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2019

Global Report on Food Crises

JOINT ANALYSIS FOR BETTER DECISIONS

UPDATE September 2019



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This update is part of a series of publications released by the FSIN and its partners that provide consensus-based analyses of food crises to members of the Global Network Against Food Crises.

The Global Network Against Food Crises seeks to identify the underlying causes of food crises, share knowledge and strengthen collaborative efforts among humanitarian and development actors so they can design evidence-based responses. It was launched by the European Union, FAO and WFP during the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

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WHY THIS UPDATE?

The *Global Report on Food Crises* (GRFC), released annually, provides a consensus-based view of the numbers of people in urgent need of assistance for food, nutrition and livelihood support at the worst point during the previous year. For the last three years the report has indicated that despite the efforts of national governments and humanitarian actors, the number has not fallen below 100 million people globally, with conflict and insecurity, climate-related issues and economic shocks being the primary drivers of food insecurity.

Humanitarian agencies, governments and other stakeholders need to be able to better understand and respond effectively and promptly to food crises with immediate life-saving assistance and livelihood support as well as preventive action, including resilience-building programmes and longer-term development policies. To do so they need the most recent consensual evidence-based analysis. They need to know the severity of the situation in terms of numbers of acutely food-insecure people and whether the situation is improving, deteriorating or stable, and why so.

The GRFC partners are responding to that need to support timely responses and preventive actions to food crises by issuing this analytical mid-year update of the GRFC 2019 with the use of relevant information made available by September 2019.

Data gaps and comparability challenges

This update is aimed at providing the latest estimates for as many crises as possible out of the 66 countries and territories initially selected for the GRFC 2019 based on the criteria listed below:

- They required external assistance for food as assessed by FAO Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) in 2018
- And/or they experienced at least one food crisis in the past three years or at least three food crises in the past 10 years
- And/or they were affected by climate shocks/natural disasters; conflict, insecurity, localized violence or political instability; or economic shocks that had a major impact on food security or that the Government could not handle without external assistance
- And/or hosted large numbers of displaced populations whose food security was affected and required external assistance.

While the main table in the GRFC 2019 provided the peak number of food-insecure people in need of urgent action in 2018 for 53 countries and territories, this update provides estimates of the peak number for 36 of those countries with new food security information from the first eight months of 2019.

By September 2019, there were no updated estimates available for the 17 remaining countries and territories, which are therefore omitted from this update. These are countries hosting Syrian refugees (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey), the Syrian Arab Republic,¹ Iraq and Palestine in the Middle East; countries hosting Venezuelan migrants (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru) in Central America and the Caribbean; Afghanistan,² Bangladesh (Cox's Bazar) and Myanmar in Asia; Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Libya in Africa, and Ukraine in Eastern Europe.

These data gaps include five of the eight worst food crisis countries: Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the Syrian Arab Republic did not have updated information, while the information from Yemen and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are not comparable with 2018 data due to differences in geographical coverage. In 2018 the food-insecure populations of these five crises amounted to over 54 million people, or almost half of the total number of food-insecure people included in the annual report.

Eleven countries had data comparability challenges due to differences in geographical coverage and percentage of the population analysed. These were the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, eSwatini, the Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, the Sudan, Yemen and Zambia. It was not feasible to provide an accurate update of the aggregate peak number of people in need of urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance during the first eight months of 2019 because of these data gaps.

Thirty-six of the 66 countries selected for analysis in 2019 had updated estimates available for this report while analysis from 25 were comparable.

¹ Analysis ongoing, results not released by the time of producing this publication.
² Analysis ongoing, results not released by the time of producing this publication.

Sources for the peak number of food-insecure people

This update gives the updated peak number of acutely food-insecure people in the first eight months of 2019 when available and compares it with that of 2018 where possible.

In countries where the government and food security stakeholders have adopted the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) or the Cadre Harmonisé (CH) as the protocol for classifying the severity and magnitude of acute food insecurity, the number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above is provided. Populations in *Crisis* (IPC/CH Phase 3), *Emergency* (IPC/CH Phase 4) and *Catastrophe/Famine* (IPC/CH Phase 5) are deemed to be those in need of urgent food, nutrition and livelihood assistance. Populations in *Stressed* (IPC/CH Phase 2) require a different set of actions - ideally disaster risk reduction and livelihoods protection interventions - and are also reported in this update. See Annex 1 for more explanation of IPC/CH and phase descriptions.

For countries and territories that lack an IPC/CH, estimates of the number of people in need of food, nutrition and livelihood assistance were primarily derived from IPC-compatible analyses carried out by FEWS NET.³ Other sources include analysis carried out by Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VAC),⁴ Food Security Cluster (FSC) reports, Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNO)⁵ or WFP Food Security Assessments using Consolidated Approach to Reporting Indicators of Food Security (CARI) methodology.⁶

3 IPC-compatible products are generated using key IPC protocols but are not built on multi-partner technical consensus.
 4 The VAC assessment process and methodology is coordinated and backstopped by the SADC Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Vulnerability Assessment Committee. Its methodology draws from a livelihood-based vulnerability assessment framework.
 5 HNO: Humanitarian Needs Overviews aim to support the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in developing a shared understanding of the impact and evolution of a crisis and to inform response planning. The HNO includes an assessment of the food security situation, the impact of the crisis, the breakdown of the people in need and the required funds.
 6 The CARI is used to classify individual households according to their level of food insecurity. All five indicators included within the CARI approach can be incorporated within the IPC analysis; the IPC technical manual provides guidance on where each indicator sits within the IPC analytical framework.

ACUTE VERSUS CHRONIC HUNGER: TWO GLOBAL REPORTS

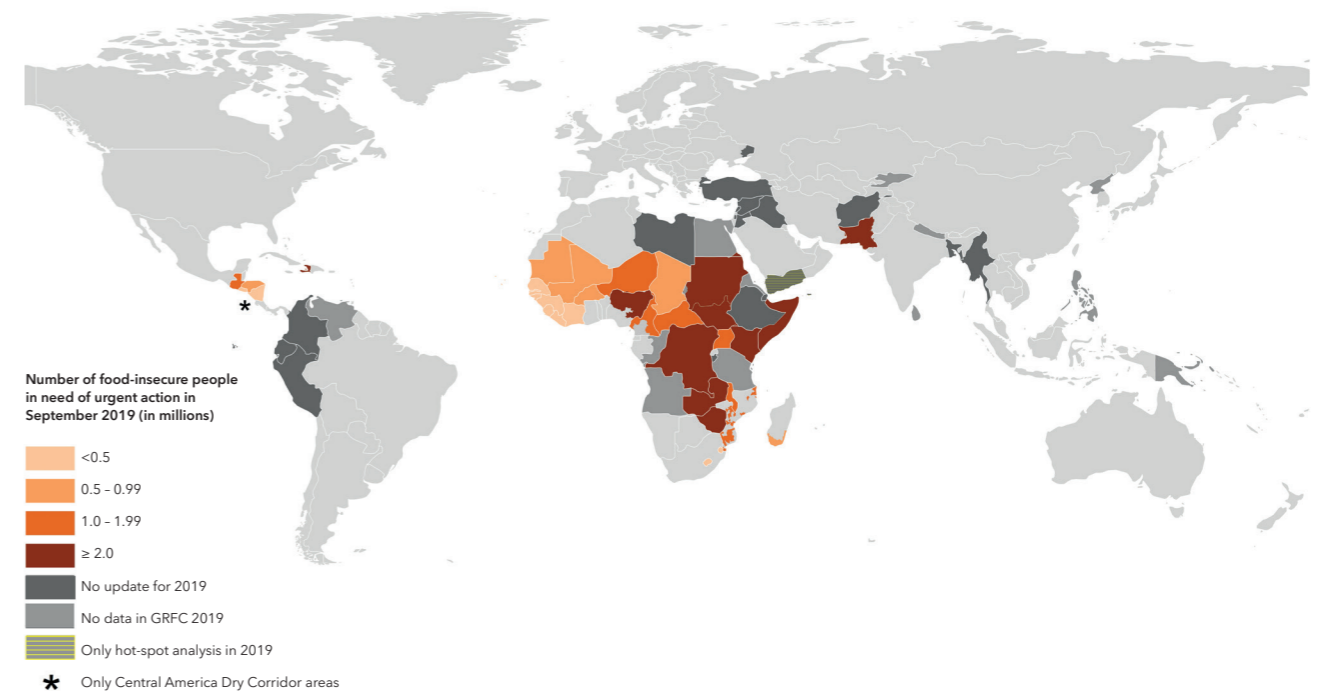
FAO, UNICEF, WFP and their partners produce two global reports on hunger a year - the *State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World* (ex-SOFI) and the *Global Report on Food Crises* (GRFC).

The ex-SOFI report is produced annually by FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO and aims to monitor the achievements regarding the SDG 2 to end world hunger. Based on the prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) and severe food insecurity (FIs_{sev}) reported by the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), which both measure chronic food insecurity, it estimated that more than 820 million people in the world were undernourished in 2018, and 704 million were severely food-insecure.

The GRFC is produced annually by 15 partner agencies under the umbrella of FSIN to feed consensual and evidence-based information to the Global Network against Food Crises. It focuses on acute food insecurity at the worst (peak) moment in the year in countries and territories that face food crises. Mainly based on IPC/CH estimates for food-insecure populations facing *Crisis* conditions or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above), the GRFC 2019 estimated that over 113 million people across 53 countries and territories experienced acute hunger in 2018 and required urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance.

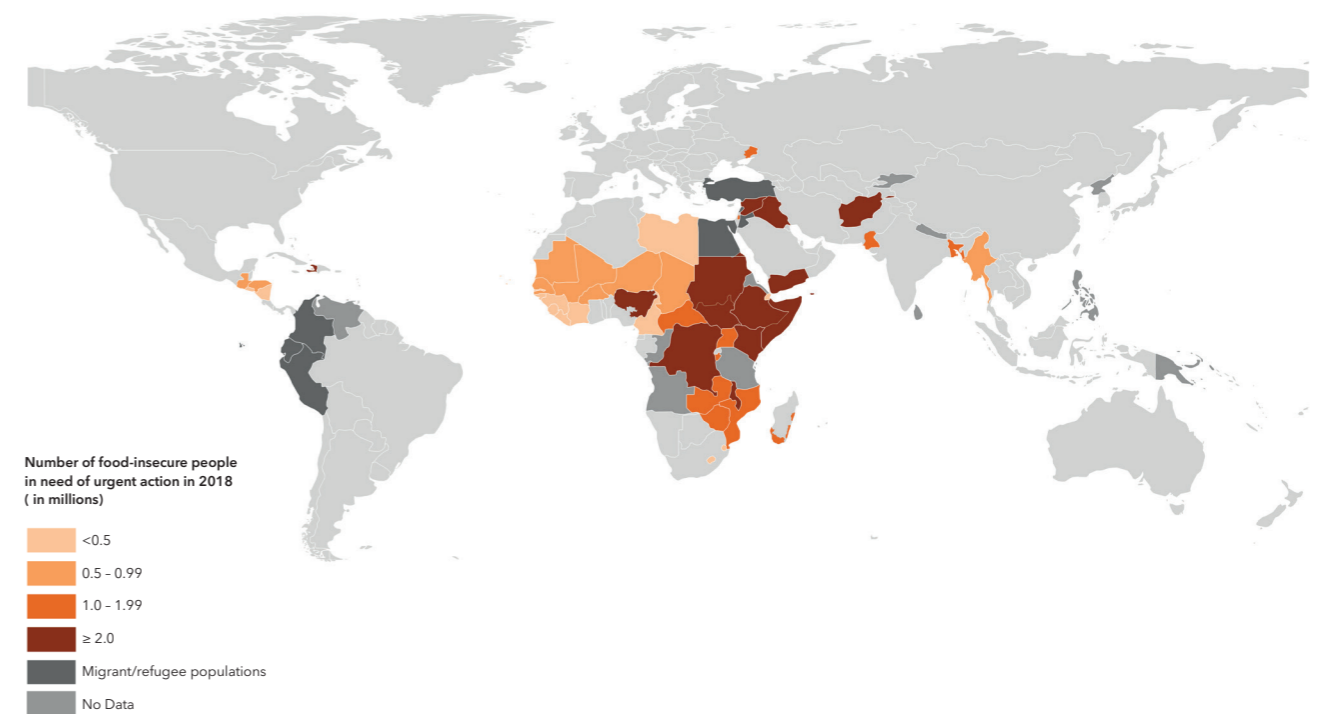
Acute and chronic food insecurity are not mutually exclusive phenomena. Indeed, repeated shocks and persistent crises can provoke upticks in severe food insecurity, eventually forcing households into destitution and chronic poverty, and potentially leading to starvation. While acute food insecurity may require short-term interventions that address immediate causes, interventions tackling root causes may also be important to prevent repeated transitory acute food insecurity, which may lead to chronic food insecurity.

Map 1 Number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (ranges) in September 2019



Source: FSIN GRFC September 2019

Map 2 Number of people in IPC/CH Phase 3 or above (ranges) in 2018



Source: FSIN GRFC March 2019

Table 1a Highest number of food-insecure people in 2018

Countries	Total population of reference 2018 (millions)	Source	Time period covered	Percentage of population analysed out of total population of reference (%)	Population in Stressed (IPC/CH Phase 2)		Population in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)		Highest area phase classification 2018
					Number (millions)	% of total population analysed	Number (millions)	% of total population analysed	
Burkina Faso	20.8	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	97%	2.7	13%	1.0	5%	Phase 3 Crisis
Cabo Verde	0.6	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	99%	0.1	20%	0.02	4%	Phase 3 Crisis
Cameroon (7 regions)	24.8	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	64%	2.9	18%	0.5	3%	Phase 2 Stressed
Central African Republic ¹	4.7	IPC	August 2018	95%	1.8	41%	1.9	43%	Phase 4 Emergency
Chad	15.4	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	90%	2.9	21%	1.0	7%	Phase 3 Crisis
Côte d'Ivoire	24.8	CH	Oct-Dec 2018	80%	3.0	15%	0.04	0%	Phase 2 Stressed
Democratic Republic of Congo ^{1,2}	84.9	IPC	Aug 2018-Jun 2019	66%	27.4	49%	13.1	23%	Phase 4 Emergency
El Salvador (Dry Corridor)	6.4	IPC	Nov 2018-Mar 2019	22%	0.4	28%	0.2	16%	Phase 2 Stressed
eSwatini ¹	1.4	IPC	Dec 2018-Mar 2019	79%	0.3	28%	0.2	23%	Phase 3 Crisis
Gambia ¹	2.2	CH	Oct-Dec 2018	83%	0.4	21%	0.1	6%	Phase 2 Stressed
Guatemala (Dry Corridor)	17.2	IPC	Nov 2018-Feb 2019	34%	1.4	23%	0.8	14%	Phase 3 Crisis
Guinea ¹	10.0	CH	Oct-Dec 2018	100%	0.9	9%	0.1	1%	Phase 2 Stressed
Guinea-Bissau	1.9	CH	Oct-Dec 2018	65%	0.1	11%	0.01	1%	Phase 1 Minimal
Haiti	11.1	IPC	Oct 2018-Feb 2019	63%	2.4	35%	2.3	32%	Phase 3 Crisis
Honduras (Dry Corridor)	9.4	IPC	Dec 2018-Feb 2019	30%	0.8	28%	0.5	19%	Phase 3 Crisis
Kenya ^{1,3}	46.3	FEWS NET	Jan-Mar 2018	100%	N/A	N/A	2.6	6%	Phase 3 Crisis
Lesotho	2.3	IPC	Dec 2018-Feb 2019	64%	0.5	33%	0.3	19%	Phase 3 Crisis
Liberia	4.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	87%	0.6	15%	0.04	1%	Phase 2 Stressed
Madagascar (southern and southeastern)	24.3	IPC	Nov 2017-Mar 2018	12%	0.7	22%	1.5	51%	Phase 4 Emergency
Malawi	19.3	IPC	Oct 2018-Mar 2019	79%	5.0	33%	3.3	22%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mali	19.4	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	97%	3.4	18%	0.9	5%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mauritania	4.5	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	88%	1.0	24%	0.5	14%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mozambique ¹	30.5	IPC	Sept-Dec 2018	94%	7.8	27%	1.8	6%	Phase 3 Crisis
Nicaragua	6.0	FEWS NET	Jun-Jul 2018	100%	N/A	N/A	0.02	0%	Phase 2 Stressed
Niger	22.1	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	94%	5.0	24%	0.8	4%	Phase 3 Crisis
Nigeria (16 states & Federal Capital Territory)	195.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	50%	22.7	23%	5.3	5%	Phase 4 Emergency
Pakistan (Balochistan and Sindh drought-affected districts) ^{1,3}	207.8	WFP	October 2018	1%	0.2	11%	2.0	87%	N/A
Senegal	16.2	CH	Jun-Aug 2018	77%	3.2	26%	0.8	6%	Phase 3 Crisis
Sierra Leone	7.7	CH	Oct-Dec 2018	86%	1.5	23%	0.1	2%	Phase 2 Stressed
Somalia	13.9	IPC	Feb-Jun 2018	89%	2.7	22%	2.7	22%	Phase 4 Emergency
South Sudan	11.0	IPC	September 2018	93%	3.2	31%	6.1	59%	Phase 4 Emergency
Sudan ¹	43.9	IPC	May-Jul 2018	100%	13.7	31%	6.2	14%	Phase 4 Emergency
Uganda	40.0	FEWS NET	Sep-Dec 2018	100%	N/A	N/A	1.1	3%	Phase 3 Crisis
Yemen ¹	29.9	IPC	Dec 2018-Jan 2019	100%	8.9	30%	15.9	53%	Phase 4 Emergency
Zambia ¹	17.6	IPC	Oct 2018-Mar 2019	39%	2.0	28%	1.2	17%	Phase 3 Crisis
Zimbabwe ³	13.9	ZimVAC	Oct-Dec 2018	67%	N/A	N/A	1.9	20%	Phase 4 Emergency

¹ The geographical coverage of estimates for Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, eSwatini, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, Sudan, Yemen and Zambia vary widely between 2018 and 2019 – direct comparison cannot be made between the two years for these 11 countries.

² FEWS NET analyses of available evidence suggest the population requiring emergency food assistance in 2019 was lower than Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, because of different interpretation of data related to factors contributing to food security.

³ The source of information changed for Kenya, Pakistan and Zimbabwe between 2018 and 2019.

Table 1b Highest number of food-insecure people in 2019 (as of September)

Countries	Total population of reference 2019 (millions)	Source	Time period covered	Percentage of population analysed out of total population of reference (%)	Population in Stressed (IPC/CH Phase 2)		Population in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above)		Highest area phase classification 2019
					Number (millions)	% of total population analysed	Number (millions)	% of total population analysed	
Burkina Faso	20.8	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	100%	3.8	18%	0.7	3%	Phase 3 Crisis
Cabo Verde	0.5	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	99%	0.08	14%	0.01	2%	Phase 2 Stressed
Cameroon (7 regions)	25.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	60%	3.1	20%	1.1	7%	Phase 3 Crisis
Central African Republic ¹	4.8	IPC	May-Aug 2019	91%	1.8	41%	1.8	41%	Phase 4 Emergency
Chad	15.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	90%	2.7	19%	0.6	4%	Phase 3 Crisis
Côte d'Ivoire	25.7	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	77%	2.6	13%	0.06	0%	Phase 2 Stressed
Democratic Republic of Congo ^{1,2}	86.8	IPC	Jul-Dec 2019	69%	27.0	45%	15.6	26%	Phase 4 Emergency
El Salvador (Dry Corridor)	6.4	IPC	Feb-Jul 2019	22%	0.5	35%	0.3	22%	Phase 3 Crisis
eSwatini ¹	1.4	IPC	Oct 2019-Mar 2020	67%	0.4	39%	0.2	25%	Phase 3 Crisis
Gambia ¹	2.3	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	95%	0.5	23%	0.1	4%	Phase 2 Stressed
Guatemala (Dry Corridor)	17.6	IPC	Mar-Jun 2019	34%	1.3	23%	1.1	18%	Phase 3 Crisis
Guinea ¹	12.8	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	79%	1.4	14%	0.3	3%	Phase 2 Stressed
Guinea-Bissau	1.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	64%	0.1	12%	0.0	0%	Phase 1 Minimal
Haiti	11.1	IPC	Mar-Jun 2019	63%	2.4	35%	2.6	38%	Phase 3 Crisis
Honduras (Dry Corridor)	9.6	IPC	Mar-Jun 2019	29%	0.8	27%	0.6	20%	Phase 3 Crisis
Kenya ^{1,3}	52.6	IPC	Aug-Oct 2019	26%	6.8	50%	3.1	23%	Phase 3 Crisis
Lesotho	2.3	IPC	Oct 2019-Mar 2020	63%	0.6	38%	0.4	30%	Phase 3 Crisis
Liberia	4.9	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	88%	0.8	19%	0.04	1%	Phase 2 Stressed
Madagascar (southern and southeastern)	27.0	IPC	Aug-Dec 2019	13%	1.3	36%	0.9	26%	Phase 4 Emergency
Malawi	18.6	IPC	Oct 2019-Mar 2020	79%	3.6	24%	1.1	7%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mali	19.7	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	99%	3.2	17%	0.6	3%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mauritania	4.5	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	90%	1.2	28%	0.6	15%	Phase 3 Crisis
Mozambique ¹	27.9	IPC	Oct 2019-Feb 2020	18%	1.6	32%	1.7	34%	Phase 3 Crisis
Nicaragua	6.0	FEWS NET	Jul-Sep 2019	100%	N/A	N/A	0.1	1%	Phase 2 Stressed
Niger	23.3	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	90%	4.7	22%	1.2	6%	Phase 3 Crisis
Nigeria (16 states & Federal Capital Territory)	201.0	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	52%	18.8	18%	5.0	5%	Phase 4 Emergency
Pakistan (Balochistan and Sindh drought-affected districts) ^{1,3}	216.6	IPC	Oct 2018-Jul 2019	3%	1.4	23%	3.1	51%	Phase 4 Emergency
Senegal	16.3	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	80%	2.5	19%	0.3	3%	Phase 2 Stressed
Sierra Leone	7.8	CH	Jun-Aug 2019	85%	1.5	23%	0.1	2%	Phase 2 Stressed
Somalia	15.4	IPC	Oct-Dec 2019	80%	4.2	34%	2.1	17%	Phase 4 Emergency
South Sudan	11.4	IPC	May-Jul 2019	100%	3.2	28%	7.0	61%	Phase 4 Emergency
Sudan ¹	43.9	IPC	Jun-Aug 2019	96%	11.8	28%	5.9	14%	Phase 4 Emergency
Uganda	40.0	FEWS NET	Apr-Jul 2019	100%	N/A	N/A	1.5	4%	Phase 3 Crisis
Yemen ¹	30.0	IPC	Jul-Sep 2019	8%	0.8	32%	1.2	52%	Phase 4 Emergency
Zambia ¹	17.6	IPC	Oct 2019-Mar 2020	53%	3.1	33%	2.3	24%	Phase 4 Emergency
Zimbabwe ³	14.6	IPC	Oct-Dec 2019	64%	2.7	28%	3.6	38%	Phase 4 Emergency

¹ The geographical coverage of estimates for Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, eSwatini, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, Sudan, Yemen and Zambia vary widely between 2018 and 2019 – direct comparison cannot be made between the two years for these 11 countries.

² FEWS NET analyses of available evidence suggest the population requiring emergency food assistance in 2019 was lower than Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, because of different interpretation of data related to factors contributing to food security.

³ The source of information changed for Kenya, Pakistan and Zimbabwe between 2018 and 2019.

UPDATE ON THE WORLD'S EIGHT WORST FOOD CRISES IN 2018

The GRFC 2019 found that in 2018 two-thirds of the 113 million people in urgent need of food, nutrition and livelihood assistance (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) came from just eight countries. In the first eight months of 2019, five out of these eight worst food crisis countries had new data, but just two (South Sudan and northern Nigeria) had data that was comparable with that of 2018. The population analysed in Yemen was limited and therefore not comparable, while the geographical coverage for the Democratic Republic of the Congo analysis increased and that of the Sudan decreased in 2019. No new food insecurity numbers were available for Afghanistan, Ethiopia or the Syrian Arab Republic on time for this update.⁷

As reported in the GRFC 2019, the highest area phase classification for the four countries with IPC/CH updates (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, the Sudan and northern Nigeria) was *Emergency* (IPC/CH Phase 4). This mid-year analysis found this information unchanged.

Yemen continues to be the world's largest food insecurity crisis in 2019. More than half of the country's population, 15.9 million people, were classified in need of food, nutrition and livelihood assistance in January 2019 (IPC Phase 3 or above), even when taking into account the mitigating effects of food assistance.⁸ About 64 000 of them in 45 districts were facing *Catastrophe* (IPC Phase 5). The recent IPC analysis covered the period July–September 2019 in 29 of the 45 worst-affected districts because access constraints made collecting food security data impossible in 16 of the districts. It indicates a slight improvement in those locations from over 1.5 million acutely food-insecure people to some 1.2 million people, largely due to the scale-up of multi-sector assistance to the most vulnerable populations in the worst-affected districts and improved food availability from seasonal production.⁹

The food insecurity situation remained alarming in areas with active fighting, where internally displaced people (IDPs) and host communities faced limited access to essential services and livelihood activities and for the 6.5 million people living in hard-to-reach areas. Mid-2019 torrential rains, winds and flooding damaged infrastructure, shelters, health clinics, food stocks and water and sanitation facilities, escalating the spread of cholera, with health actors recording more than 593 200 suspected cases between January 1 and August 24, well over the 2018 total.¹⁰

The food insecurity crisis in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** continued its downward spiral with 26 percent of the population analysed in *Crisis* (IPC Phase 3) and *Emergency* (IPC Phase 4) in the latter half of 2019 compared with 23 percent for the same period the previous year. Around 15.6 million people were estimated to be in need of urgent assistance from July to December 2019, with less than 4 million classified in *Emergency* (IPC Phase 4). The territories classified in *Emergency* (IPC Phase 4) were mainly located in the provinces of Ituri, the Kasais, South Kivu and Tanganyika.¹¹ Full comparison to the 2018 figure of 13.1 million is not possible as the geographical coverage for analysis increased in 2019.

Following the severe drought in 2018, food insecurity remains high in **Afghanistan**. Conflict, insecurity and lack of livelihood opportunities remain present in communities across the country. The number of people in need of food assistance is already on the rise and may increase further in the coming months, particularly among displaced people, returnees from Iran and those affected by natural disasters.¹²

The acute food insecurity situation has deteriorated in **Ethiopia** due to drought, localized flooding, people being newly displaced and others returning home.¹³

The **Syrian Arab Republic** conflict has continued more than eight years, pushing millions of Syrians into hunger and poverty. Despite recent improvements in security in most parts of the country, the humanitarian situation remains dire. While fighting has abated in most areas, most of those returning to their towns have no homes and they need to revive their livelihoods.

The most vulnerable governorates of the country remain those where localized military operations are still ongoing, such as Aleppo, Raqqa and Deir-ez-Zor. The governorate with the highest proportion of households with poor food consumption is Raqqa. Vulnerability to food insecurity in the Syrian Arab Republic remains at worrying levels across both urban and rural areas.¹⁴

Since the start of the conflict in 2013, the food insecurity situation has steadily deteriorated in **South Sudan**. In May–July 2019 the number of people estimated to face *Crisis* or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) levels of acute food insecurity was the highest on record, both in absolute numbers (6.96 million) and as a proportion of the population (61 percent).¹⁵ An estimated 21 000 people were expected to be in *Catastrophe* (IPC Phase 5) by the middle of the year. The situation improved from August, when the number of food-insecure people was about 5 percentage points lower on a yearly basis. This follows an improvement in the security situation, facilitating a partial recovery of livelihood activities, market functionality and improved humanitarian access. However, the lingering impact of the five-year conflict is still resulting in severe constraints to food availability and access.¹⁶

The **Sudan** food insecurity situation has remained relatively unchanged. Despite favourable 2018/2019 crop and livestock production around 5.9 million people still need urgent humanitarian food and nutrition support in the Sudan as the country faces a deepening economic crisis and political instability.¹⁷ Comparison with the 2018 peak of 6.2 million is limited because the June–August 2019 analysis did not include West Darfur.

A slight decrease in the number of people experiencing acute food insecurity in 16 states of **northern Nigeria** and the Federal Capital Territory continues in 2019, with the number in *Crisis* (CH Phase 3) and *Emergency* (CH Phase 4) dropping from 5.3 million in June–August 2018 to 5 million during the same period this year.¹⁸

7 Afghanistan IPC analysis is on-going: Ethiopia estimates were under discussion and FAO/WFP Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission Report in Syrian Arab Republic was released after the mid-year update cut-off date.

8 IPC Yemen TWG. 2019 Acute food insecurity analysis December 2018–January 2019.

9 IPC Yemen TWG. 2019. Acute food insecurity (hot-spot) analysis July–December 2019.

10 USAID. 2019 Yemen – Complex Emergency factsheet No.10. August 29, 2019.

11 IPC Democratic Republic of Congo TWG. 2019. Acute food insecurity situation July–December 2019.

12 USAID. 2019. Afghanistan – Complex Emergency factsheet No.3. August 20, 2019.

13 OCHA Ethiopia, June 2019. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ocha_ethiopia_situation_report_no.23_june_2019_final.pdf

14 FAO/WFP. 2019 Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission. September 2019.

15 IPC South Sudan TWG. 2019 Acute Food Insecurity and Acute Malnutrition Analysis (May–July). June 2019.

16 FAO GIEWS. 2019 Crop Prospects and Food Situation. No.3. September 2019.

17 IPC Sudan TWG. 2019 IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis (June–August). September 2019.

18 CILSS/Cadre Harmonisé. 2019 Nigeria (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states). 2019.

THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

East Africa

The 2019 March-May *Gu/Genna* long rains season was characterized by widespread drought conditions during March and most of April in the Horn of Africa – a region still recovering from the prolonged 2016/17 drought and erratic and below-average 2018 October-December *Deyr* short rains. Weather conditions were among the driest on record in several areas, with cumulative precipitation between March and the second dekad of April estimated at about 80 percent below average in most areas of Somalia, south-eastern Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.¹⁹

In crop-producing areas the drought conditions resulted in widespread germination failures and crop wilting, with a negative impact on the planted area and yields. In Somalia, for instance, the output of the 2019 *Gu* harvest was the lowest since 1995 and about 60 percent below the average of the previous five years.²⁰

In pastoral areas, the extreme dryness resulted in livestock emaciation, increased animal mortality rates, and declines in livestock productivity, severely affecting poor households' income and access to milk.²¹

Driven by unfavourable harvest prospects, prices of cereals sharply increased to very high levels in the first half of 2019. In Kenya, prices rose by 60-90 percent between March and July. In Somalia, prices of maize and sorghum increased by 50-100 percent in some key southern markets between May and July, when they were up to nearly twice their year-earlier levels. In Uganda, prices of maize surged by almost 50 percent between March and May, subsequently levelling off in June and July as better late season rains lifted crop prospects, but remained more than twice their year-earlier levels.²²

As outlined above, in **South Sudan** the 2019 lean season was particularly difficult and prolonged since households depleted their meagre food stocks from the record low 2018 harvest early and the 2019 harvests were delayed by the late onset of seasonal rains. Only 52 percent of the 2019 national cereal needs were met by harvests, driving a further deterioration in food insecurity. This was compounded by a major economic crisis critically affecting income-earning opportunities for large segments of the population and pushing up food prices, as well as by pests and diseases, conflict-related destruction of livelihoods, and disruption of agricultural and marketing activities.²⁴

In the **Sudan** the economic crisis that started in late 2017 deepened in the first eight months of 2019. The persistent poor macroeconomic situation, political instability and unrest, fuel shortages and high prices of food and essential non-food items were forecast to result in worse food insecurity outcomes than are typical of the start of the June to September lean season, and somewhat worse than the same time last year, particularly in parts of Red Sea, Kassala, Al Gadarif, Blue Nile, West Kordofan, North Kordofan, South Kordofan and Greater Darfur, continuing through to January 2020.²⁵ Major concerns exist particularly for South Kordofan, Red Sea and the three Darfur States (Central, North and South) which reported a significant increase of food-insecure people compared to the previous analysis.²⁶

Central Africa

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and the **Central African Republic** the violent activities of numerous armed groups continued to cause displacement and prevent people from accessing local markets and farming their lands, thus limiting the income of daily workers and jeopardizing harvests.

By August 2019 – one year after the Ebola outbreak was

Following the signing of the Khartoum peace agreement in February 2019, the security situation in the **Central African Republic** improved significantly and, according to the UNHCR, the number of IDPs declined from 641 000 in December 2018 to 613 000 in May 2019. However, the security situation remained precarious, mainly in the Mbomou, Haute-Kotto, and Haut-Mbomou prefectures where non-signatory armed groups continued their incursions on major supply routes and around major cities. Over 1.8 million people (41 percent of the analysed population) were in *Crisis* or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) during the May-August lean season. The precarious security situation along the trade routes and heavy rainfall since July, which damaged road infrastructure, limited the supply of markets, resulting in shortages of certain foods and rising prices.²⁹

Southern Africa

In most Southern African countries, acute food insecurity levels remained high or worsened as a result of severe drought and the two cyclones. Sharp increases in food prices have also had a significant impact on households' access to food, particularly amid a situation of reduced incomes caused by smaller harvests and reduced crop supplies for sale.

Zimbabwe suffered prolonged periods of dry weather conditions, as well as the impact of Cyclone Idai in southern and eastern parts of the country, which caused localised flooding and crop losses. These factors were the main drivers of a significantly reduced cereal harvest in 2019 that tightened food supply particularly for rural households. The food price subindex rose by nearly three times between February and August 2019,³⁰ severely eroding households' purchasing power, and restricting their access to food. As a result, from June-September 2019 an estimated 25 percent of Zimbabwe's rural population, were estimated to be in *Crisis* or *Emergency* (IPC Phase 3 and 4) rising to 38 percent – or 3.6 million

and livelihoods, and internal displacements. Almost 1.7 million people were estimated to be in need of urgent assistance in October 2019 – February 2020.³²

In **Malawi** 1.1 million people are expected to be in *Crisis* or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) conditions in October 2019 – March 2020 as a result of floods, dry spells and high prices of staple foods. However, the situation is not as severe as October 2018-March 2019 when around 3.3 million people needed urgent humanitarian food assistance following a sharp decrease in maize production caused by prolonged dry spells in central and southern areas.³³

In **Zambia**, adverse weather conditions, mainly characterised by significant rainfall deficits in southern and western provinces, caused a steep contraction in the cereal output and negatively affected the livestock sector. These conditions contributed to a projected 2.3 million people – almost a quarter of the population analysed – facing *Crisis* conditions or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) across the country during the October 2019-March 2020 lean season.³⁴

In **eSwatini** and **Lesotho**, prolonged periods of dry weather conditions caused a decline in agricultural production in 2019, reducing food availability for rural households. Combined with limited purchasing power and high food prices, access to food is constrained for very poor and poor households. This situation resulted in nearly a third of Lesotho's population analysed (around 433 000 people) being classified in *Crisis* or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) and in need of urgent humanitarian action between October 2019 – March 2020.³⁵ Similar conditions prevail in eSwatini, and some 232 000 people were assessed to be in *Crisis* and *Emergency* (IPC Phase 3 and 4) conditions over the same period.³⁶

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