

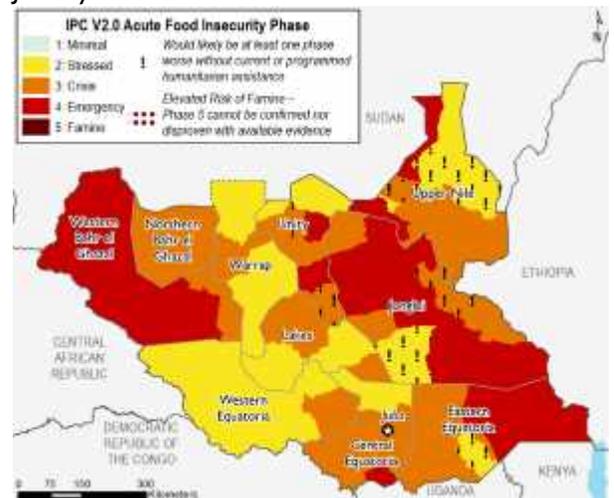
Some households likely in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5), while conflict has increased in several areas

FEWS NET produces forward-looking food security analysis and IPC compatible mapping several times a year for 30 countries, including South Sudan. FEWS NET is a member of South Sudan's multi-stakeholder IPC Technical Working Group and an active participant in national IPC analysis workshops in South Sudan. The map and classifications in this report use IPC standards and methods, but do not necessarily reflect a consensus view of the national IPC Technical Working Group, IPC partners, or the Government of the Republic of South Sudan. However, this report was reviewed by the South Sudan IPC Technical Working Group prior to publication. The most recent national IPC analysis was conducted in September 2017 and the next analysis is expected to convene in January 2018.

KEY MESSAGES

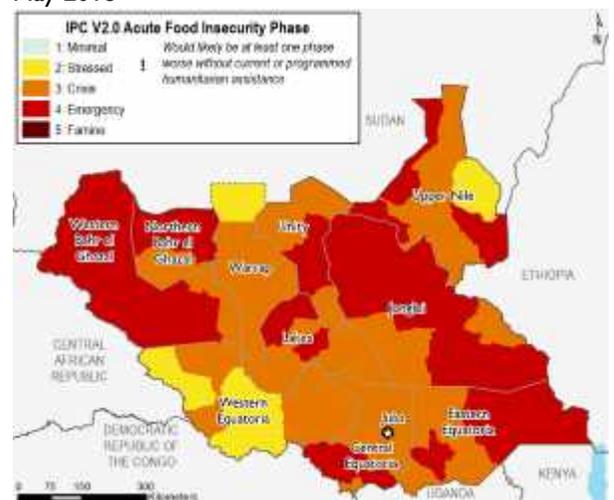
- According to key informant information and rapid assessments, the harvest has supported marginal food security improvements including in some counties where Phase 5 populations were likely during the 2017 lean season. However, many households still face large food consumption gaps and are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, and it remains likely some households are in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in Wau, Leer, Nyirol, and Ayod.
- According to key informant observations from a November assessment in Greater Baggari, it is unlikely Famine (IPC Phase 5) is ongoing among populations in Mboro and Farajallah towns, though data limitations remain. Even less information is available on those residing outside of Mboro and Farajallah, and the results of food security indicators collected during the assessment are not yet available. Given extreme levels of acute malnutrition observed during the lean season, it is possible Famine (IPC Phase 5) occurred in this area in 2017, but evidence is insufficient to confirm or deny.
- The prevalence of acute malnutrition remains 'very Critical' in several areas of the country even during the post-harvest period. Many households are expected to deplete their minimal harvests by early 2018, and food security and nutrition outcomes are expected to further deteriorate through mid 2018. Widespread Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Emergency (IPC Phase 4) are expected, and there remains a credible risk that Famine (IPC Phase 5) could occur in a worst-case scenario of an extended absence of assistance.
- There has been a notable increase in conflict in Jonglei, central Unity, and Lakes between October and December. In addition to the loss of life, the violence has caused displacement, restricted households' movement towards fields, and forced aid workers to relocate, all of which are contributing to continued extreme acute food insecurity. It is highly unlikely food security will improve until there is a resolution to the conflict, and urgent action to facilitate such is needed.

Current food security outcomes, December 2017 to January 2018



Source: FEWS NET

Projected food security outcomes, February 2018 to May 2018



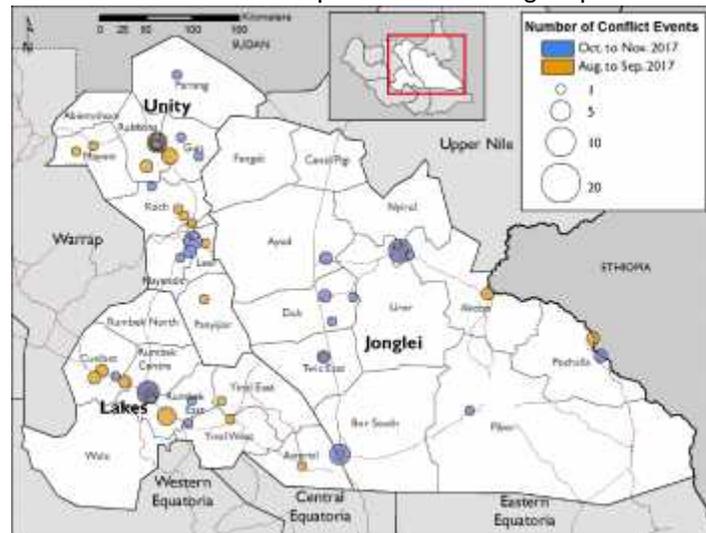
Source: FEWS NET

FEWS NET classification is [IPC-compatible](#). [IPC-compatible](#) analysis follows key IPC protocols but does not necessarily reflect the consensus of national food security partners.

CURRENT SITUATION

Between October and December, the number of conflict events and resulting fatalities has increased in several areas of the country compared to mid-2017 (Figure 1). Inter-communal clashes in Rumbek Centre, Rumbek North, Rumbek East, and Cueibet of [Lakes](#) have disrupted normal livelihoods, limited the delivery of health and nutrition services, forced several aid agencies to relocate, and prompted the Government to declare a three-month [state of emergency](#). In Duk Payuel of Jonglei, relief supplies have been looted, [crops have been destroyed](#), and many lives have been lost, including those of aid workers. Attacks reported in Duk Padiet of Duk and Daktek of Pochalla, also in Jonglei, have had similar impacts. Continued insecurity in remote parts of Nyirol and [armed clashes](#) in Ayod have also restricted households' access to their fields and prevented markets from functioning even at low levels. In Leer and Mayendit of Unity, [armed clashes](#) between Government and opposition forces have forced many aid workers to relocate, disrupting the delivery of assistance.

Figure 1. Conflict events in Jonglei, Unity, and Lakes States, Oct.–Nov. 2017 compared to Aug.–Sept. 2017



Source: ACLED data

Conversely, emergency humanitarian assistance has reached [Morobo of Central Equatoria](#) for the first time since July 2016. Furthermore, the flow of staple commodities from Uganda to Morobo is increasing, and market functioning is improving.

In Greater Baggari of Wau, key informant observations during a multi-agency rapid assessment in November indicate it is unlikely a Famine (IPC Phase 5) is ongoing among populations in Mboro and Farajallah towns, though data limitations remain. Rapid MUAC screenings of 2,500 under-five children found a proxy GAM (MUAC) of 28.1 percent (C.I. N/A) in Mboro and 10 percent (C.I. N/A) in Farajallah. Also in Mboro, five cases (0.5%) of edema were recorded. In Farajallah, the GAM (MUAC) prevalence is a [decline](#) from September, when a rapid screening reported a GAM (MUAC) prevalence of 25.8 percent. In Mboro, the prevalence is slightly lower than the 34.7 percent reported in September, though the prevalence remains extremely high. Many households reported access to some harvests and community leaders indicated the harvest and food assistance were improving consumption. However, little information is available on households residing outside of Mboro and Farajallah and given that these populations are displaced from areas outside of Greater Baggari and are less likely to have access to fields to cultivate, their food security outcomes could be more severe. Results from food security indicators collected during the assessment are not yet available, but given extreme levels of acute malnutrition observed during the lean season, it is possible a Famine (IPC Phase 5) occurred in this area during the 2017 lean season.

Throughout South Sudan, food security has improved marginally with the ongoing harvest compared to the lean season. This includes in some counties where Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) populations were likely during the peak of the 2017 lean season: In Kapoeta East of Eastern Equatoria, Rumbek North and Yirol West of Lakes, and Tonj North and Tonj South of Warrap, key informant information indicates that ongoing harvest of sorghum and access to fish and livestock products have contributed to slight improvements in food security and even worst-off households have some access to these improvements. However, throughout the country many households did not cultivate, or they harvested minimal amounts of cereal. Nearly half of the population remains in Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or worse due to this and severely limited livelihood options to access other sources of food. Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) likely persists in parts of Leer of Unity and Nyirol and Ayod of Jonglei, where many of the worst-off households likely do not have access to harvests and ongoing insecurity is also limiting the delivery of assistance and access to natural sources of food. Emergency humanitarian assistance continues to be delivered to around 2.5 million people a month and this assistance is preventing more extreme outcomes in many areas, although the reach of assistance is under 50 percent of the estimated population in need.

Despite the ongoing harvest, results from recent SMART surveys indicate persistent high levels of acute malnutrition (Figure 2). Only four SMART surveys from the October to December 2017 period have been validated; however, among them results show GAM (WHZ) prevalences at or above levels observed during the 2016 post-harvest period.

UPDATED ASSUMPTIONS

The assumptions used to develop FEWS NET's most likely scenario for the [South Sudan Food Security Outlook for October 2017 to May 2018](#) remain unchanged except for the following:

- In addition to the ongoing political conflict, inter-communal clashes are likely to persist in parts of Lakes and Jonglei during the outlook period. Conflict in Warrap is also likely due to high tension in Gogrial West and Gogrial East and the proximity of these counties to ongoing conflict in Lakes.
- Based on key informant information and recent field assessments, seasonal improvements in Yirol East, Yirol West, Renk, Ezo, Mvolo, and Nagero are better than previously assumed. In Yirol West and Yirol East, it was previously assumed that intercommunal conflict would continue restricting households' access to fields and fishing; however, relative calm has persisted and allowed households to engage in these livelihood activities. In Renk, Mvolo, Ezo, and Nagero, the level of production among populations of concern is slightly better than previously assumed. As a result, relatively greater food access from these sources is expected through January 2018.
- It was previously assumed that humanitarian assistance would continue to prevent more extreme area-level outcomes in Duk and Guit. However, recent conflict has led to the looting of assistance and disrupted deliveries, and it is now expected that conflict will continue to disrupt the delivery of planned assistance in these counties.
- In early December, aid agencies were again granted access to Greater Baggari and it is expected they will have relatively better access to this area in the near term. However, given the volatile nature of the conflict, assistance cannot be assumed throughout the outlook period.

PROJECTED OUTLOOK THROUGH MAY 2018

Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are expected to continue in many counties even during the remainder of the harvesting period through January 2018. Due to the above mentioned disruptions to humanitarian assistance deliveries in Duk and Guit, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are most likely in these counties in December and January. Conversely, slightly better food security outcomes are now expected in Yirol East and Yirol West of Lakes, Renk of Upper Nile, and Ezo, Mvolo, and Nagero of Western Equatoria, where key informant information indicates that access to harvests and fishing is slightly better than previously projected. Access to these food sources is expected to improve food security to Stressed (IPC Phase 2) in December and January, though these improvements are expected to be short-lived.

As previously projected, it is still expected that most households will deplete their minimal harvests in early 2018. Prices are expected to start rising around January/February and persist at extremely high levels, above those observed in 2017. As a result, many households will face record low purchasing capacity. Very high levels of GAM and mortality already persist during the harvest, and given the expectation of continued very lower purchasing power and conflict-related restrictions to normal livelihood activities, many households are expected to face extreme acute food insecurity. Although emergency humanitarian assistance is likely to reach 2.5-3 million people a month throughout 2018 and will prevent more extreme outcomes in many areas, assistance at these levels will only reach an estimated 50 percent of the need. Concern is highest for the many households in need who do not have access to assistance. It is expected some households will exhaust the capacity to cope during the outlook period and be in Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) in areas of greatest concern, including Greater Baggari of Wau, Leer of Unity, and Ayod and Nyirol of Jonglei. However, Catastrophe (IPC Phase 5) remains possible in many other areas, specifically in the event that conflict restricts household movement in search of alternative food sources. In a worst-case scenario characterized by an extended absence of humanitarian assistance, Famine (IPC Phase 5) is likely in several areas of the country.

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This monthly report covers current conditions as well as changes to the projected outlook for food insecurity in this country. It updates FEWS NET's Food Security Outlook, which is published three times per year. Learn more about our work [here](#).

Figure 2. Results from SMART surveys conducted in South Sudan, Oct.-Dec. 2017 compared to Oct.-Dec 2016

Location	Oct. to Dec. 2016		Oct. to Dec. 2017	
	GAM (WHZ) (95% C.I.)	Non-trauma CDR *Cause of death not specified	GAM (WHZ) (95% C.I.)	Non-trauma CDR *Cause of death not specified
Mayendit, Unity	N/A	N/A	19.9% (14.1-22.4)	0.82
Pibor, Jonglei	26.4% (21.6-31.8)	0.16*	26.8% (22.8-31.2)	0.83
Kapoeta East, EES	14.0% (n/a)	0.78	24.0% (19.0-29.8)	1.51*
Ikotos, EES	N/A	N/A	10.3% (7.9-13.3)	1.32

Source: Data from South Sudan Nutrition Information Working Group; Surveys conducted by UNIDO (Mayendit), IMC (Kapoeta East 2016), ACF (Kapoeta East 2017) JAM (Pibor), AVSI (Ikotos)