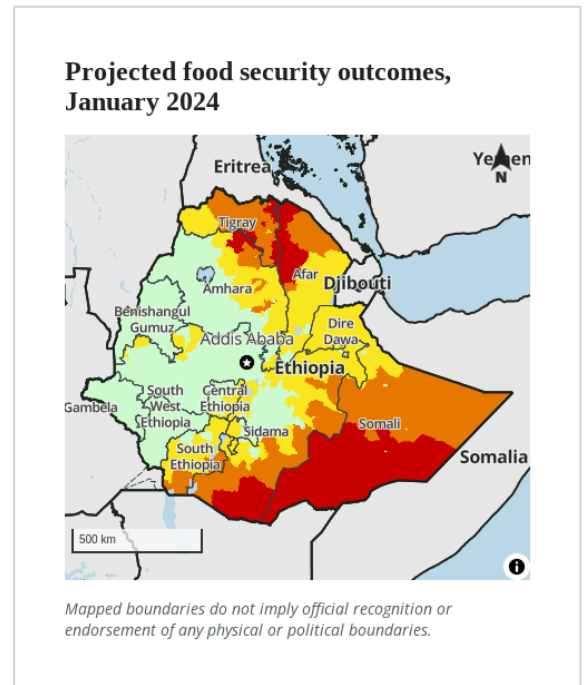


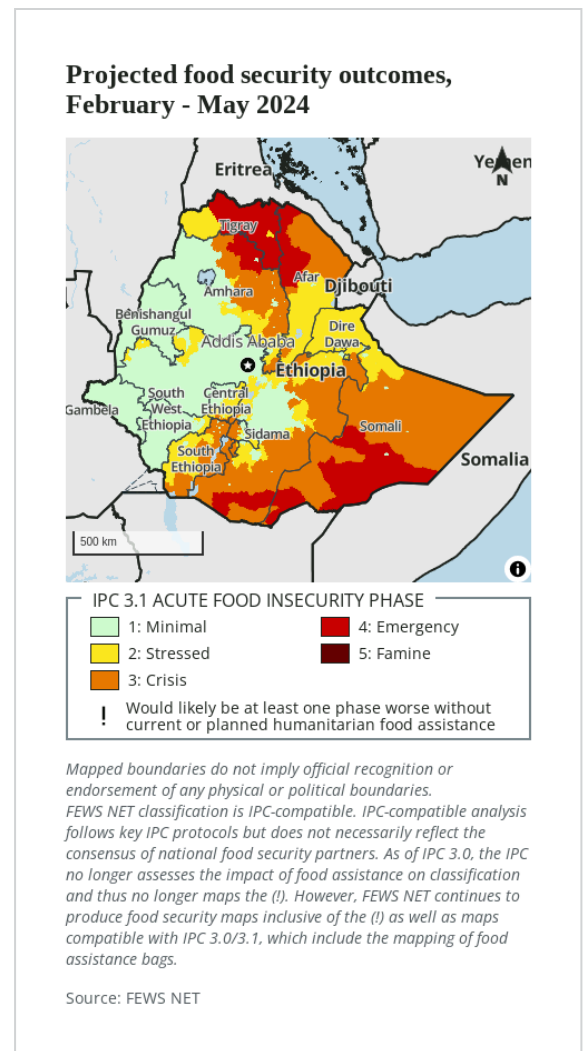
## Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes expected in northern Ethiopia

### Key Messages

- Households in northern Ethiopia increasingly face extreme hardships accessing food and income which are driving ongoing Emergency (IPC Phase 4) and Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes. Households have limited food stocks resulting from the failure of the 2023 *meher* harvest, and income-earning activities have yet to recover from recent conflict. Additionally, in Afar, where livestock is a key food and income source, livestock herd sizes are low and livestock body conditions are poor due to drought. Ongoing food assistance continues to mitigate some of the most severe food consumption deficits among beneficiaries; however, assistance levels are insufficient for a large proportion of the population. In Tigray, there is a risk of more extreme outcomes from February onward if food assistance is not scaled-up as planned and if social support does not continue.
- In the pastoral south and southeast, Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are expected to materialize in many areas. Recovery from the 2020-2023 drought is expected to take multiple seasons, and households continue to have difficulty accessing food and income from livestock, the primary food and income source. Food security conditions are expected to improve in many areas during the March to May *gu/genna* rains, when milk availability and livestock holdings will moderately increase. However, in areas where drought impacts were most acute, notably in Afder, Liban, Dawa, and areas of Shabelle and Borena zones, Emergency (IPC Phase 4) outcomes are expected to persist as household assets are severely eroded and herd sizes are limited.
- Crisis (IPC Phase 3) and Stressed (IPC Phase 2) outcomes are expected in areas of Sidama, South Ethiopia, and Central Ethiopia regions. Crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are ongoing in agropastoral and pastoral areas that were impacted by the 2020-2023 drought and where households typically heavily rely on livestock; currently, households have smaller herd sizes available to sell to purchase food. Furthermore, the main lean season in these areas will peak between March and May, and many households are likely to have exhausted their own production and will rely on markets for food. As a result, household access to food will be lower than normal as households face both atypically low purchasing power and elevated staple food prices.



- The 2023 *meher* harvest has reached the market; however, market supply is lower than normal in conflict-affected areas of the country due to supply chain disruptions. Although the increase in market supply is driving modest declines or stability in staple food prices in most areas, prices still remain significantly above last year and the three-year average. In December, maize prices in Nekemet and Yabello in Oromia region decreased by 17 and 4 percent, respectively, compared to November, but remained at least 50 percent higher than the three-year average. In other areas such as Sekota in Amhara (affected by conflict-related market disruptions) and Shashemene in Oromia region, the price of maize did not seasonally decline but remained roughly stable. Conversely, the price of staple foods has been increasing in southern and southeastern pastoral areas; for instance, in Chereti in the Somali Region, the maize price has increased by 9 percent compared to the previous month.
- In conflict-affected areas, market disruptions have led to atypical declines in livestock prices; however, livestock prices are improving in the pastoral south and southeast due to the favorable impact of the 2023 rainy seasons on livestock body conditions. In Sekota – where conflict is disrupting market functionality – December goat prices were down by nearly 20 percent from November. In Chereti – where conflict is absent – December goat prices increased by 11 percent compared to November. However, due to parallel increases in maize prices in the pastoral south and southeast, the terms of trade between livestock and maize has remained roughly stable month-on-month; for example, with the sale of one goat, a household can purchase 39-40 kg of maize. This is nearly 68 percent higher than the same time last year, when with the sale of one goat, a household could purchase nearly 24 kg of maize.
- According to the Food Cluster, around 2.6 million people received food assistance nationally in December. This is a slight decline from November distributions, when roughly 3.1 million people received food assistance. In Tigray, nearly 1.2 million people received food aid in December, similar to the number of people that received food assistance in November. In Amhara, food assistance distributions slightly increased from November to an additional 400,000 people receiving assistance in December. In Afar, where food insecurity remains severe, available data indicates assistance distributions declined month-on-month.
- In Oromia region, acute malnutrition outcomes are likely improving with a declining trend in Therapeutic Feeding Program (TFP) admissions. In Oromia, TFP admission data is a more reliable indicator for trends in acute malnutrition as the number of facilities reporting admissions is generally stable, therefore providing a stable reporting rate. TFP admissions are expected to continue to decline in many areas of Oromia as households have access to the *meher* harvest and as livestock herd sizes improve. However, Siraro, Shalla, and Dugda Dawa *woredas* of Oromia region are among the top priority *woredas* by TFP admission in the region, with Siraro *woreda* reporting the highest number of admissions due to chronic issues such as childcare and feeding practices and poor water and sanitation practices.



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**About Key Message Update**

This Key Message Update provides a high-level analysis of current acute food insecurity conditions and any changes to FEWS NET's latest projection of acute food insecurity outcomes in the specified geography. Learn more [here](#).