

2021 GLOBAL REPORT ON FOOD CRISES

JOINT ANALYSIS FOR BETTER DECISIONS

REGIONAL FOCUS

ON THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD) MEMBER STATES



IN BRIEF

In seven of the eight IGAD member states (excluding Eritrea), 31.4 million people faced Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) in 2020. This figure represented around 20 percent of the global number of 155 million people in Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) or equivalent in 55 countries/territories in 2020.

Worst-affected countries in the IGAD region

As in 2019, three countries in the IGAD region – the Sudan, Ethiopia and South Sudan – were among the 10 worst global food crises, and they accounted for nearly 79 percent of the region's population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above). The Sudan was the largest food crisis with 9.6 million people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above), followed by Ethiopia (8.6 million) and South Sudan (6.5 million). South Sudan was the worst food crisis in terms of prevalence with more than half of its analysed population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above).

The number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) rose by nearly 4 million from 2019 to 2020

The number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) has steadily increased in the IGAD region from 26.8 million in 2017 to 27 million in 2018, 27.5 million in 2019 (excluding Djibouti) and up to 31.4 million in 2020. When comparing acute food insecurity figures for the six IGAD countries covered by the GRFC 2020 and GRFC 2021 (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda), the number of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) increased by around 3.4 million, largely driven by rising numbers in the Sudan and Uganda.

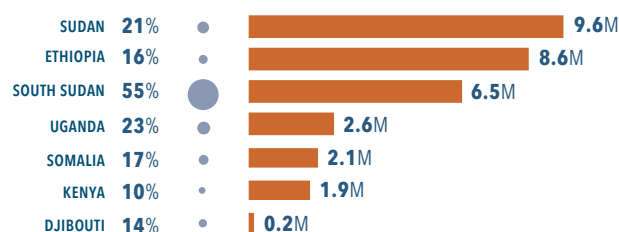
Populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in South Sudan

In December 2020, 105 000 people in six counties in South Sudan were in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5).¹ The IPC Famine Review Committee determined that four western payams in South Sudan's Pibor county faced Famine Likely (IPC Phase 5) in October–December 2020 with two additional payams qualifying for an IPC 'Risk of Famine' from December 2020.

Populations in Emergency (IPC Phase 4)

Across six of the IGAD member states, 6.8 million people were in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) with the highest numbers in the Sudan (2.2 million), followed by South Sudan (1.7 million) and Ethiopia (1.4 million). These three countries accounted for nearly 79 percent of the IGAD region's population in Emergency (IPC Phase 4).

Populations in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) in 7 IGAD member states, 2020



● Percentage of population analysed in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above)
■ Number of people (in millions) in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above)

Source: FSIN, GRFC 2021.

Populations in Stressed (IPC Phase 2)

Around 48.9 million people were in Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in seven of the IGAD countries (excluding Eritrea), representing close to 24 percent of the global population in this phase.

Major drivers of food crises in the region

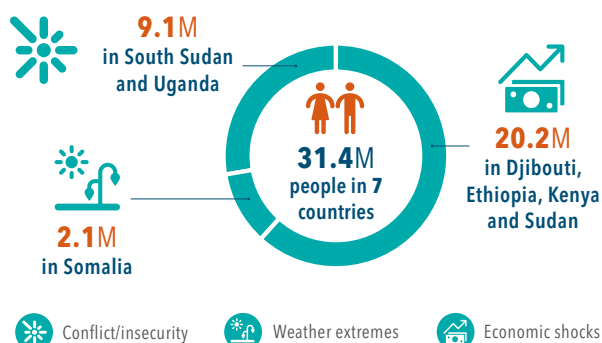
Macroeconomic challenges and the socio-economic effects of COVID-19, conflict and insecurity, weather extremes, and a resurgence of desert locusts were among the key drivers of acute food insecurity in the region in 2020. The majority of the countries faced the compounding effects of each of these threats, adding to the complexity of the acute food insecurity situation.

Economic shocks, such as high inflation and currency depreciation, were the primary driver of acute food insecurity for 20.2 million people in the Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti – nearly two-thirds of the region's total. Government spending declined and food prices increased, weakening household purchasing power. In addition, COVID-19 restrictive measures led to livelihood losses, especially in urban areas, leading to a major decrease in household disposable income.

Conflict/insecurity in the region continued to displace households, disrupt livelihoods and market functioning, and constrain the delivery of humanitarian and other essential services. It was the predominant driver of acute food insecurity in South Sudan and in

¹ Based on two external reviews (Famine Review and Quality Review), following a breakdown in technical consensus in the estimation of populations in Catastrophe.

Numbers of people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) by primary driver in 2020



Note: Many food crises are the result of multiple drivers. The GRFC has based these infographics on the predominant driver in each country/territory.

Source: FSIN, GRFC 2021.

Uganda, where a significant proportion of the population in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) were refugees who fled armed conflict and war in their home countries.

Weather extremes constituted the predominant driver for 2.1 million people in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) in Somalia. Extremes ranged from widespread flooding to below-average rains towards the end of 2020.

Acute food insecurity among displaced populations

As of December 2020, there were over 4.2 million refugees and asylum seekers in the IGAD region – around half were from South Sudan. Four IGAD member states – Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan and South Sudan hosted around 9.5 million IDPs.

Refugees and IDPs face heightened levels of acute food insecurity and malnutrition because of their limited livelihood options and assets. For those living in camps and settlements, access to basic services is constrained and they are often reliant on humanitarian food assistance to meet their minimum food and nutrition needs. Funding shortfalls have forced ration cuts in food and non-food assistance to refugee populations in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda, exacerbating their situation.

Overview of nutrition

At any point in time in 2020 across the eight IGAD member states, an estimated 3.5 million children under the age of 5 years were wasted, 900 000 of them severely so, with the highest numbers in Ethiopia, the Sudan and South Sudan. This translates to an estimated 9 million wasted children, including an estimated 2.3 million of them severely wasted, over the course of the year. A

further 14.1 million children (nearly one out of three) were stunted, with the highest numbers in Ethiopia, the Sudan and Uganda.

The socio-economic effects of COVID-19 had detrimental consequences for nutrition outcomes as the rising cost of living and declining incomes pushed more people into extreme poverty.

Outlook for 2021

An estimated 36.7–37.2 million people are expected to be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) across the IGAD region in 2021.² Within this, 108 000 people in Jonglei and Pibor administrative area, Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap states in South Sudan are expected to face Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). Four western payams of Pibor county are projected to continue facing Famine Likely (IPC Phase 5), while two eastern payams could face Risk of Famine in the first half of 2021.³

The primary drivers of acute food insecurity in 2021 are expected to include the impacts of COVID-19, especially in urban areas, macro-economic crises, including high food prices, poor rainfall, conflict-induced displacements, and the threat of desert locusts.

The impact of the third wave of COVID-19 across the IGAD region is expected to be felt through late 2021 to early 2022. Several countries in the region are likely to re-impose movement restrictions to mitigate the spread of the virus. This is expected to result in further losses in household incomes, as well as rising staple food prices and transport costs.

Below-average rains observed during the March–May 2021 rainfall season adversely affected crop and rangeland conditions in parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, leading to pockets of drought. Early forecasts indicate chances of La Niña-like conditions in late 2021 so there is a likelihood of consecutive dry seasons in affected areas.

Desert locusts remains a threat to crop production and pasture regeneration in the region. Despite substantial control operations, good rains in late April–early May 2021 in parts of the region caused widespread breeding and a further increase in desert locust numbers, signifying that the current upsurge is not yet over. The upsurge could continue to at least the end of 2021.

The cascading effects of conflict – displacement, movement restrictions, limited humanitarian access, loss of harvest and livelihoods, and dysfunctional markets – are expected to continue throughout the region, including in Ethiopia where it is creating a catastrophic food crisis in the Tigray region.

2 This figure does not include the June 2021 IPC analysis covering the Ethiopian regions of Tigray, Afar and Amhara, which has not been endorsed by the Government of Ethiopia.

3 Based on two external reviews (Famine Review and Quality Review), following a breakdown in technical consensus in the estimation of populations in Catastrophe.

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