

East Africa

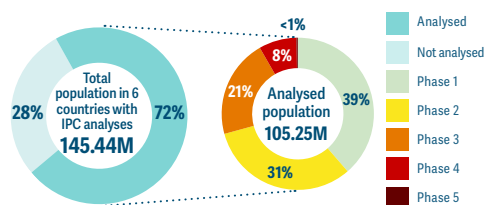
Burundi | Djibouti | Ethiopia | Kenya | Somalia | South Sudan | Sudan | Uganda

The number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity reached the highest level since GRFC records began

56.85M people or **22%** of the analysed population in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent, in 2022 in eight countries

30.94M of them are in six countries with IPC analyses

32.73M in 6 countries | 21.84M in 6 countries | 8.79M in 6 countries | 0.30M in 2 countries



Source: IPC TWGs, 2022.

In Ethiopia, about **23.61M** people faced high levels of acute food insecurity (HRP, 2022)

In Uganda, **2.3M** people faced high levels of acute food insecurity (FEWS NET, 2023)

10 countries in this region were selected for inclusion

Two countries had data not meeting GRFC requirements: Eritrea and Rwanda (refugees). Seven of the eight remaining countries included in the GRFC 2023 are major food crises: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Sudan and Uganda. One country, Djibouti, is included in the GRFC 2023 but not as a major food crisis.

Populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5)

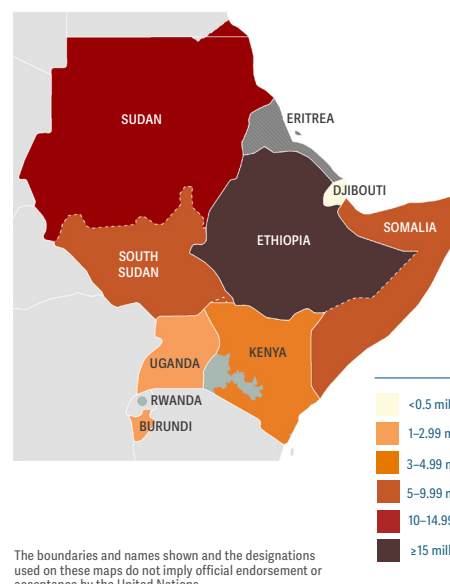
Extremely severe levels of acute food insecurity plagued parts of the region.

In October–December 2022, 214 000 people faced IPC Phase 5 in eight regions (Bakool, Banadir, Bay, Galgaduud, Gedo, Middle Juba, Mudug and Nugaal) in central and southern parts of **Somalia**. A Somalia IPC analysis published in September 2022 projected Famine (IPC Phase 5) for agropastoral populations in Baidoa and Burhakaba districts and displaced people in Baidoa town (Bay region) as well as in Mogadishu between October and December. However, the December 2022 Somalia IPC analysis found that Famine did not materialize due to scaled-up assistance, a better-than-expected but still below-average October–December rainy season, and stabilization of very high food prices.

In April–July 2022, around 87 000 people faced IPC Phase 5 in Jonglei, Lakes and Unity states, and the Greater Pibor Administrative Area in **South Sudan** – 19 percent lower than during the April–July 2021 lean season. In 2022, no new information by IPC phase was available for **Ethiopia**.

The compounding effects of multiple shocks, including drought, macroeconomic challenges and conflict, drove rising levels of acute food insecurity across East Africa, with nearly 56.85 million people in eight countries facing Crisis or worse (IPC Phase 3 or above) or equivalent in 2022. While this marks the highest number in seven years of GRFC reporting, the 30 percent increase in the number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity is in line with the increase in analysed population (+29 percent year-on-year).

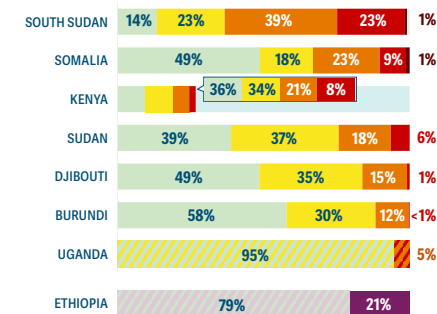
Number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above, or equivalent, 2022



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: IPC TWGs, HRP (Ethiopia), FEWS NET (Uganda).

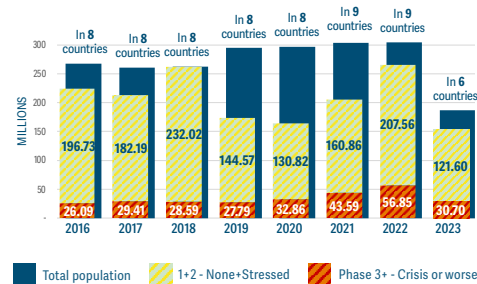
Share of analysed population by phase of acute food insecurity, 2022 peak



increase). Year-on-year changes cannot be evaluated for Ethiopia due to different data sources.

The countries with the largest populations facing high levels of acute food insecurity were **Ethiopia** (23.6 million), followed by the Sudan (11.7 million), South Sudan (7.7 million), Somalia (5.59 million), Kenya (4.4 million) and Uganda (2.3 million) – all of them considered major food crises. Ethiopia and the Sudan are in the top ten largest GRFC 2023 food crises in terms of

Numbers of people by phase of acute food insecurity, 2016–23



Source: IPC TWG, FEWS NET and WFP.

magnitude.

Each country analysis covered 100 percent of the population except for Kenya, which covered the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASALs), or 27 percent of the country's population. The prevalence of the population in IPC Phase 3 or above or equivalent was highest in South Sudan (63 percent), followed by Somalia (33 percent), the Sudan (24 percent) and Ethiopia (21 percent). In Kenya, 29 percent of the analysed population in the ASALs was in IPC Phase 3 or above.

Drivers of the crisis 2022–23

Weather extremes were considered the primary driver of acute food insecurity in **Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda**, where a total of 37.26 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity. The Horn of Africa has faced an unprecedented three-year drought, with southern Ethiopia, the ASALs of Kenya, and most of Somalia being worst affected. Both Burundi and Uganda were affected by rainfall deficits that constrained crop yields. Meanwhile, record-breaking flooding was observed in South Sudan (FSNWG, October 2022).

Economic shocks Very high food prices limited food access across almost all countries in the region, linked to the combined effects of high international food, fuel and fertilizer prices (partially

driven by the spillover effects of the war in Ukraine), a tightening of regional cereal supplies due to the drought, and currency depreciation in multiple countries (WFP, July 2022). Economic shocks were considered the primary driver in **Djibouti, South Sudan and the Sudan**, where a total of 19.59 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity.

Conflict/insecurity Both political and resource-based conflict and insecurity continued to disrupt livelihoods, markets and humanitarian access in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan while regional conflict contributed to the ongoing refugee situation in Uganda (WFP & FAO, October 2022).

Acute food insecurity since 2016

After stable numbers of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity between 2016 and 2019, the population in IPC Phase 3 or above in East Africa rapidly increased from 2020, with more than 10 million additional people each year. This is attributed to multiple factors, including the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19, increasing conflict (such as in northern Ethiopia), drought, atypical flooding, and macroeconomic challenges, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine as well as an increase in the population analysed, by 30–47 million people each year.

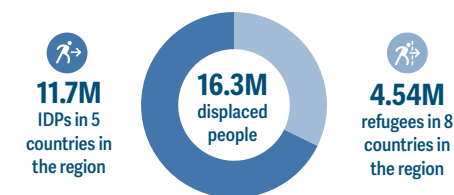
The population facing Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) has also increased in recent years. The population in this phase in 2022 (301 050) was lower than the record 2021 levels (509 000); however no new information was available on the 401 000 people who faced IPC Phase 5 in the Tigray region of Ethiopia in July–September 2021¹ (outside the 2021 peak of acute food insecurity), but major concerns remain. The regional IPC Phase 5 figures during these past two years represent significant increases compared with other years covered by the GRFC, including in 2018 when 172 000 people were in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Somalia and South Sudan, and in 2017 when two counties in Greater Unity, South Sudan were classified in Famine and 100 000 people faced IPC Phase 5 (GRFC, May 2022).

¹ These estimates combine two IPC analyses: that of Belg and Meher-dependent areas (January–June 2021), and conflict-affected areas of Tigray, Afar and Amhara (May–June 2021). The Government of Ethiopia did not endorse the latter.

When evaluating year-on-year regional trends be aware that some countries, such as Djibouti, were not included every year, while others, such as Ethiopia and Uganda, saw major changes in the geographic coverage of analyses and of data sources, and Kenya saw major increases in the analysed population in the ASALs.

DISPLACEMENT

Number of forcibly displaced people in eight food-crisis countries, 2022



Source: UNHCR; IOM, December 2023.

There were about 16.27 million forcibly displaced people in eight food-crisis countries in the region, of whom 11.7 million were internally displaced: 3.78 million in the Sudan, 2.97 million in Somalia, 2.73 million in Ethiopia, 2.23 million in South Sudan and about 20 000 in Uganda.

Of the 4.54 million refugees hosted in eight countries in the region, the majority were in Uganda (1.5 million) and the Sudan (1.13 million) followed by Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Somalia. More than half of the refugees in the region (2.29 million) were from South Sudan (mainly living in Uganda and the Sudan) followed by Ethiopia and Kenya (UNHCR, February 2023).

NUTRITION

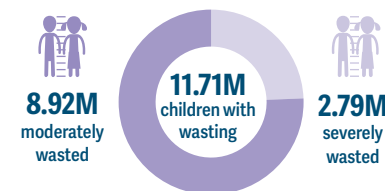
Acute malnutrition worsened significantly since 2021 in the region, particularly in the Horn of Africa, with very high levels of wasting. In Ethiopia, screening data in most of the woredas in the Somali and Oromia regions reported proxy GAM levels above 15 percent (GNC, 2022). The nutrition situation was also concerning in drought- and conflict-affected northern areas (Tigray, Afar and Amhara) (UNICEF, 2022).

In Somalia, the median wasting prevalence was 15.9 percent, and exceeded 25 percent in several areas. And in Kenya, nutrition surveys conducted in June–July 2022 in ASAL counties reported wasting prevalence above 15 percent. The nutrition situation in South Sudan and the Sudan continues to be dire (OCHA, June 2022). In South Sudan, 2022 surveys showed persisting high levels of wasting above 15 percent in conflict-affected areas.

All food-crisis countries in the region, except Djibouti, had nutrition data available in 2022. In Ethiopia, the Sudan, Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya, Burundi and Uganda, 11.72 million children under 5 years old were estimated to be wasted. Of these, around 2.79 million were severely wasted.

Across the region, the highest numbers of wasted children under 5 years old were in Ethiopia (4.8 million, of whom 1.21 million were severely wasted), the Sudan (2.8 million with 0.56 million severely wasted), Somalia (1.48 million with 0.36 million severely wasted), South Sudan (1.4 million with 0.35 million severely wasted) followed by Kenya, Burundi and Uganda.

Number of children under 5 years old with wasting, in seven major food crises, 2022



Source: IPC, HNO/HRP 2022.

Drought in the Horn of Africa

In 2022, the Horn of Africa was experiencing its worst drought in more than four decades, with catastrophic consequences (OCHA, September 2022).

The severe nature of the drought drove a large-scale, multisectoral humanitarian emergency, with a sharp increase in acute food insecurity, malnutrition and mortality rates. The worst-affected countries were Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia.

The worsening of the drought in 2022 was driven by the poor performance of the region's two main rainy seasons. The March–May 2022 rainy season was well below average, with much of the region seeing the lowest rainfall amounts recorded in the past 70 years. In addition, the poor rains were extremely widespread, affecting over 80 percent of the eastern Horn of Africa (FSNWG, July 2022). This was followed by the October–December rainy season that also performed poorly, though rainfall deficits during this season were not as severe as those observed during March–May.

Pastoral livelihoods – the key livelihood activity across many of the worst-affected areas – were devastated by the drought. For example, estimates from the beginning of January 2023 indicated that 10.8 million livestock had died across the region due to a lack of pasture and water (FSNWG, January 2023). Milk availability, which is key for the nutrition status of young children, was also severely limited as most animals ceased producing milk.

For cropping households, the drought drove consecutive seasons of below-average production. The 2022 Gu harvests in southern Somalia were estimated to be 50 percent below the 1995–2021 average (IPC, September 2022), while in Kenya, total crop failures were observed across much of the southeastern marginal agricultural cluster (Government of Kenya, September 2022).

Food access for households who already were facing below-average crop and livestock production was further curtailed by extremely high food prices. For example, in parts of southern Somalia, staple food prices doubled or tripled compared with the long-term average and exceeded levels observed during the 2011 and 2017 drought emergencies.

Due to a lack of food, water and other basic resources, 1.69 million people were internally displaced in 2022, including 1.2 million in Somalia and 512 000 in Ethiopia (UNHCR, December 2022).

As of December 2022, between 21.7 million and 22.6 million people faced high levels of acute food insecurity, primarily due to the drought in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, including 2.7 million people in Emergency (IPC Phase 4) in Kenya and Somalia, and 214 050 people in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Somalia. At that time, subnational acute food security classifications showed a dire situation. In Kenya, four counties (Turkana, Marsabit, Isiolo and Mandera) were classified in IPC Phase 4 (IPC, September 2022).

In Somalia, the projected Famine was averted due to scaled-up humanitarian assistance and a poor but better-than-forecast October–December rainy season. However, widespread IPC Phase 3 and IPC Phase 4 classifications continued with consequent outcomes on food security, morbidity and mortality (IPC, December 2022). Similarly in Ethiopia, FEWS NET analyses showed widespread IPC Phase 4 and IPC Phase 3 outcomes, indicating that while the situation remains alarming, worse outcomes would have been likely in the absence of ongoing assistance (FEWS NET, November 2022).

Alarming rates of malnutrition

The IPC acute malnutrition analysis in Kenya found that Laisamis in Marsabit county, Turkana South and Turkana North were experiencing an Extremely Critical situation (IPC AMN Phase 5) and widespread areas faced a Critical situation (IPC AMN Phase 4) in July 2022 (IPC, September 2022). Similarly, in Somalia, the IPC acute malnutrition analysis showed many areas in a Critical situation between July and September 2022.

Rising mortality rates were also observed. For example, in Somalia, the post-Gu assessment found that four population groups were experiencing death rates for children under the age of 5 years exceeding 2 out of 10 000 per day (FSNAU, September 2022). The nutrition situation among displaced populations was also a major



© WFP/PATRICK MWANGI

Somalia is in the grip of an acute food insecurity crisis amid what will soon become the longest drought in its history. This had driven 1.2 million internal displacements by the end of 2022.

source for concern. Data from UNHCR indicate that there has been a significant increase in admissions of SAM and MAM cases into nutrition treatment programmes at IDP and refugee sites in the region, particularly in Ethiopia and Kenya, and critical levels of wasting (>15 percent) were reported among the children of newly arrived refugees in Kenya and Ethiopia (FSNWG, January 2023). Furthermore, displaced populations have been identified as one of the populations facing the most dire food security, nutritional and mortality outcomes in Somalia, with the IPC analysis released in September projecting Famine among IDP populations in Baidoa town (Bay region) and Risk of Famine among IDPs in Mogadishu, Garowe, Galkacyo and Dollow (IPC, September 2022). Though this projected Famine was prevented, IDPs still continue to face some of the most severe outcomes in Somalia (IPC, December 2022).

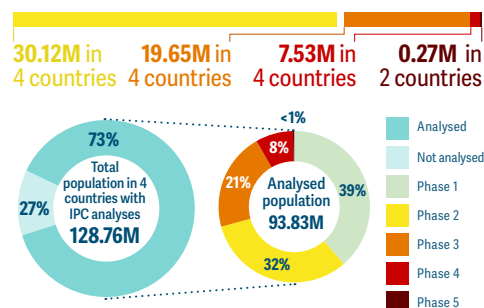
Drought recovery will be prolonged in 2023

Earlier forecasts for the March–May 2023 rainfall season had pointed to depressed rainfall, coupled with high temperatures, risking a sixth consecutive season of drought in affected areas. However, improved rainfall from mid-March 2023 brought some reprieve to pastoral and agropastoral communities, especially in southern Ethiopia, facilitating land preparation in agropastoral areas, although poor vegetation conditions persisted in numerous ASAL areas in Kenya. Heavy rains caused river overflows and flash floods, destroying homes, farmlands and shelters for displaced populations in some areas, and increasing the risk of waterborne diseases, such as cholera. Given the magnitude of livelihood losses and population displacements in the region, the impacts of the drought will likely continue regardless of seasonal performance (FSNWG, March 2023).

Out of the six countries with projections for 2023, Kenya and Somalia are again facing sharp deteriorations in acute food insecurity

30.7M people or **20%** of the analysed population were projected in IPC Phase 3 or above, in 2023 in six countries

27.45M of them were projected in four countries with IPC analyses



Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023.

In Burundi, 0.5–0.75M people faced high levels of acute food insecurity (FEWS NET, 2023)

In Uganda, 2.0–2.5M people faced high levels of acute food insecurity (FEWS NET, 2023)

Populations in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5)

Significant efforts in the scale-up of multisectoral humanitarian assistance, supported by slightly more favourable than previously foreseen rains, contributed to a moderate improvement in food security and nutrition outcomes. However, the situation remained critical in the first six months of 2023. From April–June, around 222 700 people are projected to be in IPC Phase 5 in the most severely drought- and conflict-affected areas. In southern Somalia, agropastoral populations in Burhakaba district (Bay region) and IDPs in settlements in Baidoa (Bay) and Mogadishu (Banadir) face a Risk of Famine if the Gu season rainfall turns out to be much poorer than forecast, leading to crop failure, and humanitarian assistance does not reach the most vulnerable populations (IPC, February 2023).

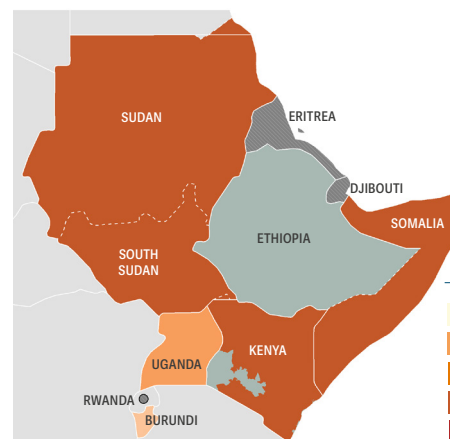
In South Sudan, in April–July 2023, around 43 000 people are expected to face IPC Phase 5 in Akobo, Canal/Pigi and Fangak counties (Jonglei state), and Leer and Mayendit counties (Unity state) (IPC, November 2022).

crisis continues to be driven by currency depreciation, high global food prices, climatic shocks including floods and dry spells, and persistent conflict and insecurity (IPC, November 2022).

In **Somalia**, 6.5 million people are projected to face IPC Phase 3 or above, including 222 700 people in IPC Phase 5 and 1.86 million people in IPC Phase 4 – an overall 16 percent increase compared with peak 2022 figures due to the continued impacts of five below-average rainy seasons and a forecast sixth poor season during the 2023 Gu, high food prices and conflict (IPC, February 2023).

In **Kenya**, the population facing IPC Phase 3 or above is projected to increase by 25 percent in 2023, or to 5.4 million people, the highest in the history of the GRFC due primarily to the continued impacts of the

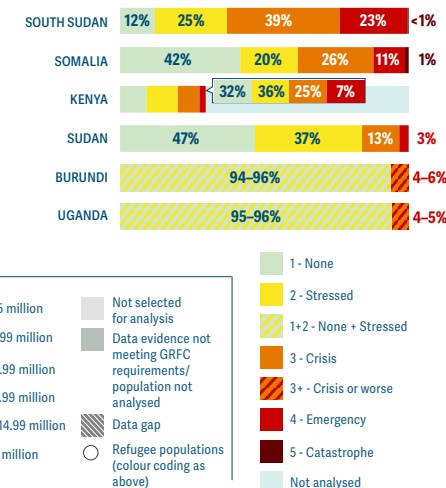
Projected number of people in IPC Phase 3 or above, 2023



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on these maps do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023.

Share of analysed population by phase of acute food insecurity, 2023



Source: IPC TWGs, 2022 and 2023; FEWS NET (Burundi and Uganda).

Weather extremes including the severe, three-year drought across the Horn of Africa, economic challenges, and conflict and insecurity affecting livelihoods, markets and humanitarian access continue to drive dire levels of acute food insecurity across many countries in East Africa in 2023.

Populations with the most severe levels of acute food insecurity (IPC Phases 4 and 5) will remain extremely elevated during 2023, with 7.5 million people projected in IPC Phase 4 in Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan, and 265 700 people projected in IPC Phase 5 in Somalia and South Sudan.

Populations in IPC Phase 3 or above in **South Sudan** are expected to increase marginally from 7.74 million in 2022 to 7.76 million in 2023, with 2.9 million people in IPC Phase 4 and 43 000 in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5). The

unprecedented drought, along with high food prices (IPC, February 2023).

In the **Sudan**, the number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity was projected to decline by 34 percent to 7.7 million between October 2022 and February 2023. However, this is largely attributable to seasonality of food insecurity, while high food prices and intercommunal conflicts will persist (IPC, June 2022). Of high concern, violent clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary forces in mid-April are likely to trigger a severe deterioration of livelihoods, internal displacement and acute food insecurity. No updated acute food insecurity estimates were available at the time of publication.

In **Burundi**, 2022 and 2023 data are not directly comparable due to changing data sources. Between

500 000 and 750 000 people will face high acute food insecurity driven by below-average rainfall negatively affecting Season A production, and economic challenges driving rising food prices, thus limiting economic access for many households according to FEWS NET.

In **Uganda**, weather shocks, high food prices and conflict in certain areas are expected to drive acute food insecurity, with up to 2.5 million people projected to face high levels of acute food insecurity in 2023, up from 2.3 million in 2022 according to FEWS NET.

No projections are available for **Djibouti** or **Ethiopia**.