. This includes areas expected to be at risk of Famine in Somalia and areas with GAM rates exceeding 30%.
- Refraining from export restrictions and| or bans to cushion against potential supply chain disruptions from the Ukraine-Russia crisis.
- Supporting and strengthening initiatives, such as social cohesion programmes and community-

based peace committees, that seek to address and mitigate conflict and insecurity in the region.

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