

Key Figures

25.3M

People in Crisis+

323K

Hectares

Over 25.3 million people are already facing Crisis acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3) or worse in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. **Over 11 million people of these, in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, are located in areas currently affected by the desert locust infestation.** A further 2.76 million people in South Sudan and 120,000 people in Uganda are under threat from expanding swarms.

Control operations have targeted laid eggs, new-generation hopper bands and immature swarms. Areas treated since January 2020 add up to 94,000 ha in Kenya, 222,000 ha in Ethiopia, 3,400 ha in Somalia and Uganda cover 4,074 ha.

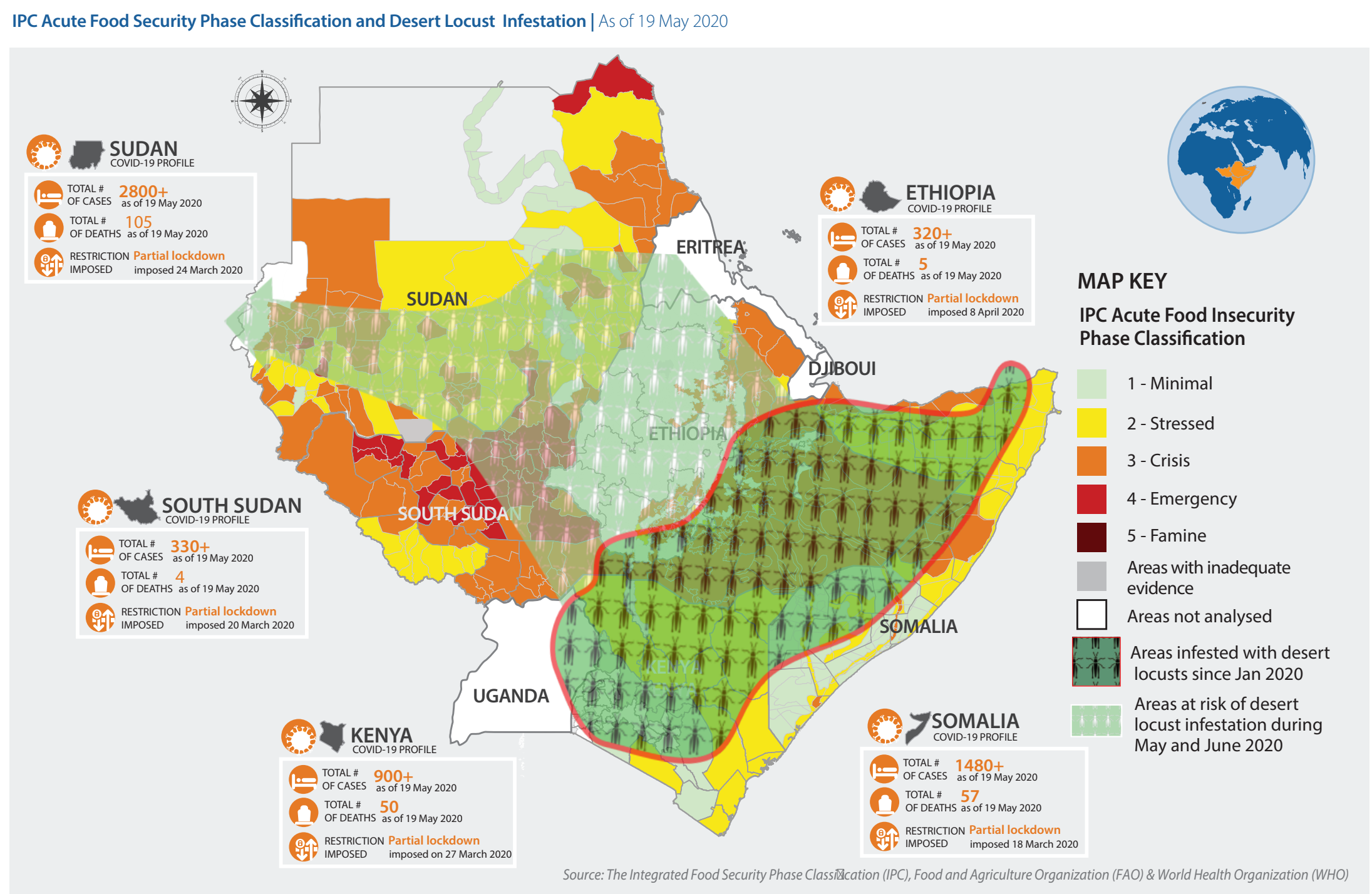
Impact of COVID-19

In the Horn of Africa region, COVID-19 pandemic measures have created restrictions on movement within and across countries and presented an unprecedented challenge to food security and nutrition.

Overview

The East and Horn of Africa region is already home to some of the most food insecure populations in the world. Now, with countries such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia currently facing one of the worst desert locust infestations in decades, coupled with the impacts of COVID-19, experts fear that the health crisis transforms into a food crisis unless global, regional and country level coordinated action is in place to control the economic crisis. The East Africa region's six infested countries host 25.3 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+), which is 28% of the case-load of Africa. In addition, five of the Desert Locust affected countries have 35 million people in Stress (IPC Phase 2). These people do not have resilience for further disruption of their livelihoods, such as lack of economic and physical access to food due to COVID-19 containment measures.

Based on the current and projected Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analyses, more than 11 million people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, who are already facing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3+), are located in areas currently affected by the desert locust infestations. A further 2.76 million people in South Sudan and 120,000 people in Uganda facing high levels of acute food insecurity are also under threat, bringing the total number of the population at risk to nearly 14 million. Key drivers including several consecutive failed rainy seasons, drought, torrential rains, flooding, disease outbreak (rift valley fever in Kenya and Uganda in 2018), ongoing conflict, and economic shocks, have already left millions of people highly food insecure in this region. Experts say the second wave of desert locust swarms could swell further in this region, causing major damage to staple crops and rangelands.



COVID-19: Impact on Food Security

Impact on Food Security

The COVID-19 pandemic, and measures taken to suppress its spread, are likely to further increase the magnitude and severity of acute food insecurity. Some countries in Horn of Africa region could see worse levels of food insecurity.

Restricted Market Access

Control measures are restricting access to income-earning activities, resulting in real and immediate negative impacts on poor households' ability to cover daily food needs.

Increased Unemployment

Rural livelihoods of especially the self-employed and wage workers are at risk, as supply chains and markets are being disrupted due to lockdowns and restrictions of movement.

DESERT LOCUSTS: Impact on Food Security

Crop Damage

Desert locust swarms can congregate into thick, mobile, ravenous swarms that can devastate crops and cause more acute food insecurity.

Impact on Pasture

Desert locusts further threaten pastoral communities' ability to access pasture for livestock, upsetting the food cycle and could drastically threaten livelihoods, erode people's savings, and push people further into poverty.

TIMELINE: Desert Locust Timeline in the Horn of Africa

1958

Between 1958 and 1959, heavy swarms of desert locusts infested parts of northern Ethiopia prompting regional and international action

1986

In 1986, numerous swarms invaded the Sahel from Mauritania to Sudan, northern Ethiopia and Eritrea where summer breeding caused more swarms to form and damage crops

1992

A pronounced desert locust outbreak began in late 1992 along the Red Sea coastal plains of Sudan and Eritrea following several years of drought

1995

In 1995, swarms of desert locusts were reported along the Red Sea coastal plain and infested parts of Sudan and Somalia

2007

In 2007, spring-bred swarms from Yemen invaded Kenya's arid northeastern region.

2019-2020

The worst desert locust upsurge in 25 years has caused significant pasture losses across East Africa, mainly in agro-pastoral areas of eastern Ethiopia, central Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia and northern Kenya

Source: FAO Locust Watch

Impact of Desert Locusts

Desert locusts first invaded the Horn of Africa towards the end of June 2019 when spring-bred swarms arrived from Yemen in northeast Ethiopia and northern Somalia. Unusually favourable weather conditions have allowed desert locusts to continue breeding and spreading, despite ongoing control operations in affected parts of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The threat will be further exacerbated by the breeding of new locusts in the region that has already commenced. East Africa also saw widespread rains for a second consecutive month in April 2020; conditions that are favorable for the further reproduction and development of locusts. Increasing swarms in areas characterized by low resilience to shocks and by upcoming cropping and rangeland seasons, such as the Ethiopia Belg-dependent and Kenya pastoral areas, raises alarms over the potential increase of food insecure in the region. According to an assessment conducted by the Government of Ethiopia<sup>1</sup>, FAO, the IPC Technical Working Group and the Food Cluster, among other partners, around one million people have been significantly affected by the desert locust invasion and require Emergency food assistance. Meanwhile, in Kenya, numerous hopper bands have continued to develop in the centre and north, resulting in an increasing number of immature swarms to grow and mature. Infestations were present in 27 ASAL counties, especially: Turkana, Marsabit, Samburu, Isiolo, Laikipia, Meru and Embu. Ground and aerial control operations treated 80,713 ha of affected land.

In Somalia<sup>2</sup>, new swarms are developing and building up at the onset of the Gu planting season, and risk destroying farmers' newly planted crop in Burao, Gebiley, Borama, Belet Weyne, Luuq, Baardheere, Garbahaarey, Belet Xaawo, Doolow, Ceel Barde, Xudur, Waajid, Rab Dhuure, Buur Hakaba and Qansax Dheere. The 2020 Gu/Karan season's likely production loss due to desert locust is estimated at 19,000 tons, likely to coincide with flood-induced crop losses in riverine areas, estimated at 11,000 tons. Through September, the population in IPC Phase 3 and 4 (Crisis and Emergency) is expected to rise by 40% to 1.6 million people in both desert locust affected and non-affected areas. Although control operations in the regions have reduced locust populations, the new generation of breeding will cause locust numbers to swell as new hopper bands and swarms form in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia in May and June. Swarms are expected to move further north in Ethiopia and Somalia with a risk that a few swarms may reach Sudan in June. This second wave is expected to be much bigger and cause destruction on a wider scale across the East and Horn of Africa, months after the region was already hit by the earlier invasion.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Like most parts of the world, the East and Horn of Africa region has been affected by COVID-19 pandemic measures. Restrictions on movement within and across countries has presented an unprecedented challenge to food security and nutrition in the region. According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the pandemic has already created a looming food crisis, especially for the most vulnerable populations. The COVID-19 pandemic impact is especially high for the population groups working in the informal sector, casual labourers, and self-employed, displaced, people in slums and low-income government workers in rural and urban areas. Around 56M in the named countries live in urban areas, and about half of those in informal settlements and slums. A significant subset of the latter either rely on the informal economy (self-employed, informal workers) or are inactive<sup>3</sup>. Border closures, cancelled flights and restricted movement have hindered the global supply chain, which has disrupted the availability of food as well as people's access to food. This is especially challenging for countries already facing high levels of food insecurity. Movement restrictions will likely impact agricultural labour and the supply of inputs. The restriction of people from the informal sector moving from rural to urban areas will also soon pose a critical challenge due to loss of employment and income. Thus, food security will be jeopardized for many people, particularly for those living in the East and Horn of Africa region. The region also hosts millions of refugees and displaced populations living in overcrowded camps who are dependent on humanitarian aid. The COVID-19 pandemic hinders humanitarian access and response actions to these populations.

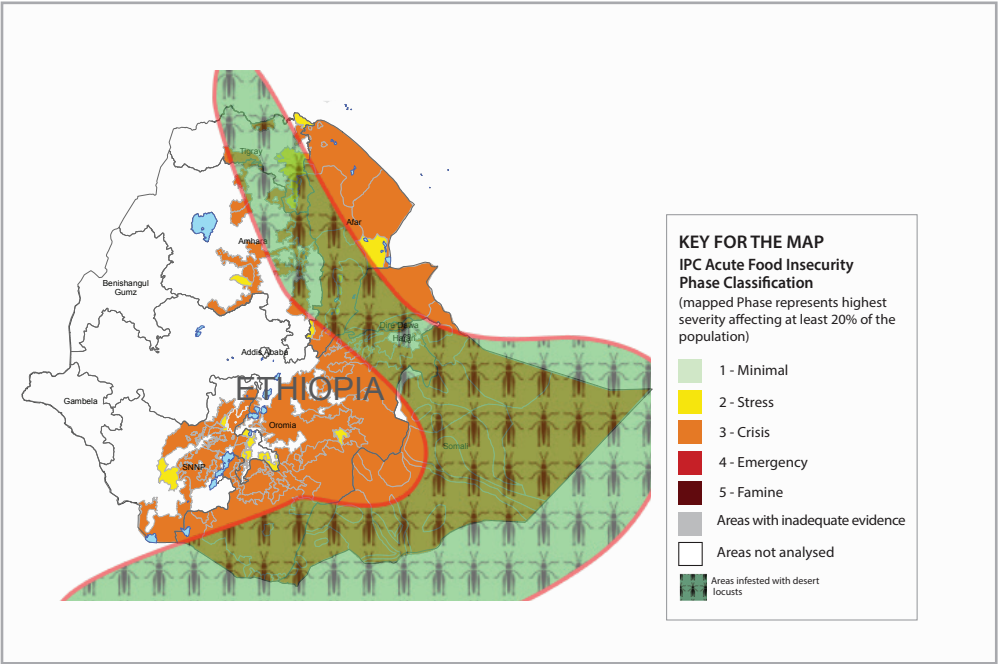
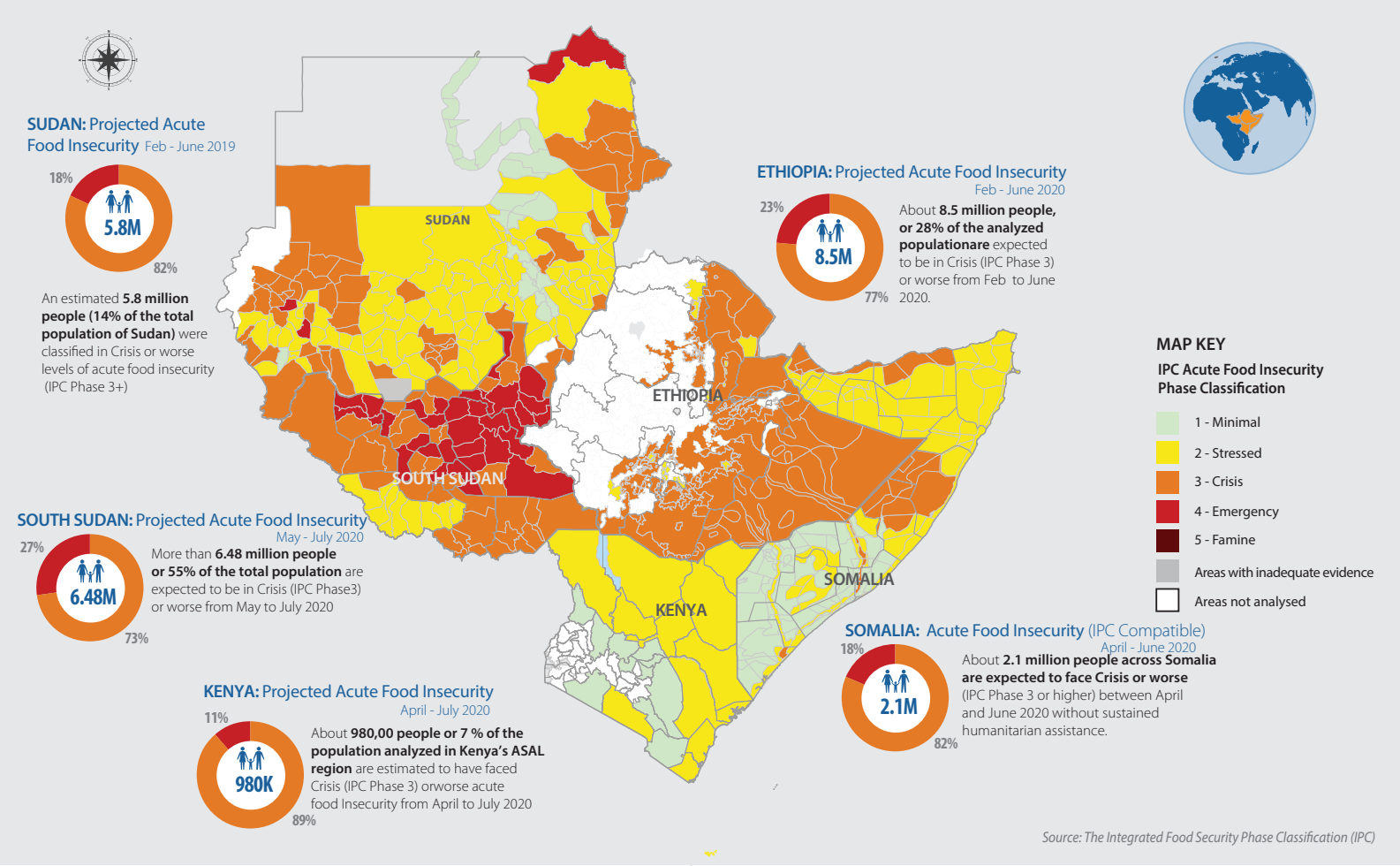
ETHIOPIA: Acute Food Insecurity Projection: | February - June 2020



The acute food insecurity analysis of the second projection period (February - June 2020) for six regions of Ethiopia indicates that, despite ongoing assistance, an estimated 8.5 million people (26% of the 28.7 million people analysed) will likely be facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity between February and June 2020. All the six analysed regions have reported infestations of desert locusts. People will likely become more reliant on markets for food throughout the lean season (March to May), which, along with expected rising food prices, will make it more difficult for poor households to access food. People's physical access to markets is also limited by inter-ethnic clashes between border areas. Despite ongoing peace-building efforts in the region, fighting over control of resources, including: land, water and pastoral fields, is expected to continue. According to an assessment conducted by the Government of Ethiopia, FAO, the IPC Technical Working Group and the Food Cluster, among other partners, around one million people have been significantly affected by the desert locust invasion and require Emergency food assistance. Of these, about 390,000 are in Somali, 360,000 in Oromia and Dire Dawa city (combined), 100,000 in Afar, 72 000 in Amhara, 43,000 in Tigray and 13,000 in Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples (SNNP) regions.

According to the assessment findings, desert locusts have damaged about 200,000 hectares of cropland and caused a cereal loss of over 356,000 MT. Sorghum was the most affected cereal with 114,000 hectares damaged, followed by maize with 41,000 hectares and wheat with 36,000 hectares. The Oromia region was worst affected with a total cereal loss of 123,000 MT, followed by the Somali region with 100,000 MT and the Tigray region with 84,000 MT recorded cereal losses. The majority of the assessed households either had no or very limited cereal food stocks barely a month after completing the Meher crop harvest (September – February). Up to 1.3 million hectares of pasture and browse were affected. Communities estimated a 61% reduction in the pasture of the Somali region, 59% in Afar, 35% in Dire Dawa and SNNPR, and 31% in Oromia. On 31 March 2020, a 14-day total lockdown of Bahir Dar and three other towns was imposed and later a state of emergency was declared. With over 320 recorded cases and five deaths as of 19 May 2020, COVID-19 could deprive millions of Ethiopians of their livelihoods, including many who subsist on daily earnings from the informal service economy. It could also squeeze domestic food supply at a time when annual inflation is at more than 20%. Vital imports such as fuel, medicine and fertiliser may become scarce if dwindling hard currency reserves are depleted, combined with slowing remittances and other economic inflows.

Regional IPC Acute Food Insecurity Situation | As of 19 May 2020



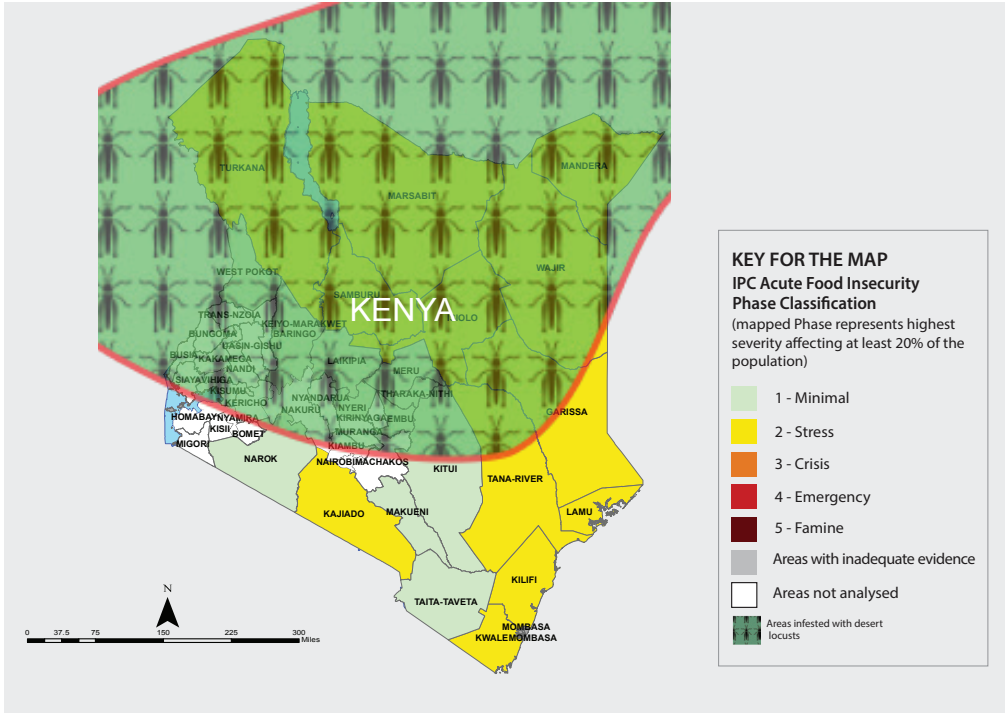
<sup>1</sup>FAO Ethiopia Desert Locust assessment report March 2020.  
<sup>2</sup>FAO Somalia Desert Locust update 15 April 2020.  
<sup>3</sup><https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL?locations=ET>



**KENYA: Acute Food Insecurity Classification | April - July 2020**



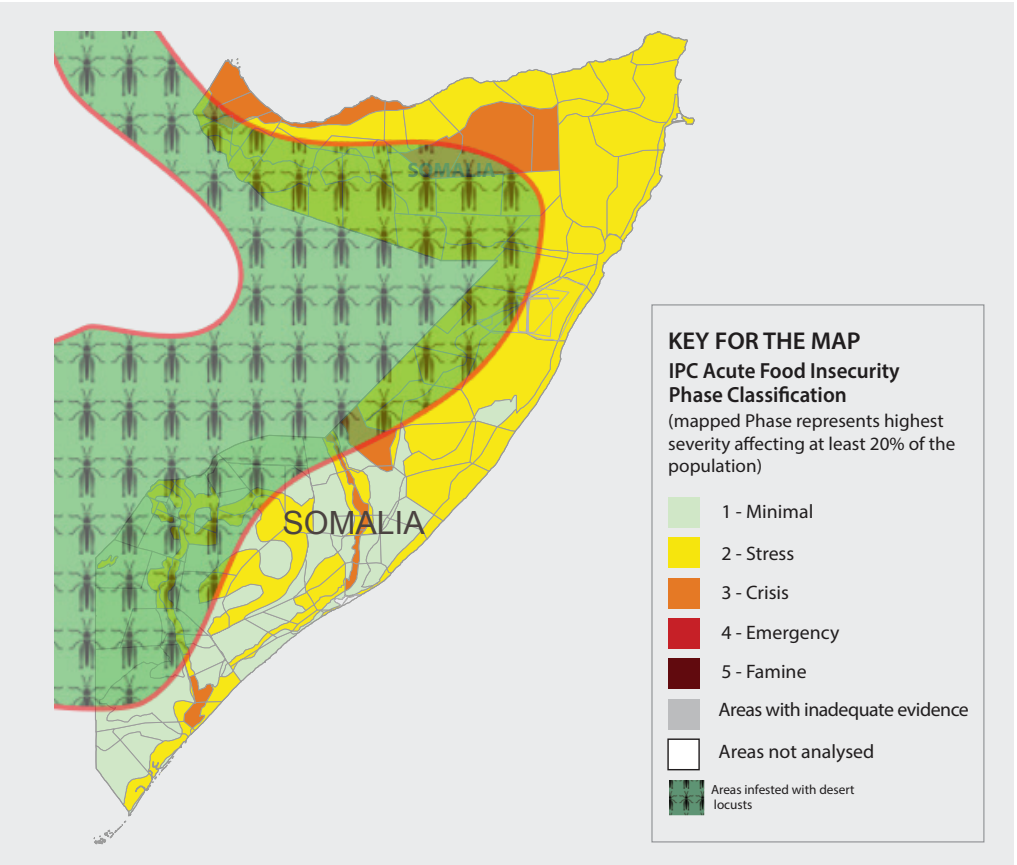
Over 985,000 people are projected to be in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and IPC Phase 4 (Emergency) food insecurity in 23 ASAL counties of Kenya between April and July 2020. Mudslides, landslides and floods, due to prolonged and above average rainfall during the October-December rains, led to population displacement, damage of crops and disruption of markets. Outbreaks of livestock pests and diseases led to reduced livestock production, deteriorated Terms of Trade and mortality of sheep, goats and cattle. The invasion of desert locusts in December 2019 affected crops, pasture and browse, although the damage was negligible since the locusts came when most crops had matured, and pasture was above normal in most of the counties. In these counties the acute malnutrition situation has improved considerably due to improved food security as a result of good rains in 2019. However, 310,155 children under the age of five and 76,540 pregnant and lactating women are still facing acute malnutrition and are in urgent need of treatment in infested ASAL counties. Since December 2019, immature swarms of locusts arrived in northeastern Kenya, formed in April and bred. Hatching is now in progress and will continue during May. New swarms will start to form around mid-June. The breeding is concentrated in the northern counties of Turkana, Marsabit, Samburu, and Isiolo. Kenya has also been affected by the COVID-19 situation, with more than 900 recorded cases, out of which 50 people have died. In Nairobi, the crowded Kawangware slum is one of the most affected areas, along with the coastal city of Mombasa.



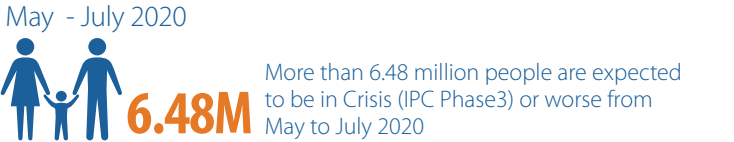
**SOMALIA: Acute Food Insecurity Classification | April - June 2020**



Despite an above-average rainfall in October-December 2019 resulting in above-average cereal crop and livestock production, 2.1 million people are still expected to face food consumption gaps. Somalia's ongoing civil conflict continues to exacerbate food insecurity for many people, and a worsening situation is only mitigated by ongoing humanitarian food assistance. Two of the listed regions face Critical levels of acute malnutrition (Gedo and Mudug), while one region faces Serious levels of acute malnutrition (Bay): all are in urgent need of treatment. According to FAO, in October 2019, locust swarms moved into central and southern Somalia. So far, the damage to pastoral land is limited to late-planted crops. Locust numbers have increased further from breeding that occurred as a result of recent rains on the coast and plateau in the northwest, and in central and southern areas from Garowe to the Kenyan border. As a result, hatching and numerous hopper bands have been expected during the forecast period. The exponential rise in the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Somalia continues to rise, making the country among the worst affected in the East and Horn of Africa region. From 26 April to 19 May, confirmed cases rose from 390 to over 1480, with 57 deaths. The new cases are largely caused by community transmission. Measures announced by authorities to contain the spread of COVID-19 have had a significant impact on the livelihoods of people. In March, Somalia experienced slight price increases on imported food items due to the partial disruption of the supply chain and panic buying in response to the pandemic. Experts fear that Somalia's food insecurity, which is already deemed a protracted crisis, could be worsened by the combined impact of COVID-19 and desert locusts, which are likely to affect the long rains (Gu) harvest.

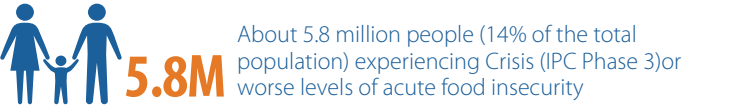


**SOUTH SUDAN: Acute Food Insecurity**



In the projection period of May to July 2020, 6.48 million people in South Sudan (55.4% of the population) will face Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse acute food insecurity, which is 5% lower than was projected for the 2019 lean season. Immediate scale-up of humanitarian food assistance is needed to save lives and avert total collapse of livelihoods in the affected counties particularly those with populations in Ca-tastrophe (IPC Phase 5) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4). Swarms of desert locusts invaded parts of Magwi, Torit, Ikotos, Budi, Lafon/Lopa counties in Eastern Equatoria in South Sudan, with 2.76 million highly food insecure people living in these areas. The swarms came from Uganda, and the movement aided by westerly winds. The locusts (mature and immature) were seen feeding on a range of vegetation, and caused damages to recently planted crops especially maize, sorghum and vegetables. South Sudan had recorded over 330 cases of COVID-19 and four deaths as of 19 May.

**SUDAN: Acute Food Insecurity**  
June - August 2019



An estimated 5.8 million people (14% of the total population) experienced Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse levels of food insecurity and needed urgent action from June to August 2019. This figure which was the highest on record. During March 2020, desert locusts declined on the Red Sea coast as conditions dried out. A residual hopper band and immature adult group were present on the southern coast early in same month, and a few immature and mature swarms appeared near the Eritrean border at mid-month. In the Tokar Delta, a mature group was laying Low numbers of immature and mature adults were scattered elsewhere along parts of the coast as far north as the Egyptian border. According to FAO Sudan faces impending invasion from spring breeding areas in neighbouring countries in the coming months. Sudan has 1365 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 70 deaths as of 10 May 2020 and the government has imposed several restrictions to bring it under control.

**UGANDA: Acute Food Insecurity April - July 2020 (FEWSNET)**

Desert locusts among other driver threatens to worsen food insecurity in Uganda's north if more action to control the infestation and mitigate its damage is not taken. During the first week of March 2020, mature swarms were seen in several northeastern districts near the Kenyan border with Uganda, south of Moroto as well as further north near the South Sudanese border between Kitgum and the Kenyan border. The last swarm was reported south of the South Sudanese border in Madi Opei district. Ground teams treated 607 ha. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) estimates that 1.5 million people Uganda will likely be in Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3+) between April and July 2020 in the absence of food assistance. Most of these are refugees and asylum seekers, as well as poor households in Karamoja affected by a poor 2018 rainy season severely constraining crop and livestock production (GRFC report). Among these, it is estimated that around 120,000 people are in areas will likely be infested by the desert locusts, mainly in Karamoja and northern Acholi.

<sup>4</sup>Likely food security impacts of COVID-19 in Somalia 19 - FSNAU April to June 2020.